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ARI Research Note 90-108

The Army Family Research Program: First Annual Work Plan

Research Triangle Institute

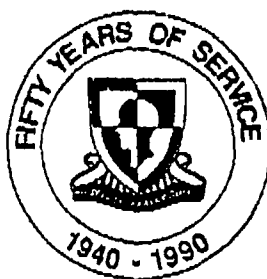
for

Contracting Officer's Representative
D. Bruce Bell

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THE ARMY FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM: FIRST ANNUAL WORK PLAN

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THE ARMY FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM: FIRST ANNUAL WORK PLAN

OVERVIEW OF THE ARMY FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM

1.1 Background

Recognizing the importance of families in achieving its overall mission, the Army has taken a lead role among the services in responding to family issues. This commitment was clearly expressed in White Paper 1983: The Army Family (Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 1983) and has been reinforced subsequently by The Army Family Action Plan I (Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Army, 1984). Publication of these documents signaled the Army's recognition of the partnership that exists between the Army and its families and committed the institution to "assuring adequate support to its families in order to promote wellness."

One focus of current Army program activities is a long term project of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) designed to perform research on the role of family factors in retention, readiness, and sense of community. Designated as the Army Family Research Program (AFRP), the purpose of the research is to produce improved programs, policies, and practices that yield: (1) increased strength and wellness of Army families; (2) enhanced spouse employment opportunities; (3) improved retention of qualified personnel; (4) increased soldier and unit readiness; and (5) an improved sense among soldiers and their families of identity with and participation in Army community life.

Under terms of contract MDA903-87-C-0540 awarded by ARI, the Research Triangle Institute (RTI), together with Caliber Associates and the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO), are pursuing a multi-year research program to achieve these objectives.

1.1.1 Project Structure

Project activities are organized into six distinct tasks that comprise the core study: (1) identification of "strong/healthy" families (addressing the concepts of community and wellness), (2) family factors and retention, (3) family factors and readiness, (4) spouse employment, (5) conceptual and operational integration of project activities, and (6) overall management and support. In addition, a series of three options were included within the overall ARI research program: (1) assessing needs for formal community support programs (community and partnership), (2) building a policy/program impact analysis system, and (3) increasing volunteers for family programs. Initial contract activities are restricted to the six tasks in the core study. Research activities to address the optional tasks will be initiated at a later date, as these options are funded.

Over the five year period of performance, it is anticipated that approximately 100 professional staff years of effort will be devoted to the core study under terms of this research effort. Although specific research activities will vary from year to year, it is anticipated that this total effort will be expended in an approximate equal yearly shares.

The approximate percentage distribution of professional staff years of effort across the five project tasks for this first year is as follows:

<u>Task</u>	<u>Percentage of Professional Staff Years of Effort</u>
1. Strong/Healthy Families	21 %
2. Retention	25 %
3. Readiness	24 %
4. Spouse Employment	16 %
5. Project Integration	14 %

The project team is organized along task lines. ARI has appointed individual staff members to serve as task monitors for the four substantive project tasks and for the overall integration task. Project task leaders work closely with their task monitor counterparts to develop research plans, receive suggestions for conducting of research activities, and obtain informal review of draft materials for project deliverables. Close working relationships between the task leaders and task monitors will facilitate effective integration of in-house and contracted research efforts and help assure that products developed in this effort meet both ARI and research user needs.

The project will be guided by three steering groups that will help to maximize the relevance and technical quality of the research: a General Officers Steering Committee, a multidisciplinary Technical Advisory Committee of leading researchers in the field, and a Family Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from non-Army agencies and associations.

1.1.2 Audience

A principal focus of project activities will be to prepare products that are useful to Army agencies with direct responsibility for developing policies and delivering services for Army family programs. As users of these research results, these agencies also constitute a principal audience for the materials in this plan. These organizations include:

- o Department of the Army
- o Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (ODCSPER)
- o Community and Family Support Center (CFSC)
- o Family Liaison Office (FLO)
- o Major Commands personnel policy and program staff (MACOMs)
- o Family service staff and volunteer leaders on installations and in units (e.g., ACS, YA, CDS, Family Support Groups, DPCA)

Another audience for this research project is other family researchers within the Army, as well as elsewhere in DoD. By consolidating knowledge and information and pinpointing critical issues and appropriate measures and methodologies, this project should help other researchers to make sure that their efforts are maximally efficient and useful.

1.2 PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST ANNUAL RESEARCH PLAN

One of the requirements of the contract is to submit a series of annual research plans to ARI. These plans will provide an overall framework for research activities that will be conducted during each of the years of contract activity.

Building on the materials submitted in the original proposal for research, this document constitutes the research plan for the first year of project activities, extending from November 28, 1986 to November 27, 1987.

The primary purpose of the first annual research plan for the Family Research Program is to provide an overview of the entire research program and a more detailed explanation of the products and activities that are planned for the first year. Many of the first year activities are designed to assess the current state of knowledge and identify critical research gaps in the military family arena. Based on this assessment, the second annual research plan will lay out a more detailed research strategy for the remaining years of the research program.

This plan is intended to help ARI, the project steering committees, and other interested Army and DoD policy and family program managers to understand the scope of the intended research and its likely utility to future policy decisions and programming. These materials can also be used to help coordinate these activities with concurrent Army family research efforts being conducted by organizations such as the Walter Reed Army Research Institute for Research (WRAIR) and the RAND ARROYO project.

The plan is divided into two major sections. The first section provides an overview of the overall research program, including the background of the project and the purpose and structure of the first plan. It also describes:

- o the conceptual framework that guides the research,
- o the overall research strategy for the project, and
- o the types of products and outcomes anticipated.

The second section provides detailed information on the first year plan. It begins with an overview of activities and products and then provides a discussion of the plans for each of the five major project tasks, including a Gantt chart, description of products, and narrative on the major activities.

1.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

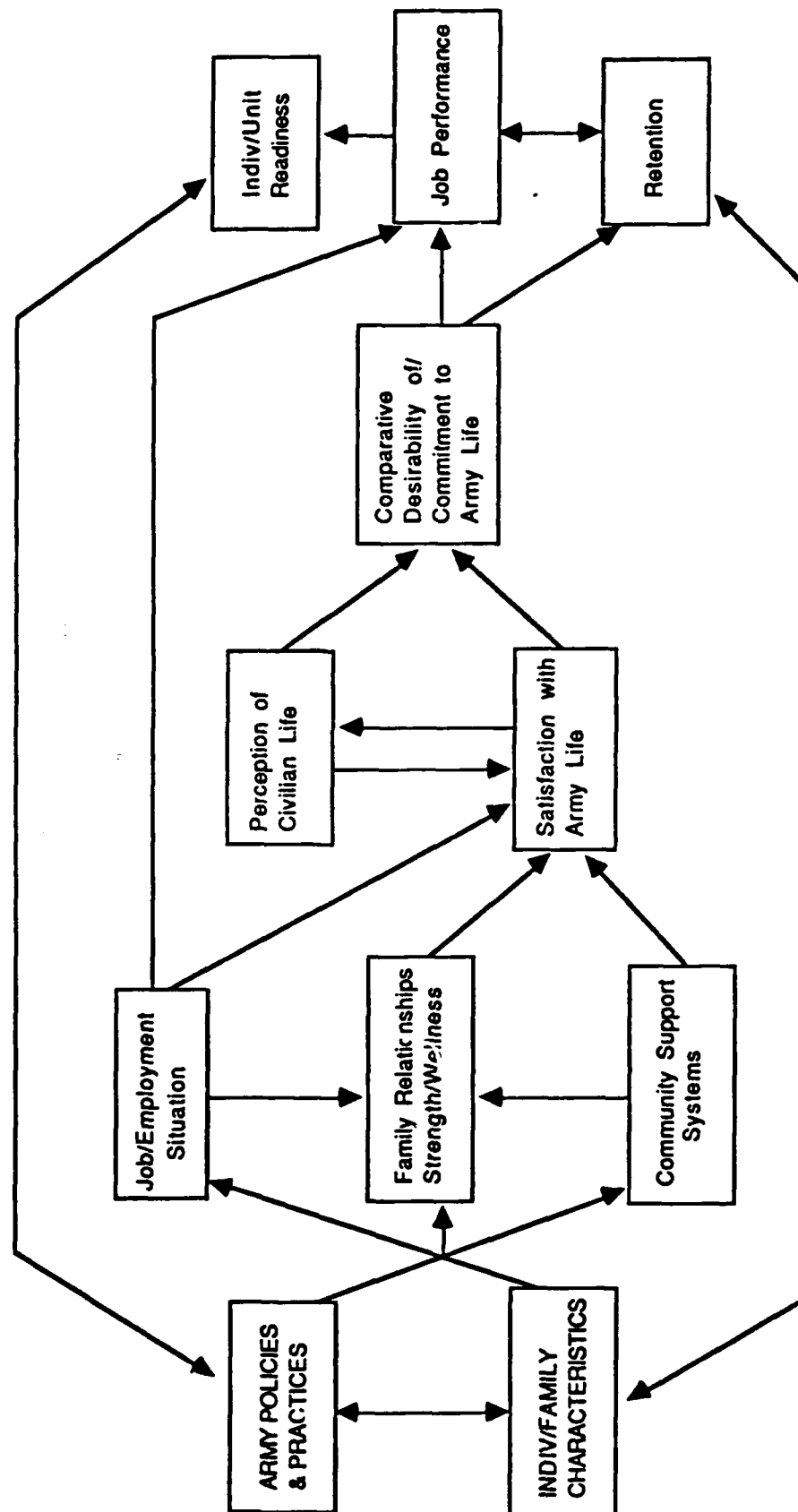
A conceptual framework is needed by the project research team to provide guidance to the diverse research efforts which will be undertaken over the course of the investigation. A conceptual framework serves as a model that proposes hypothetical linkages between the primary constructs and variables to be incorporated into the study. Without an agreed upon conceptual framework, it is difficult to maintain a coherent empirical research program. With a sound conceptual framework, it is possible to articulate and to test alternative explanations of the relationships between variables and their paths of influence toward the primary criterion variables of this study, retention behavior and individual and unit readiness. Once these relationships are established, one can more readily identify the types of policies, programs and practices that will produce the desired results: family strength, increased retention and enhanced readiness.

