



VETERANS AWARENESS TRAINING

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Financial Disclosures-none

- ❖ WARNING – This presentation contains video of American Soldiers in combat and under attack from IEDs and gunfire.
- ❖ If there are any veterans in the room who would rather not be reminded of past experiences, now would be a good time to take a 5-10 minute break.

USA Today Headline 1/17/14

**UP TO 48,000 AFGAN, IRAQ
VETS HOMELESS
(out of 2.5 million veterans)**

- ❖ VA announced it will continue to fund a program that targets homeless vets.
- ❖ Places a priority on finding immediate shelter or preventing loss of their homes
- ❖ \$300 million annually for 2014/2015

Goal

To provide an overview of military service to help Phoenix Fire personnel understand the challenges, hardships and difficulties facing our veterans.



Phoenix Fire Involvement

- ❖ Partnered w/ Arizona Coalition for Military Families in 2009
- ❖ Paramedic CME (3 hours)
Included a panel with 3 vets.
- ❖ Civilian/dispatcher training
- ❖ On-Line Training for firefighters
<http://phoenixfireops.com/ctc/situation-awareness/>

Objectives

- ❖ Overview of military service.
- ❖ Identify military stressors (combat & civilian).
- ❖ Overview of post-traumatic stress (PTS) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).
- ❖ Identify resources for veterans, homeless veterans & military families.

Combat Stressors



- 98% -- Incoming artillery, rocket or mortar fire
- 92% -- Knowing someone who was seriously injured or killed
- 81% -- Attacked or ambushed
- 79% -- Seeing dead bodies

Recent Conflicts

Operation Desert Storm	1990--1991
War of Kosovo	1998--1999
Operation Enduring Freedom	2001- present
Operation Iraqi Freedom	2003--2010
Operation New Dawn	2010- present

Arizona Military/Veteran Population

VETERANS

- ❖ +/- 600,000
- ❖ 9% AZ population
- ❖ 25% live in rural areas
- ❖ High concentration of OEF/OIF/OND veterans









Post Traumatic Stress

- ❖ **Definition:** “An anxiety response that can occur following the experience or witnessing of a traumatic event.”
- ❖ Occurs after someone goes through, sees, or learns about a traumatic event such as combat exposure, physical or sexual abuse, terrorist attack, serious accident, or natural disaster.
- ❖ A stress-related reaction that does not resolve over time may be PTS.

Post Traumatic Stress

“If you had seventy near-fatal car accidents in one year of your life between ages eighteen and nineteen, do you think that would mess you up all by itself?”



Jack, A Vietnam Vet
as told to Edward Tick, PhD.
Author, War and the Soul

Post Traumatic Stress

“I don’t want help for PTS. I just can’t sleep.”

Former OIF/OEF Combat Vet





Traumatic Brain injury

“A blow or jolt to the head, resulting in a closed head injury, or concussion, or penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain.”

- ❖ May not realize they have TBI.
- ❖ Ranges from mild to severe.
- ❖ Extended period of unconsciousness or amnesia.

Combat Operational Stress First Aid (COSFA)

- ❖ A method to recognize stress
Ask...Care...Escort
- ❖ A Stress Continuum
 - ❑ **Red Zone** — Suicidal or violent
(18 vets. commit suicide each day)
 - ❑ **Orange Zone** — Extreme anxiety, rage, panic attacks
 - ❑ **Yellow Zone** — Irritable, sleep issues, apathy, drug abuse
 - ❑ **Green Zone** — Stress manageable

The Stress Continuum

RED ZONE: ILL	There is an immediate danger or threat to life – call 9-1-1 Examples: actively suicidal (danger to self) and/or violent (danger to others).
ORANGE ZONE: INJURED	There is an urgent situation which requires support – utilize national and local crisis resources Examples: extreme anxiety, panic attacks, suicidal thoughts, homicidal thoughts, rage, self-harm behavior, heavy use of drugs and/or alcohol, psychosis, eating disorders, sexual assault, family violence.
YELLOW ZONE: REACTING	There is a situation where a person shows increased signs and symptoms of distress – encourage connection to local/national counseling resources, and to social supports. Examples: trouble sleeping, anxious, irritable, grouchy, worrying, apathy, loss of interest, negative, pessimistic, drinking more alcohol to cope, drug experimentation, relationship stress.
GREEN ZONE: READY	There is no crisis situation and stress is manageable.

