

Personal Experience Paper
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Abstract

The Metropolitan Police Department of Washington DC had a few forward thinking leaders who saw the need for a Military Liaison person to help facilitate the deployment and redeployment of its members who serve in the Armed Forces. I was one of the members contacted to fill this position. My duties initially where that of adviser and mentor but along the way the opportunities to serve both the Department's and Military's needs became evident, and with over 100 members of the department still serving in the Armed Forces and those forces still looking for career minded personal the line between the two organizations became very thin.

In the fall of 2006 the International Association Chiefs of Police (IACP) started a Round table discussion group of Military Veterans on their experiences during the Deployment and Redeployment phases from their agencies.

The IACP choose various locations around the United States to get the largest sampling possible. I was asked to represent my department in the last round table in the fall of 2007 in Baltimore Maryland.

My panel represented approximately ten different law enforcement agencies from the northeast section of the United States. The group was very diverse with ranks from both from the Armed Forces side as well as the law enforcement side. The big rock that I took away from the panel was the lack of consistency from department to department.

As I headed back to my department full of ideas I quickly relearned the lesson of “Status Quo.” Even with an Assistant Chief of Police on our side the journey has taken a much slower and less dynamic approached to implementation than I thought possible.

I was introduced to a Captain who heads up our Human Resources Department who is a strong advocate of the troops both military and police. He sent me on the journey of the less traveled rode to build a deployment handbook that would help our members in the transition of police to military basically ensuring that they and their families receive all the benefits that they are entitled to i.e. (health care, pay differential etc.) It was even proposed to start our own version of the Family Support Group (FSG) to help facilitate needs of the members’ family while they are deployed. If you haven’t noticed this liaison position fills the need very similar to that of a First Sergeant always caring for the soldier while ensuring the mission is getting done.

In 2008 with no official position for the Military Liaison advertised I was asked by our Chief of Police to do the job from my current position in Patrol. My answer was yes, but I knew that I would be far less effective than if I was assigned to HR. I do get emails and calls from members but with little face time with the members it is hard to stop the problems from snow balling sometimes.

In the spring of 2008 I was brought in by our Assistant Chief and advised me that my Department was looking at signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United States Army Reserve (USAR). The MOU was going to cover recruitment and training. The same day my Reserve unit contacted me about the same event. Opportunity to participate was offered and I as well as a few others took on the challenge of being the first Soldiers interviewed and photographed as a part of the MOU Recruitment drive.

The Metropolitan Police Department was the first department to sign the MOU. with that both the Department and the USAR struck out to see what could be gained by both entities. The Department while still looking for career minded and goal driven individuals was competing for applicants by no less than twenty three other agencies in the National Capitol Region, it became apparent recruitment needed to hit the national stage. All the while the Military has a strong base of Reservists and Guardsmen gaining experience and training but needing a avenue to exploit these assets. The 200th Military Police Command was assigned to be the conduit of the MOU as it pertains to police agencies nationwide. Three members of the Department are also members of the 200th Military Police Command myself, SFC Nagerka and SGT Dignan. During the initial phase all three of us became ambassadors for the cause. We became recruitment material

for the Warrior Citizen showing that both careers can be accomplished with in the Metropolitan Police Department and 200th Military Police Command.

Reflection now that the new has worn off, we still struggle to have proper representation for the Citizens Soldiers in our department. I feel that this program could have set a great example for other large number employers to have a liaison filling that First Sergeant role inside their organization. With the changes that come with it I look to the future to see that our Service Men and Women get the proper and needed guidance to ensure that the Citizen Soldier is look upon as a asset not a distracter.