1.3.1 Overview of the Conceptual Model

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1 is derived from the ARI-sponsored family retention panel of 1985. That panel examined previous research and proposed a conceptual framework that hypothesized the relationships between the variables that ultimately predict personnel

FIGURE 1

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ARI FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM



retention. The framework is further elaborated in Figure 2 by including additional variables that are hypothesized to be components of the model and ultimately to impact upon individual and unit readiness, as well as retention. The potential causal linkages between the antecedent variables and the behavioral outcome variables have been expanded to accomodate new information and a more robust research design.

Ultimately, the conceptual framework serves as a foundation for empirical testing. The variables incorporated in that framework require operational definitions and sound empirical indicators. Much of the early effort in this project will involve the specification of these variables. A preliminary model such as this has several important implications for the overall approach to be taken in this study in that:

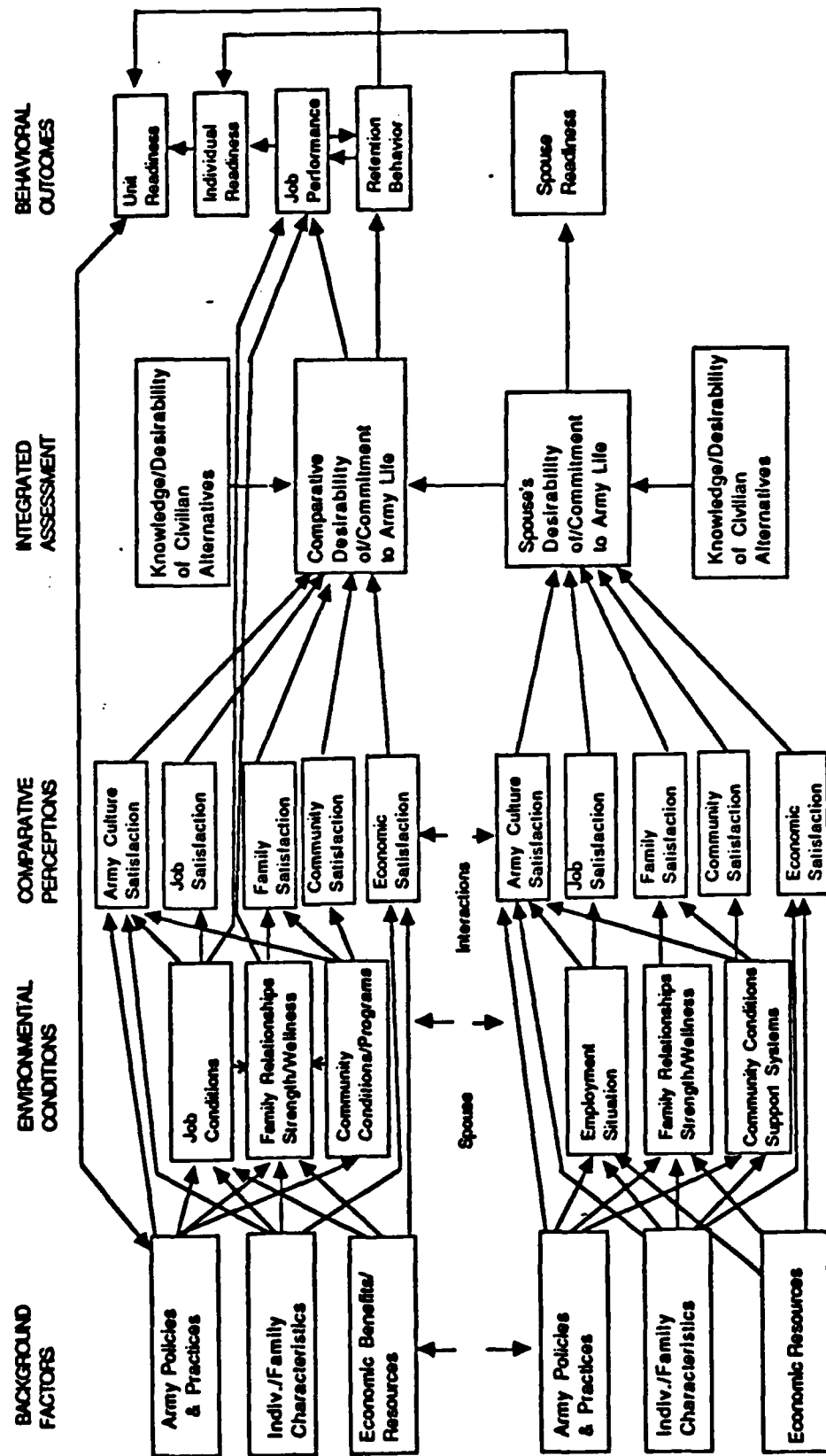
- o It establishes a set of assumed causal linkages leading to the prediction of behaviorally defined outcome variables (retention and readiness).
- o It encompasses in broad terms all of the primary factors presumed to be linked to retention and readiness, including nonfamily factors.

The overall conceptual framework for this study incorporates Army members and spouses into a decision-making system. It is assumed that the retention and job performance/readiness of the active duty Army member are impacted upon by a range of factors that influence that member's behavior and, if married, the member's spouse.

The proposed conceptual framework is built upon the assumptions of several major theoretical models in the social and behavioral sciences. For example, Exchange Theory assumes that individuals make decisions based upon their comparisons between current situational assessments and perceived

FIGURE 2

ELABORATED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ARI ARMY FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM



assessments in alternative situations. Thus, Army job satisfactions are not only defined in terms of existing job evaluations but also in terms of perceived alternatives in the civilian world. Individuals weigh the costs and the rewards of these perceptions on a variety of dimensions and ultimately make a judgement upon which their behavior is based.

In the world of families, however, decision-making is even more complex. Each individual is hypothesized to interpret his or her environment both individually and jointly. Eventual decisions and subsequent behaviors are based upon "maximum joint profit," the perception that certain behaviors will maximally benefit the individuals involved as well as the overall relationship.

The conceptual framework proposed is hypothesized to be primarily recursive. It is recognized, however, that the eventual model that results from the study will undoubtedly exhibit more feedback loops, and these will be hypothesized as various sub-models are developed and tested. Likewise, other variables may be incorporated into the model as their importance becomes apparent through early investigations, secondary analysis of existing data sets and eventual analysis of a more comprehensive data set.

1.3.2 Model Components

For preliminary purposes, five sets of variables are incorporated into the overall conceptual framework. First, there are several background factors that are hypothesized to have an overarching influence on the variables of interest in this study. These include Army policies and practices as well as the individual and family characteristics and economic resources of Army personnel and families. Each of these

factors can vary in the way they are experienced by families and subsequently influence family decisions about Army life.

The background factors identified above are predicted to impact upon the environmental conditions that circumscribe Army members and families. These environmental conditions include the quality of the family's own relationships, including the factors that define its strengths and wellness. Conditions in the local community that determine access to support services or participation in social support networks should influence the quality of family relationships. Also, Army job conditions and demands are predicted to impact upon the family relationships, as well as on the job performance of personnel.

The conditions that define one's situation are hypothesized to influence comparative perceptions of Army and civilian life, including relative satisfaction with the organizational culture, the job, family and community life and one's economic situation. In each of these areas, it is expected that individuals and families make comparative judgements based upon their definitions of their current situation and hypothetical alternatives in a civilian context.

As a consequence of making comparative judgements that generate satisfaction or dissatisfaction with quality of life, individuals and families form an assessment of the comparative desirability of Army life. This is hypothesized to result from the comparative perceptions of their current situation and the perceived desirability and knowledge of civilian alternatives. Both the member and the spouse are expected to make their own judgements about this comparative desirability of Army life and the member is hypothesized to take the spouse's assessment into account in making further military career commitments.

Individual job commitments, retention behaviors and job performance should be products of the preceding factors and the subsequent decisions upon which they are based. It is recognized in the conceptual framework that job performance can be directly influenced by job conditions and family relationships as well as by perceptions of the desirability of Army life. In addition, individual and unit readiness can be influenced by more than job performance and should also be viewed directly as a consequence of readiness factors stimulated by Army policies and practices, including equipment quality, maintenance, transportation adequacy and so on.

1.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY

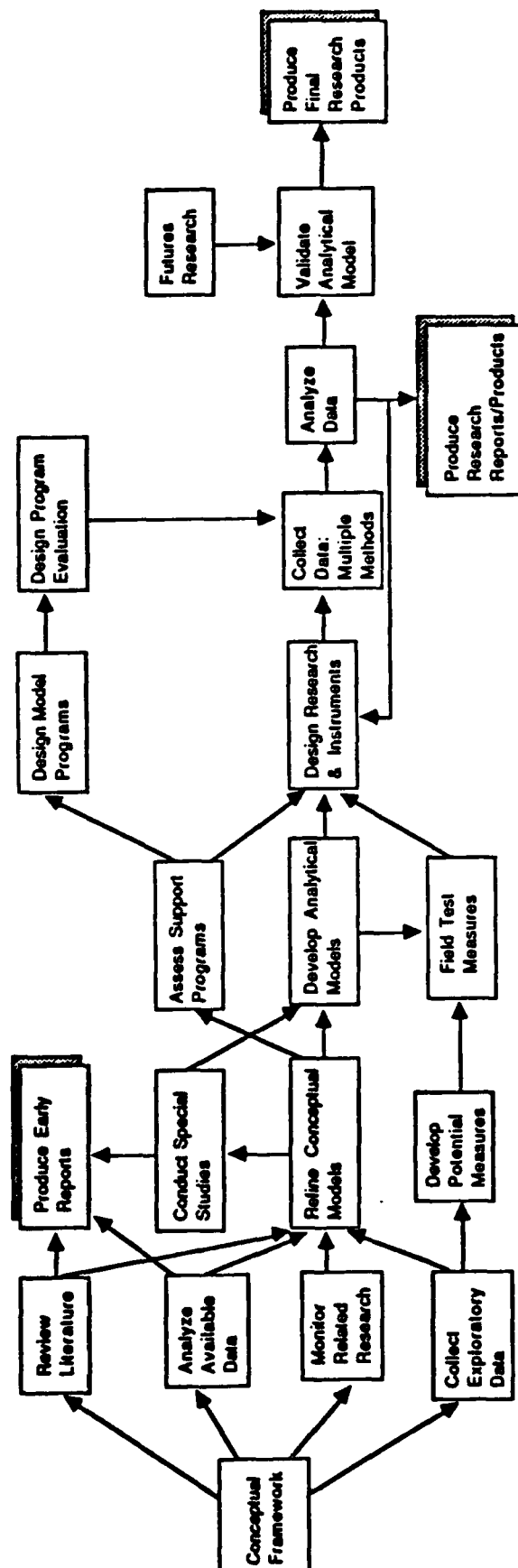
The work conducted under the first year of the ARI Family Research Program is designed to initiate the efforts that will accomplish the intermediate and long range objectives of the project. As described in the conceptual framework for the study, the ultimate test of the research will be its ability to determine the relative role that family variables play in the retention, readiness and quality of life of Army personnel.