Caregiver Tips



- Identify their military service.
- Don't bang on the front door.
- Slow down, lower radio volume. Shut down engine.
- Be prepared to stay a while.

Caregiver Tips

- Confirm if armed & ask to secure it. Look for weapons.
- Determine their stress level.
- If tired, give them time & space.
- Be aware of their potential for violence.



You may be their first contact seeking assistance.

Service Members/Veterans in the Community

- ❖ Identify clues to military service.
- ❖ “Have you served in the military?”
- ❖ “Thank you for your service.”
- ❖ “What branch did you serve in?”
- ❖ “Are you doing ok?”
- ❖ Stay neutral.
- ❖ Don’ t make assumptions.
- ❖ If they use abbreviations, ask them what it means.

If Veteran in Crisis

Call 9-1-1



Call the Crisis Response Van

On duty 24/7

Manned by a social work graduate student/EMT

Connect patient to social/behavioral resources



Service Members/Veterans in the Workplace

- ❖ Hard to return to normal society
- ❖ A lot on their mind
- ❖ Memory triggers
- ❖ Be respectful of deployment experience
- ❖ Focus on listening
- ❖ Give them time
- ❖ Maintain interactive neutrality

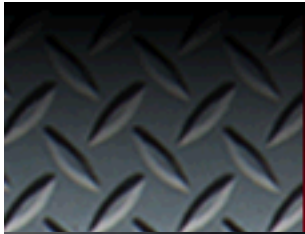
If Veteran not in Crisis

- ❖ **Do they have counseling resources?
If so, connect them to help.**
- ❖ **Maricopa Crisis Line - “Catch All”
602-222-9444**
- ❖ **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press ‘1’.**
- ❖ **Encourage them to seek out VA.**

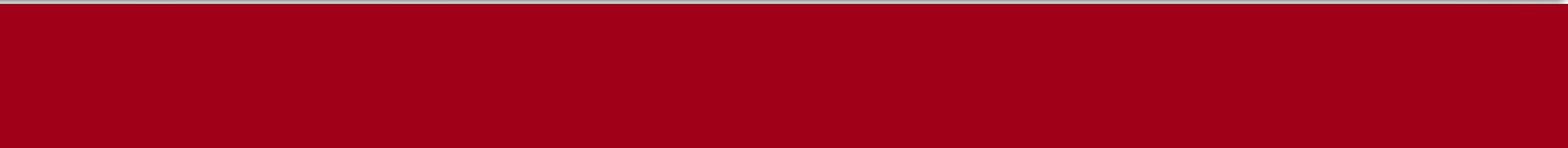
AZ Republic Headline 1/21/14

“Phoenix sets pace in U.S. for housing homeless vets”

- ❖ The White House last month declared Phoenix the first U.S. city to house all chronically homeless veterans.
- ❖ Program started in 2011 and has found housing for 222 veterans.



2011 Veterans Day Tribute - Green Bay



ON-LINE TRAINING LINK

<http://phoenixfireops.com/ctc/situation-awareness/>

On the site, use the “Situation Awareness” tab to review each section in the training.
(Do not use the “Exit Activity” button)
It will take approx. 1 hr. to complete.

Thanks

- ❖ Capt./Paramedic Dean Pedrotti for the major work he did on this project.

My New Ride



No Lights!



No Sirens!



No Radio!



Just 2 Oars, an 18ft Raft and the River!