Figure 3 presents a generalized flow diagram of the major functional activities planned for the entire research program. It cuts across the major tasks to be accomplished in the project and, thus, under-represents the many project sub-tasks in order to graphically present the overall sequence of activities to be undertaken.

According to the project flowchart, early activities will center around the specification of sound conceptual frameworks for the research program and the development of usable early products for Army leadership. These outcomes will be

FIGURE 3

ARI FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM:
FLOW OF MAJOR FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES



generated through careful literature reviews, analyses of available data bases, input from Army leadership, exploratory field studies and monitoring of related research studies. In addition, special studies will be developed as opportunities for linking with on-going efforts or other relevant data become available to the project team.

The next step in the research process will be to translate the concepts in the conceptual models into operational measures and analytical models which can be field tested. The measures will then be used to design the research and create the data collection instruments. Data are expected to be collected through a variety of complementary methodologies, including a longitudinal survey, special interview studies, program assessments, evaluation workshops, and case studies. Figure 4 provides a summary of the major research activities that are expected to be undertaken during the project, their expected time frames and the project tasks that plan to use these methodologies.

A variety of data bases will be constructed from the various research activities. These data bases provide the data needed to validate the analytical models, a model estimation activity involving an iterative sequence of estimating model parameters, refining the models and reestimating the parameters. Finally, after taking into account the trend analysis and futures research components of the project, the validated models will lead to a set of research products including research recommendations, policy aids, policy recommendations and program recommendations.

METHODOLOGIES/TASKS

15

Assessments of Community Support Programs

[illegible]

Task 2

Task 3

Task 4

Spouse Employment Model Program Evaluation

Task 4

Readiness Evaluation Workshops

Task 3

Key MOS Survey

Task 2

Trends Analysis/Futures Research

Task 5

1.5 RESEARCH OUTCOMES

The Family Research Program should have a major impact on the Army's understanding of the nature of its partnership with its families. Ultimately, it should lead to:

- o New models for programs and policies that can increase family wellness and enhance spouse employment
- o New measures and systems to evaluate the value of family-related programs to the families and the Army
- o New models for designing Army communities that meet soldier, family and Army needs
- o New tools for making resource allocation decisions based on expected returns in retention and readiness.

Overall, there are over 20 major technical reports for the four substantive tasks in the core program, and numerous interim products. Figure 5 summarizes the topics and potential applications of some of the major final products of each task.

FIGURE 5

ARI FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM

OVERVIEW OF LONG-RANGE OUTCOMES

<u>TASK</u>	<u>MAJOR PRODUCTS</u>	<u>APPLICATIONS</u>
1. STRONG FAMILIES	Identification of Strong Families and Families Most in Need of Support Techniques and Model Programs for Building Strong Families Advantages of Family Strength	Assists in setting service priorities and objectives for support programs and training for family program managers Assists in designing and evaluating specific programs and leadership practices most likely to strengthen families Assists in determining the value to the Army of attempts to create stronger families
2. RETENTION	Relationship of Army Programs, Policies, and Practices to Retention Factors That Influence Army Family Career Decisionmaking	Assists in establishing priorities among specific programs that affect career decisionmaking; provides input to changes in overall personnel policies related to retention Identifies changes in family programs, and training of family program staff that would enhance retention of high performers

TASK

MAJOR PRODUCTS

APPLICATIONS

3. READINESS

Relationship of Family Phenomena to Readiness

Helps identify ways that Army can modify work demands or support families so that families will be more supportive of soldier productivity and readiness

Relationship of Army Family Policies, Programs and Practices to Readiness

Assists in evaluating readiness payoffs to Army of investments in alternative family support programs and policies

4. SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

Factors Predicting Successful Spouse Employment

Helps identify policies and services likely to have the greatest impact in meeting spouse employment needs

Relationship of Spouse Employment Success to Career Decisionmaking

Assists in evaluating relative advantages to the Army of programs targeted specifically at enhancing employment success

Design and Evaluation of Model Spouse Employment Assistance Programs

Assists in designing specific services to be included in Army-wide spouse employment assistance programs; provides information on the effects of selected Army organizational practices, such as child care center operation, on spouse employment success

2. PROJECT WORK PLANS

The activities planned for the first year of the research program are designed to take maximum advantage of existing studies and data bases on military families (e.g., the DoD family survey) that have not yet been fully exploited. By linking data bases and conducting new analyses, we will be able to test key hypotheses in the conceptual model and gain many new insights about family strength, spouse employment, retention, and readiness. This approach will make most efficient use of existing Army family research resources and will also help develop a targeted, long-range research plan that will maximize the return on the Army family research investment. Another benefit of this eclectic approach will be the capability to produce a series of digest-style reports for Army policy and program practitioners that summarize the most up-to-date information available about selected Army family issues and their relationship to retention and readiness.

Only one major original data collection effort is scheduled to begin in the first year. This involves collecting data on family formation and family issues from samples of first-term soldiers for whom retention and performance data is being captured under another major ARI research program, "Project A" (Selection and Classification Research). This effort will provide data on families and readiness that is not available from any other source. Furthermore, because we will be capitalizing on ongoing Project A data collection efforts, this sub-study can be conducted very cost-effectively. There will be other small-scale field data collection efforts for each task. These will involve use of focus groups and in-depth interviews to explore new hypotheses and develop new measures for future family research.

The following sections provide detailed descriptions of the products, activities, and schedules for each of the five major project tasks: Strong/Well Families, Retention, Readiness, Spouse Employment, and Project Integration. Each task will engage in similar first-year activities in order to build and test hypotheses for future research and generate reports on key findings. These activities include: rigorous literature reviews and analyses, analyses of existing data bases, exploratory interviews and focus groups, and production of summary, integrative reports for both policy/program and research audiences.

Figure 6 summarizes the key products that will result from these activities. This schedule includes the development and delivery of more early products than originally planned in the Statement of Work and Proposal. All dates indicated here and elsewhere in this section refer to the date by which drafts will be submitted to ARI for review.

2.1 TASK 1: IDENTIFICATION OF STRONG/WELL FAMILIES AND THE MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT THEM

The primary objective for Task 1 in the first project year is to develop, field test and refine a conceptual model of the antecedents and consequences of strong/well families in the Army. This model will include:

- o Characteristics of strong/well families
- o Identification of "at risk" families for Army services
- o Determination of the advantages of strong/well families
- o Identification of informal support mechanisms for families

FIGURE 6

ARI FAMILY RESEARCH PROGRAM: YEAR ONE PRODUCTS

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>DATE</u>
I. Literature Reviews Tasks 1-4	6/87
II. Reports on Secondary Data Analyses Tasks 1-4	7/87
III. Summary Reports on Research Implications for Program Managers Tasks 1-5	9/87
IV. Working Papers	
Task 1: Conceptual Model and Measurement Issues for Family Strength	11/87
Task 2: Preliminary New Annual Cost of Leaving (ACOL) Model (using the family as the unit of analysis)	11/87
Task 3: Project A Coordination Plan	7/87
Task 4: Progress Report on Family Readiness Survey of First Term Soldiers	11/87
Task 5: Catalogue of Military Family Data Bases	4/87
Priorities for Army Family Research	4/87
Future Trends Affecting Planning for Family Programs and Research	7/87
V. Contract Deliverables	
Task 2: Characteristics of Stayers and Leavers (interim report for TR 9, including preliminary models of family factors, programs and retention)	11/87

PRODUCT

DATE

Task 3:	Measures of Individual and Unit Readiness (TR 11)	11/87
Task 4:	Employment Status/Earnings of Army Spouses (TR 14)	11/87
Task 5:	Annual Research Plans	2/87 & 10/87
	Integration Report (on knowledge gained, models developed, and implications for future research, RRI)	10/87

- o Operational definitions of key Army and family concepts related to strength/wellness.

The conceptual model will provide the foundation for future research in this area.

A variety of methods will be used to inform and guide model development, including:

- o Literature reviews
- o Secondary data analyses
- o Expert/user consultation
- o Individual and focus group interviews with Army families, leaders and service providers.

A sequential ordering of the first year sub-tasks is presented in Figure 7 on the following page.

2.1.1 Task 1 Products

Task 1 products in the first year are summarized in the table following the functional overview.

2.1.2 Task 1 Activities

To achieve the first year objective as described above, six major sub-tasks will be completed:

- o Conduct literature review
- o Consult with experts/users
- o Conduct secondary data analyses
- o Develop draft conceptual model
- o Field test conceptual model

FIGURE 7

TASK 1. STRONG/WELL FAMILIES

SEQUENTIAL ORDERING OF YEAR 1 SUB-TASKS

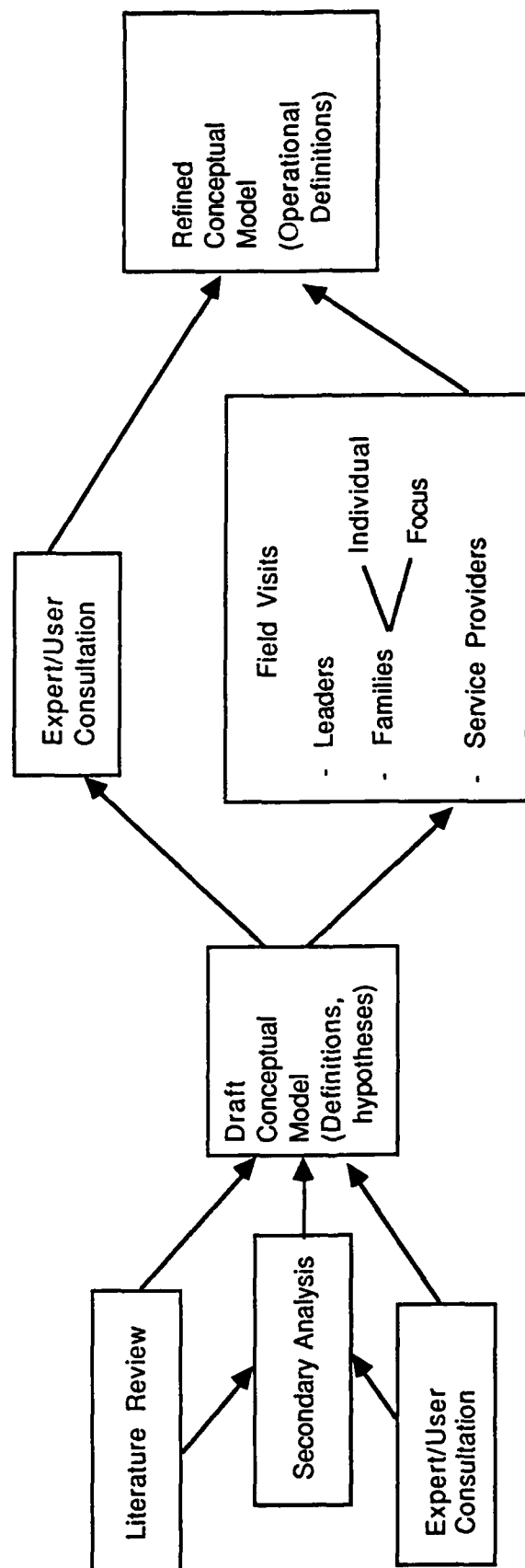


TABLE 1

FIRST YEAR PRODUCTS: TASK 1

I. MAJOR DELIVERABLES	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. User's Summary Report	Brief summary of key findings from the literature review and secondary analyses with identification of program and policy implications (15-20 pages est.)	Army family program personnel	8/15/87
II. WORKING PAPERS	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. Literature Review on Family Strength/Wellness	Detailed analysis of the literature related to the preliminary conceptual model of strong/well families and identification of implications for the model	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	6/15/87
2. Secondary Data Analysis Report	Findings from the analysis of secondary data bases related to the preliminary conceptual model and identification of implications for the model	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	7/15/87
3. Draft Conceptual Model of Strong/Well Families	Conceptual model of strong/well families including definitions, relationships and hypotheses based on the literature review and secondary data analysis findings	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	8/15/87

II. WORKING PAPERS	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
4. Revised Conceptual Model/Measures	Revised conceptual model of strong/well families, including definitions, relationships, hypotheses and preliminary operational measures, based on field test findings	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	11/30/87

- o Revise/refine model.

These subtasks are arrayed in a Year 1 Gantt chart on the following page; each sub-task is summarized in the paragraphs which follow.

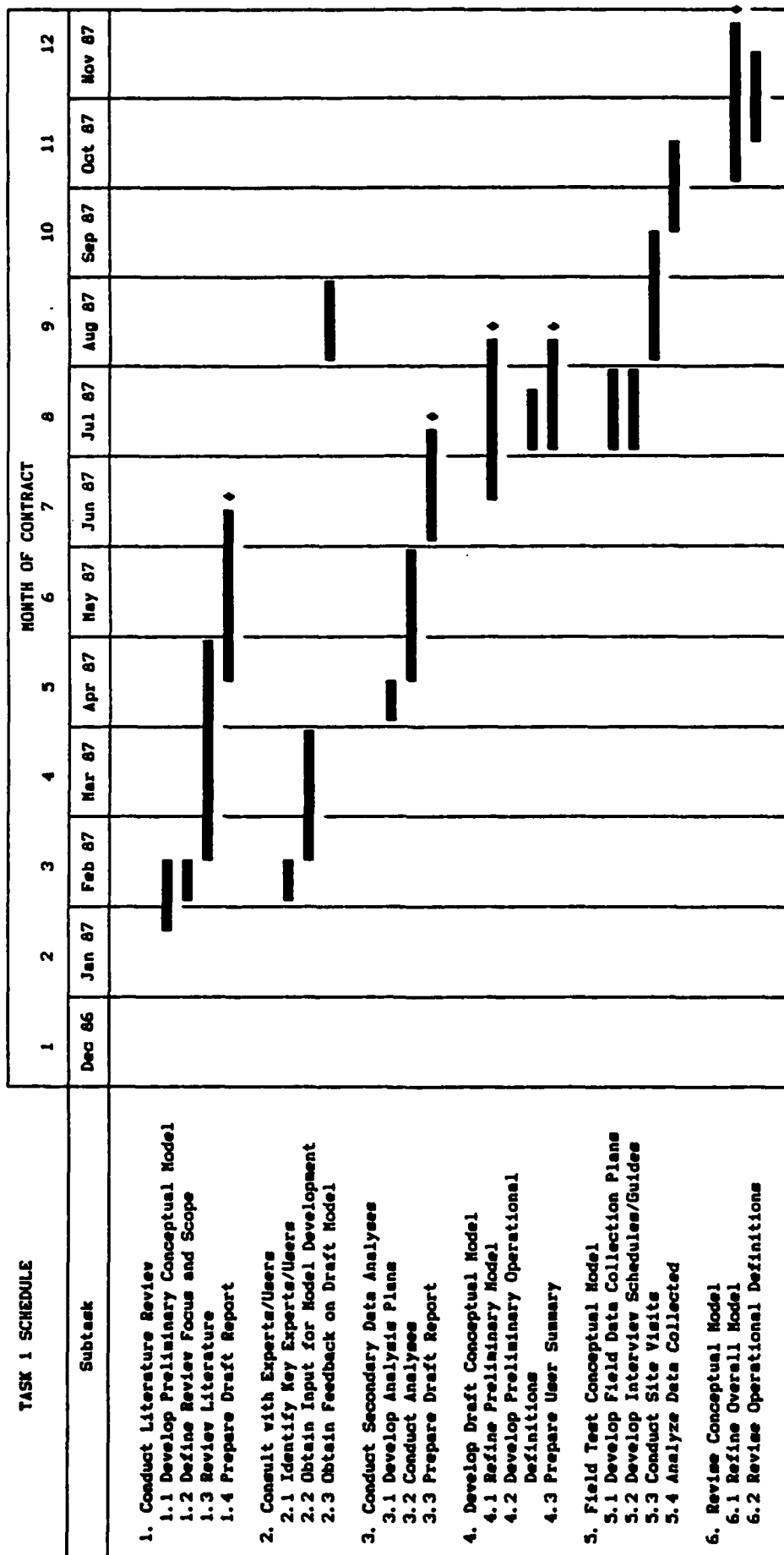
1. Conduct Literature Review

A preliminary conceptual model of strong/well Army families will be developed at the beginning of this subtask to inform and guide the literature review. This theoretical "strawman" will be based largely on military-specific research on both family strength/wellness and family adaptation. It will include conceptual domains of antecedents and consequences of strong/well families, beginning conceptual definitions and specific variable indicators. Based on this preliminary model, the specific focus and scope of the literature review will be defined. A draft outline of the literature review report will be developed to facilitate the definition process. Once the focus and scope of the review is established, the literature review will be conducted. In general, the literature review will involve military and civilian literature related to characteristics of strong/well families, military family stressors, coping styles, advantages of family strength/wellness, and informal support mechanisms for families. The product of this task will be a draft report providing a detailed analysis of the literature and the implications for the conceptual model. The findings from the literature review will help to formulate and refine hypotheses to be tested in the secondary data analysis sub-task.

2. Consult With Experts/Users

Concurrent with the literature review, military and civilian experts in the study of family strength/wellness as

TASK 1 SCHEDULE



■ : Project Activity
♦ : Deliverable

well as likely users of Task 1 products will be consulted. In addition to well known individual experts in family strength/wellness and Army family program managers, representatives from public/private agencies which have sponsored family strength/wellness-related studies or programs, such as ACYF, Armed Forces YMCA, NIMH and CDC, will be consulted. This consultation will inform the secondary analysis of data as well as provide direct input into the draft conceptual model (Subtask 4). The proposed expert/user consultation will be conducted primarily on an individual basis, although one or more special, focus group meetings may be convened if indicated. Experts and users would also be consulted in the ninth project month, after the draft conceptual model is developed to obtain feedback on the model as proposed.

3. Conduct Secondary Analyses

To provide empirical input into the conceptual model, secondary analyses will be conducted with existing data sets, including the DoD Family Survey, 1000 Army Families, and Families in Green. Specific data sets to be included will be selected in consultation with the task monitor and an analysis plan will be developed for each data set. These analysis plans will be based on the propositions formulated in the preliminary conceptual model and on the findings from the literature review, taking into account the known strengths and weaknesses of each data set including specific variables and relationships between variables. The analyses will be conducted interactively; relationships between variables, both within and among conceptual domains, will be pursued which are theoretically logical and which appear promising from earlier analyses. A variety of descriptive and inferential statistical procedures will potentially be utilized: frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, multi-factor

ANOVA, multiple regression, factor analysis, log-linear analysis and LISREL. A draft report on the findings from the secondary data analysis and the implications for the conceptual model will be prepared at the conclusion of this sub-task.

4. Develop Draft Conceptual Model

Based on an integrative analysis of the results from the literature review (subtask 1), consultation with experts/users (subtask 2), and the secondary analysis (subtask 3), the preliminary conceptual model developed as part of subtask 1 will be refined, revised and expanded as appropriate. Preliminary operational definitions of key variables in the model will be developed in this sub-task. The refined draft conceptual model will be presented in a working paper at the end of the eighth project month. In addition, an integrated user's summary of key findings from the literature review and secondary analyses will be developed for dissemination to Army family program managers.

5. Field Test Conceptual Model

The draft conceptual model will then be "field-tested" so that the concepts, definitions and hypotheses can be explored. The field test will involve interviews with Army leaders, service providers and families representative of different family types and stages in the family life cycle. Data would be obtained primarily through focus group interviews, supplemented by intensive individual interviews with a small subsample of Army families to obtain in-depth data on family strengths/wellness. Field visits are proposed for two CONUS and one OCONUS sites. Prior to the site visits, full data collection plans and protocols, including interview guides and schedules, will be developed. Data collected in the field

visits will be analyzed by a combination of methods including descriptive frequency analysis and content analysis. The summarized information will then be compared to the results from both the secondary analyses and the literature review, and the implications for the conceptual model identified.

6. Revise Conceptual Model

Based on the results of the field visits and additional input from consultation with experts/users, a revised conceptual model of the antecedents and consequences of Army family strength/wellness will be developed. As the major product in the first year research agenda for Task 1, the model will include conceptual and operational definitions of key variables, a summary of theoretical and empirical support for key variable linkages, and suggestions for further model refinement and specification. A special focus of the report on the revised conceptual model will be to highlight challenging measurement issues to be faced in the development of operational measures for each variable in the model. These measures, to be developed and tested early in year 2, will be critical to the development of the models for Tasks 2 and 3.

2.2 TASK 2: RETENTION

The first year objectives for the retention task are to:

- o Assess the current state of knowledge about retention and factors affecting retention,
- o Develop a conceptual model of factors affecting retention,
- o Produce early special reports that address selected issues about retention,
- o Distinguish individual and family characteristics of personnel who remain in the Army and who leave the Army,

- o Analyze effects of individual, family, and other factors on retention plans and retention choices,
- o Extend theoretical Annualized Cost Of Leaving (ACOL) model, to incorporate the family as the unit of analysis,
- o Develop hypotheses about factors and issues that affect retention decision processes.

These objectives will be achieved using a variety of approaches that include:

- o Review and synthesis of extant literature,
- o Secondary analyses of existing data with primary emphasis on the 1985 DoD Active Duty Surveys,
- o Focus group interviews.

The first year's activities will provide current knowledge about key aspects of retention and will provide a solid foundation and framework on which to build future efforts in the following years.

2.2.1 Task 2 Products

Table 2 summarizes the major Task 2 products planned for the first year of project work.

2.2.2 Task 2 Activities

To accomplish the first year objectives for Task 2, a series of activities will be undertaken. The schedule for these tasks is shown in the accompanying Gantt chart and the activities are described below.

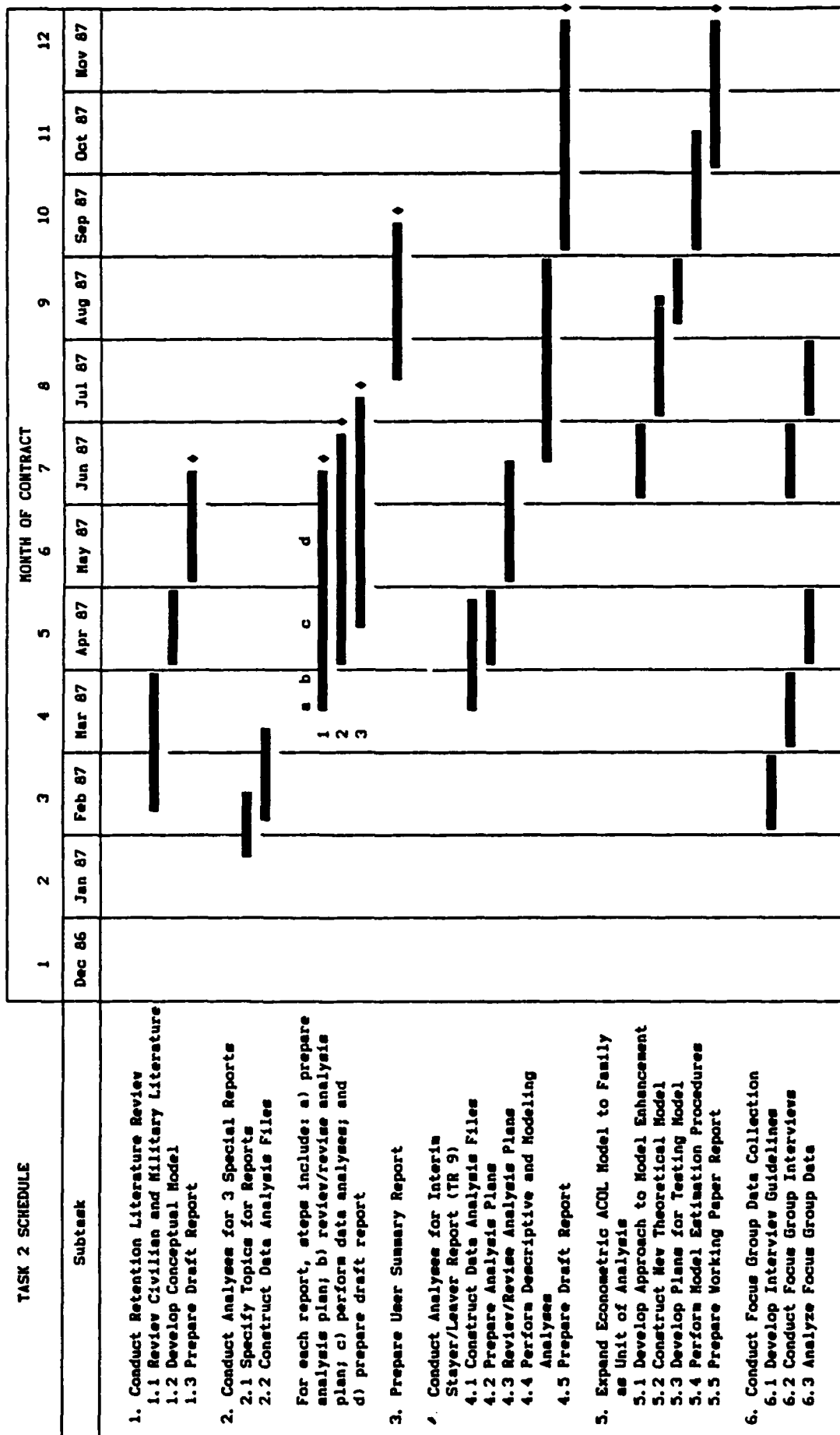
TABLE 2

FIRST YEAR PRODUCTS: TASK 2

I. MAJOR DELIVERABLES	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. User's Summary	Summary of knowledge of key issues based on literature review and secondary data analysis	CFSC, Family program personnel	9/15/87
2. TR9: Interim Report on Leavers and Stayers	Descriptive analysis and multivariate modeling of factors associated with leaving or staying in the Army, using secondary analyses of 1985 DoD surveys. Analyses will provide initial test of conceptual model and will examine socio-demographic characteristics, military experience factors, military lifestyle factors, economic factors, and family factors	DCSPER, CFSC, ARI, RAND	11/30/87

II. WORKING PAPERS	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. Literature Review	Current state of knowledge about retention in civilian and military settings; conceptual model of retention	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	6/15/87
2. "Early Product" Reports	Special reports on selected topics including: family and career life cycle and retention; rotation experience and retention; economic situation and retention. Reports will contain selected tabulations from secondary analyses; brief discussion; graphics.	CFSC and Army staff with family policy or program responsibilities	7/15/87
3. ACOL Model Development	Present extended, theoretical Annualized Cost of Leaving (ACOL) model to incorporate the family as a unit of analysis and provide preliminary estimates of the model using '85 DoD survey data	DCSPER, ARI, RAND	11/30/87

TASK 2 SCHEDULE



■ : Project Activity
 ♦ : Deliverable

1. Conduct retention literature review

An initial step in developing a knowledge base for Task 2 will be to review the literature and research relating to retention. This will include reviews of both civilian and military reports. The relevant literature will be identified through bibliographic research, consultation with research staff, program staff, and journal reviews. Literature will be examined across a variety of disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, and economics). A report will be prepared that synthesizes the literature and is organized by topics and hypothesized relationships. The report will result in the specification of a conceptual model of retention.

2. Conduct analyses for Early Product Reports

Three special reports on key issues are proposed as early products. Those will be short user-oriented descriptive reports based primarily on analyses of the Army data from the 1985 DoD Active Duty Surveys. Proposed topics for the reports include: Family and career life cycle and retention; Rotation experience and retention; Economic situation of Army personnel and retention; Dual military couples and retention. Prior to conducting analyses, an outline of the proposed contents including planned analyses and sample table shells will be prepared and approved for each special report.

3. Prepare User Summary Report

Based on the literature review and early product reports, a 10-20 page user summary report will be prepared that highlights key findings on retention for Army family program managers.

4. Conduct Analyses for Interim Stayer/Leaver Report (TR #9)

This report will focus on identifying distinguishing characteristics of individuals who remain in the Army and characteristics of those who leave the Army. A number of factors will be tested to measure their association with members' intent and actual retention behavior, including demographic factors, military experience factors, military lifestyle factors, economic factors, and family factors. The report will be based on analyses of the 1985 DoD Surveys augmented with actual retention data from Army Master files. Data analyses will move from simple descriptive crosstabulations to more sophisticated multivariate modeling. Various models will be tested including econometric models based on available data and the conceptual model constructed from the literature review.

5. Expand Econometric ACOL Model

The econometric Annualized Cost of Leaving (ACOL) model has been a useful tool for assessing effects of economic factors on retention. The current ACOL2 model, however, is still based on individual level data. As part of the retention task, the ACOL2 model will be expanded to incorporate the family as the unit of analysis. The first step will be to develop the theoretical model and the second step will be to provide a preliminary estimate of the model using data from the 1985 DoD surveys.

6. Conduct Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews will be conducted with members and spouses to learn about factors perceived to influence retention decisions and the process by which those factors operate. Timing depends on the final resolution of troop

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Focus group interviews will be conducted with members and spouses to learn about factors perceived to influence retention decisions and the process by which those factors operate. Timing depends on the final resolution of troop

support requests. Initial work will be conducted in March at a FORSCOM installation; June 87 is assumed for other installations. An interview protocol will be developed that provides flexibility, yet incorporates key content areas. Analyses will attempt to look for themes, patterns, and variation among different types of families represented in the interviews. Results and hypotheses will be summarized in a paper that will provide insights into retention decision-making processes.

2.2.3 Other Issues

Interest has been expressed by the DCSPER in studying the question of attrition from Reserve TPUs to the Inactive Ready Reserve (IRR). Alternative approaches are being considered that can fit the scope of the Year 1 activities and that will provide useful information about Reserve TPU attritees. Conducting selected analyses of existing data (if relevant data can be identified) is the preferred approach to satisfying this request.

2.3 TASK 3: FAMILY FACTORS AND READINESS

The overall purpose of Task 3 is to build the tools which can be used by both researchers and Army policy makers to relate family phenomena and Army family policies/programs to individual and unit readiness. The research objectives during year 1 of the task are to:

- 1) Solidify Task 3 research plans;
- 2) Update the literature review on research and studies relating family factors to readiness and job performance;
- 3) Coordinate and synthesize existent data bases and specific items relating family factors to readiness;

- 4) Develop working definitions and hypotheses regarding the relationship between individual and unit readiness;
- 5) Develop initial measures of individual and unit readiness, as well as related military environment, civilian community, and family program variables; and
- 6) Develop and initiate implementation of data collection strategies to capture information on family factors and readiness from first-term enlistees who are part of ARI's Project A longitudinal validation sample.

2.3.1 Task 3 Products

Table 3 on the following page summarizes the major Task 3 products planned for the first project year.

2.3.2 Task 3 Activities

To meet the objectives outlined above, five major subtasks will be undertaken during the first year. The major activities in each subtask are listed in the year 1 Gantt chart for Task 3. The work in each subtask is summarized below.

1. Identify Relevant Variables and Measurement Techniques

This subtask includes a literature review and the development of a 10 to 20 page users guide and the Year 1 research plan. The content of this subtask revolves around the identification of relevant studies and data bases, the establishment of potential measures, and the planning for short and long-term survey efforts. Under this subtask, a plan will be developed specifying how ARI's Project A and the Family Project can integrate their data collection and analysis activities to the advantage of both projects. The

TABLE 3

FIRST YEAR PRODUCTS: TASK 3

I. MAJOR DELIVERABLES	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. User's Guide to Family Readiness	Brief summary of the implications of known family factor/readiness linkages for family program managers.	CFSC & local programs	8/31/87
2. TR 11: Measuring Readiness and Related Family Phenomena	Descriptions of preliminary measures of individual, spouse, and unit readiness, family phenomena, and environmental and family program factors that are likely to impact readiness. The rationale for the selection of the particular measures will be presented.	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	11/30/87
II. WORKING PAPERS	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. Literature Review: Army Families and Readiness	Summary of research on family factors impacting readiness	ARI, WRAIR, RAND & CFSC	6/15/87
2. ARI Family and Project A Joint Research Activities	Detailed plans for integrating ARI Family and Project A data collection and data base usage	ARI, WRAIR, RAND & CFSC	7/31/87
3. Family Factors in AIT Performance: Initial Findings	Report summarizing progress of survey of trainees in Project A longitudinal validation cohort	CFSC, ARI, & DCSPER	11/30/87

TASK 3 SCHEDULE

MONTH OF CONTRACT											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Dec 86	Jan 87	Feb 87	Mar 87	Apr 87	May 87	Jun 87	Jul 87	Aug 87	Sep 87	Oct 87	Nov 87
Subtask											
1. Identify Relevant Variables and Measurement Techniques 1.1 Prepare Year 1 Research Plan 1.2 Review Literature 1.3 Write Draft Literature Review 1.4 Draw Up List of Measurable Variables 1.5 Prepare User Summary Report 1.6 Prepare Input to Year 1 Integration Report 1.7 Conduct IPR and Prepare Year 1 Report 1.8 Prepare Report on Integration of ARI Family and Project A Data Collection and Usage											
2. Develop Individual and Unit Readiness Measures 2.1 Identify Measurement Vehicles 2.2 Develop Observation Form, Questionnaire Items, Performance Scales, Personnel Record Form, etc. 2.3 Conduct Critical Incident and Evaluation Workshops											
3. Develop Relevant Family and Soldier Phenomena Measures 3.1 Identify Measurement Vehicles 3.2 Develop Observation Form, Questionnaire Items, Performance Scales, Personnel Record Form, etc. 3.3 Conduct Critical Incident and Evaluation Workshops											
4. Develop Relevant Family Program Measures 4.1 Identify Measurement Vehicles 4.2 Develop Observation Form, Questionnaire Items, Performance Scales, Personnel Record Form, etc. 4.3 Conduct Critical Incident and Evaluation Workshops											
5. Develop and Administer AIT Graduate Survey 5.1 Develop AIT Survey 5.2 Administer AIT Survey (Estimated) 5.3 Prepare Preliminary Report on Trainee Survey											

■ : Project Activity
 ◆ : Deliverable

year 1 IPR and input to the year-end integration report are also included under this subtask.

2. Develop Individual and Unit Readiness Measures

This subtask will lead to the delivery of TR 11 "Definition and Measures of Individual and Unit Readiness and Family Phenomena Affecting it." The first step in producing this deliverable is to identify what readiness is and to clarify which elements of individual readiness relate to unit readiness. The concept of spouse readiness will also be sufficiently delineated to allow the development of measures of this important construct. These steps will be accomplished through interviews of knowledgeable Army personnel, case studies, focus group interviews, critical incident workshops, and analysis of extant data. Field visit information will be integrated with existent data analysis and literature review information to arrive at these definitions and measures. The draft measures for readiness (individual, unit, and spouse) will be presented at the first year IPR and will contribute to TR 11.

3. Develop Relevant Family and Soldier Phenomena Measures

This subtask will initiate the delivery of TR 12, "Conceptual and Analytical Models Relating Family Phenomena to Readiness." Although the deliverable is due 1,095 days after contract award, work will begin in the first year on the development of measures. These measures will be developed in conjunction with developmental efforts in Task 1. The family and soldier phenomena that are to be looked at will track elements of the Soldier Career Cycle and family factors directly related to readiness. Both quantitative and qualitative data gathering methods will be relied upon to

develop the draft measures, which will also be presented in the first year IPR.

4. Develop Relevant Family Program Measures

This subtask will contribute to the ultimate delivery of TR-13, "Conceptual and Analytic Models Relating Family Programs to Readiness". The deliverable will address: the impact of family programs on readiness over the short, intermediate, and long-term; the direct and indirect costs and benefits of family programs on readiness; and what models that currently exist or that will be developed in this task are of value in measuring these relationships on performance. The research will begin in the first year and will rely on the same data gathering methods as other subtasks along with measures of family program use, value and impact on soldier and unit readiness. The selection of the measures that will be developed will be accomplished within the context of an initial overall framework relating family programs to readiness. There will be close cooperation with Tasks 1 and 5 in establishing a benchmark model of how family programs impact family wellness and other key elements of the conceptual model at various stages of the SCC and FLC.

5. Develop and Administer AIT Graduate Survey

This subtask will begin with the development of a pilot survey to be administered to Advanced Individual Training (AIT) graduates who are part of an existing Project A sample (the FY 86/87 longitudinal validation cohort which consists of approximately 40,000 soldiers in 21 Military Occupational Specialities). The AIT survey will allow the ARI family program to integrate its effort with Project A from the outset of the contract. Further, the AIT information will provide baseline data for other surveys to be conducted in the Family

Project and in conjunction with Project A. The timing of the start of data collection activities will be dependent on the resolution of issues of data collection coordination with Project A.

2.4 TASK 4: SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT

Key objectives for Task 4 in Year 1 include:

- o Synthesize current research and theory on civilian and military spouse employment and employment programs, to develop conceptual model, identify knowledge gaps, and develop hypotheses for research
- o Determine information needs of program and policy personnel, other users
- o Assess potential use of existing data sets for spouse employment analysis
- o Review measures relating to spouse employment and develop additional measures as needed for new data collection
- o Conduct secondary analyses of existing data sets to provide basic information on spouse employment, develop models of spouse employment status, and develop preliminary information on spouse employment success/careers
- o Develop information on spouse employment programs, for use in model development and in preparation of program information
- o Collect and analyze information on spouse employment problems and programs from personnel in the field
- o Conduct focus groups on spouse employment problems, factors, success, programs, with spouses of officers and enlisted personnel at installations.

These objectives will be achieved using a variety of approaches, which include:

- o Review and synthesis of extant literature

- o Secondary analysis of existing data, including the 1985 DoD Spouse Survey and the Current Population Survey
- o Focus group interviews.

2.4.1 Task 4 Products

Table 4 summarizes the major Task 4 products planned for the first year of project work.

2.4.2 Task 4 Activities

To accomplish the first year objectives for Task 4, a series of activities will be undertaken. The schedule for these tasks is shown in the accompanying Gantt chart.

1. Develop knowledge base

Activities include reviewing theory, past research, and on-going research relating to spouse employment status, careers, employment success, and relation of spouse employment to other phenomena. Both military and civilian literatures will be reviewed. Topics include: definition/measurement of employment, underemployment, careers, success; similarities/differences in civilian and military spouse employment; economic, sociological, psychological, other models and perspectives; conceptual model development/integration; established results, gaps in knowledge, hypotheses. The literature review will be provided as an early product of this task.

2. Review existing data sets

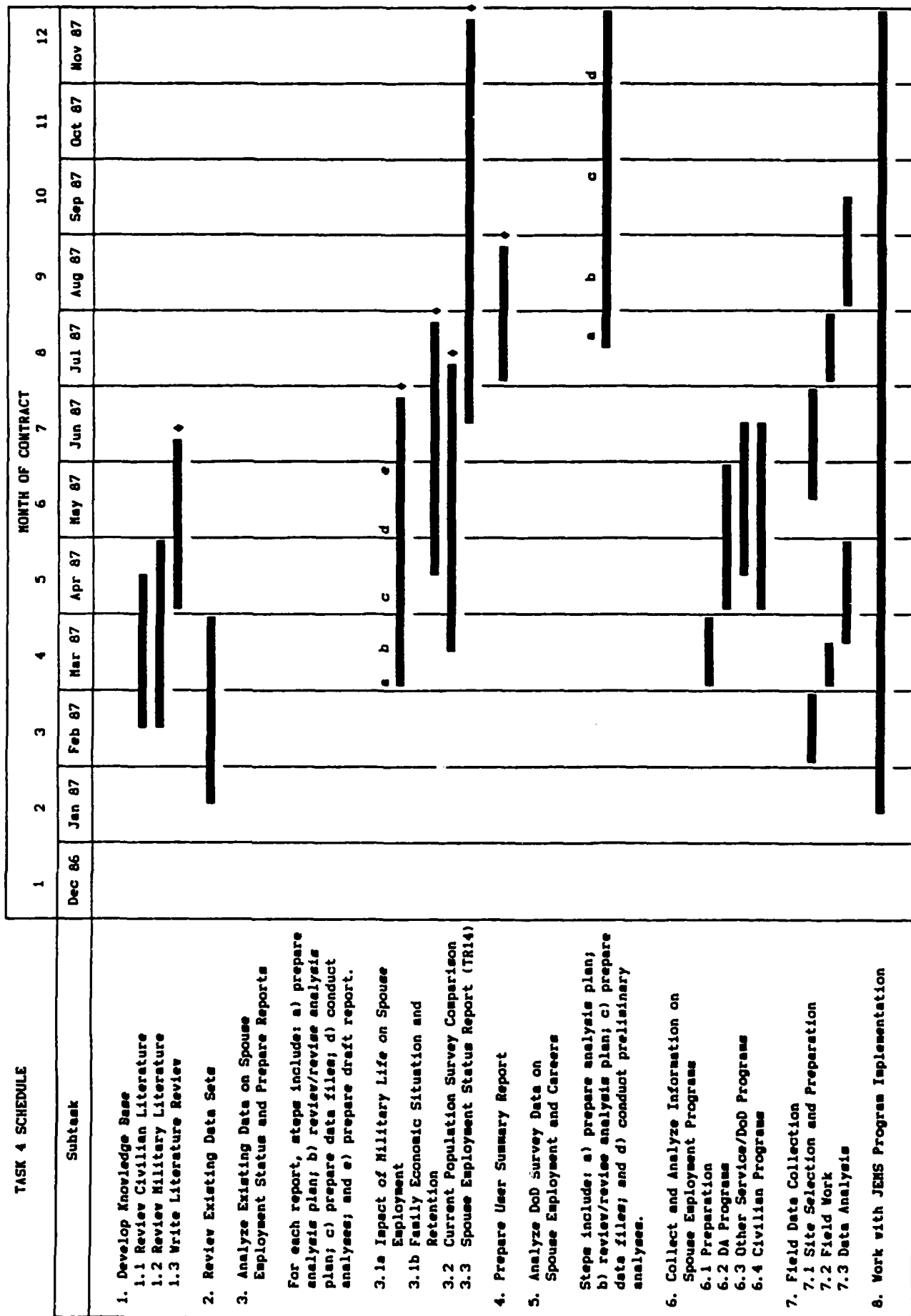
Potentially useful data sets will be identified and reviewed for possible use in this task. The review will cover

TABLE 4

FIRST YEAR PRODUCTS: TASK 4

I. MAJOR DELIVERABLES		CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1.	TR 14: Report on Spouse Employment Status	Multivariate analyses of spouse employment status/earnings	CFSC, DSCPER	11/30/87
2.	User's Summary Report	Brief summary of findings on spouse employment based on literature analyses and secondary analyses	CFSC, Family program personnel	8/31/87
II. WORKING PAPERS		CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1.	Research Summary	Current state of knowledge about spouse employment in civilian and military settings; conceptual model	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	6/15/87
2.	Report on Impact of Military Life on Spouse Employment	Results of secondary analyses of 1985 DoD spouse survey	CFSC, Family program personnel	6/30/87
3.	Report on Comparison with Civilian Spouse Employment	Results of analyses of Current Population Survey	CFSC, DCSPER, Family program personnel	7/15/87
4.	Report on Family Economic Situation and Retention (with Task 2)	Results of secondary analyses of 1985 DoD survey data	CFSC, DCSPER, Family program personnel	7/31/87

TASK 4 SCHEDULE



■ : Project Activity
◆ : Deliverable

both military data sets and civilian ones. Civilian data sets to be reviewed include: Current Population Survey; National Longitudinal Surveys; Panel Study of Income Dynamics; and Survey of Income and Program Participation. Input will be provided to the catalogue of military family data bases.

3. Analyze existing data on spouse employment status

3.1 Analyses of the 1985 DoD Spouse Survey data will be used to prepare an "early product" report on the impact of military life on spouse employment (indicated as 3.1a in the accompanying Gantt chart). In addition, the Task 4 team will collaborate with the Task 2 team to develop a report on family economic situation and retention, using the 1985 DoD Survey data (3.1b).

3.2 Analyses of data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) will be used to provide a comparison of civilian employment with the military spouse employment analyses carried out in 3.1. This will be provided as a working paper for this task.

3.3 Spouse employment status report (TR14). Based on the analyses carried out in 3.1 and 3.2, and on further analyses and modeling, the report on spouse employment status will be prepared. This report will include preliminary analyses (definitions of employment status; relationship of individual, family life cycle (FLC), soldier career cycle (SCC), and other factors to employment status; measures of work and career orientation; measurement of retention plans and other phenomena; relation of spouse employment to retention plans); descriptive analyses and comparisons by such factors as FLC, location, and spouse and member characteristics; and the estimation of models of determinants of spouse employment status outcomes.

4. Develop user summary report on spouse employment

Task 4 will produce the user summary report on spouse employment for program managers. This will be based on the literature review, secondary analyses and other task activities.

5. Analyze DoD survey data: Spouse employment success/
careers

Work on this activity will contribute to the preparation of the report on spouse employment success, scheduled for delivery in Year 2. During Year 1 we will plan and carry out the preliminary analyses relating to spouse employment success and spouse career development, using data from the 1985 DoD Spouse Survey, with comparisons with the civilian population based on the Current Population Survey. The analyses of data on spouse employment success will extend the analyses of spouse employment status.

6. Collect and analyze information on spouse employment
programs

This includes two types of activity: (1) identify, obtain and review documents; and (2) discuss spouse employment problems, programs, policy and resource issues, and information needs with knowledgeable people in DA, other Services, DoD, other organizations. This work will develop information on spouse employment programs, and will provide the basis for planning and carrying out the field data collection planned for this task for Year 1.

7. Field data collection

This includes two major activities: (1) interviews with relevant personnel at installations (about spouse employment problems, programs, information needs); and (2) focus groups with military spouses. Both activities will be done on the same site visit. We anticipate making site visits at up to 3 sites (2 CONUS, 1 Europe). Specific activities to be undertaken include: site selection and arrangements; the development of interview protocols and focus group guidelines; on-site data collection, and data analysis.

8. Work with JEMS program implementation

The Services have recently begun implementation of a Service-wide employment program (the Joint Employment Service [JEMS] program). Implementation began in Hawaii about 18 months ago, and planning is currently underway for possible implementation in the Washington, D.C. area. The Hawaii implementation is led by the Air Force, with the Army having lead responsibility in the Washington area. This program provides coordination, job bank and other services to satellite Service offices.

Subject to making a final project decision and obtaining needed approvals, we propose to maintain contact with personnel knowledgeable about the JEMS program implementation to monitor its progress and be aware of any evaluation results. Basic activities to be undertaken include: develop information on JEMS implementation in Hawaii and Washington, D.C. area; maintain contact with JEMS evaluation planned in Hawaii; obtain reports, evaluation results, available program statistics, information on future JEMS implementation plans. If deemed appropriate during Year 1, additional work with this program may be undertaken.

2.5 TASK 5: PROJECT INTEGRATION

The Project Integration task has two major objectives:

- o To provide a consistent conceptual and strategic framework to guide Army family research; and
- o To consolidate and disseminate knowledge gained about family factors in retention and readiness.

These objectives are to be met through a variety of methods, including:

- o Development of annual research plans
- o Standardization of common research methods and measures
- o Development of integrated conceptual and analytic models to guide the research and the formulation of policy and program recommendations
- o Development of special reports for both research and program audiences
- o Support of special forums for information dissemination and coordination.

The Project Integration task will be particularly critical during the first year of the project. During this year, the basic research models and strategies for the five-year research program will be established, the project's advisory groups will be created and activated, the format for project reports will be established, and the first knowledge integration reports will be prepared.

2.5.1 Products

Table 5 on the following page summarizes the major products planned for the first project year.

TABLE 5

FIRST YEAR PRODUCTS: TASK 5

I. MAJOR DELIVERABLES	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. Annual Research Plan	Proposed products, research activities, and research strategy	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	
a. First Year Plan			2/13/87
b. Second Year Plan			10/15/87
2. Special Integration Reports (RRI)			
a. Summary Information Reports to Program	Introduction to a series of eye-catching reports by task summarizing what we know about selected topics of interest to Army personnel	All HQ, MACOM and post personnel with family policy or program responsibilities	8/31/87
b. Knowledge Integration Reports	Detailed summary of key findings from the analyses of existing literature and data bases, and description of refined conceptual model(s)	CFSC, ARI, WRAIR, RAND	9/30/87

II. WORKING PAPERS	CONTENT	AUDIENCE	DUE DATE
1. Military Family Data Bases	Listing and description of key characteristics of existing and planned military data bases that are useful for family studies (estimated 30 data bases)	ARI, WRAIR, RAND, Soldier Support Center, CFSC	4/30/87
2. Priorities for Family Research	Summary of key research needs & questions posed by Advisory Group members and other key Army personnel	DCSPER, CFSC, ARI	4/30/87
3. Futures Report	Summary of key trends and projections affecting future Army family policy and assessment of futures research needs	DCSPER, CFSC, Army family program planners	7/31/87

III. MEETINGS & SYMPOSIA	PURPOSE	DATES
1. Steering Groups (3)	Advise project planning	March/April & Oct., 1987
2. Working Group/Coordination Meetings	Review research progress and facilitate coordination of Army-wide & DoD family research	Monthly
3. DoD Family Research Symposia (or equivalent, if held)	Present/summarize knowledge gained on key military family issues	5/87

2.5.2 Task 5 Activities

To reach the objectives outlined above, seven major sub-tasks will be completed during the first year:

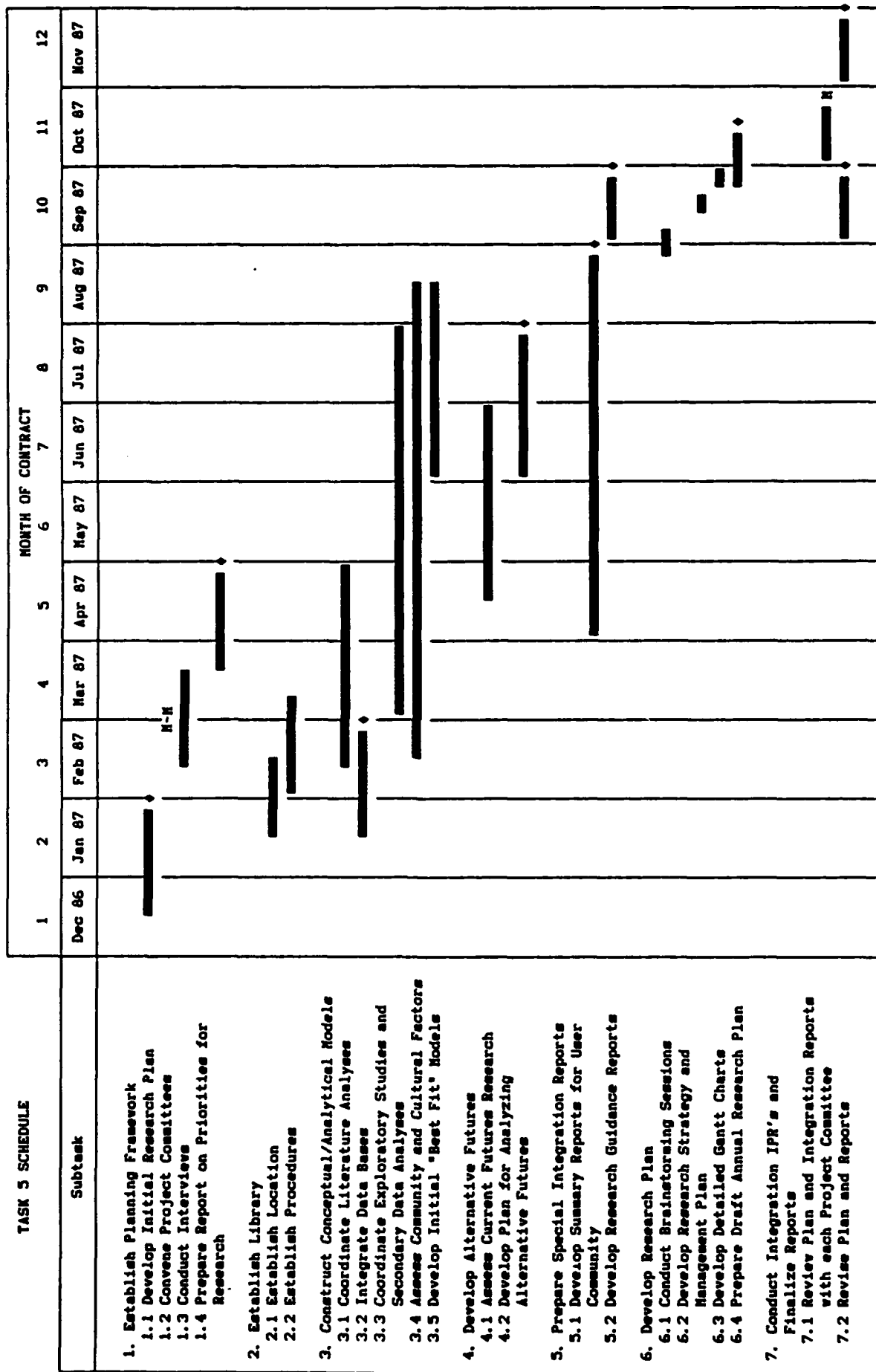
- o Establishing the overall planning framework
- o Establishing an integrated, comprehensive library of civilian and military family research literature
- o Conducting and revising both conceptual and analytic models
- o Assessing and planning for research on future family trends
- o Preparing special integration reports
- o Developing the second year research plan
- o Conducting integration IPR's and finalizing integration reports.

These activities are arrayed in a Year 1 Gantt chart on the following page, and each is summarized in the paragraphs which follow.

1. Establish Planning Framework

This task consists of a series of organizing activities that will lay the groundwork for both Task 5 and overall project activities. It includes development of the first year research plan for the project, as well as organizing and staffing the three formal project steering committees (General Officer, Technical, and External Advisory) to obtain their preliminary input and establish working relationships with each. An informal working committee of key Army family program personnel will also be established to provide more regular interaction on program and research issues.

TASK 3 SCHEDULE



■ : Project Activity
 ♦ : Deliverable
 M : Meeting

Interviews with key program sponsors will be conducted to identify their questions and issue areas so that research efforts can be guided by and responsive to user needs. The results of those interviews and steering committee inputs will be summarized in a working paper on "Priorities for Family Research."

2. Establish Library

This is a straightforward effort in which a suitable location for an integrated family research library will be identified and secured, and procedures established for its implementation and ongoing maintenance. Issues such as coordinating with the Military Family Resource Center, identifying literature sources, and acquiring, cataloging, and storing documents will be explored and resolved. Library procedures should be established by March, 1987.

3. Construct Conceptual/Analytic Models

The activities of this subtask will cover approximately seven months of the first year and constitute the core of the integration effort. A uniform format for conducting literature analyses and data base analyses will be established to support the efforts of the four research tasks. Similarly, a comprehensive list and description of extant data bases will be generated and, to the extent practical, the data bases integrated to support the secondary analyses envisioned for each task. With the knowledge gained from these activities, a series of refinements to both the conceptual and analytic models will result, providing increasingly detailed, more focused sub-models of the various relationships between independent and outcome variables. Additionally, the integration effort will include a review and assessment of a number of community and cultural variables that do not fit

neatly into any of the core tasks, but which will play an important role in predictive modeling. The revised, "best fit" models that result from the coordinated literature reviews and exploratory analyses of this task form the basis of the ongoing research program.

4. Develop Alternative Futures

During the first year, activities will be limited to assessing current knowledge on future trends affecting families and readiness, and determining its implications for this project. Key trends affecting Army planning for families will be identified and existing projection data on those trends (such as that being produced by RAND) will be compiled. Based on the findings of this assessment, which would be conducted approximately mid-year, a plan will be developed for incorporating and analyzing alternative futures in subsequent years research efforts.

5. Prepare Special Integration Reports

The activities of this task involve the preparation and dissemination of acquired knowledge-to-date on family issues. As outlined above in the products list, two types of reports will be generated, for two different audiences. The first, summary reports for the user community, will be digest-style booklets which highlight and describe the essence of what is known in the key research areas (e.g., retention or spouse employment) and what questions and issues remain to be addressed. The first year prototype will form the basis for a series of summary reports to be produced over the life of the contract. The other special integration reports will be more traditional technical reports summarizing research findings across tasks, reporting on progress in model development, and analyzing implications for future research. The summary and

special integration reports will be submitted in August and October respectively. Additionally, implementation support could be provided for a DoD-sponsored symposium on family research, tentatively scheduled for May, 1987, or for other appropriate family research symposia for dissemination of information on the state of knowledge in the field.

6. Develop Research Plan

The activities of this subtask represent a coalescing of the results of the first year's research and analysis in a comprehensive research plan. Brainstorming meetings will be held to identify research methods required for each core task and an overall research strategy developed that best fills research gaps and meets decision-maker needs. The approach adopted will be reflected in detailed Gantt charts and submitted in the Draft Annual Research Plan by October, 1987. This plan will lay out research plans for the subsequent four years, as well as detailed plans for year two.

7. Conduct Integration IPR's and Finalize Reports

This subtask will consist of a series of review and refinement activities. The integration team will meet with each of the advisory groups to receive and discuss their comments on the Special and Summary Integration Report (discussed in subtask 5). Additionally, the proposed research plan will be reviewed and refined, and other research coordination activities explored. Based on input from these meetings, the reports and research plan will be revised and finalized for submission at the end of the first contract year.

3.0 REFERENCES

Chief of Staff, U.S. Army. (1983). White paper 1983: The Army family. Washington, DC: Department of the Army.

Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Army. (1984). The Army family action plan I. Washington, DC: Author.