



ARMY MEDICINE

Bringing Value...Inspiring Trust

Army Hearing Program (AHP) Update

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Objectives

PURPOSE: To provide information about the Army Hearing Program and other initiatives developed and implemented as a result of IOM Study

1. Army Audiology
2. The AHP
3. Accomplishments
4. Challenges
5. Way Forward



Army Audiology

- 9 Medical Centers (MEDCENS)
 - 2 OCONUS; 7 CONUS
- 16+ Medical Treatment Facilities (MTFs)
 - 43 uniformed audiology authorizations (55 OFM)
 - 3 COLs; 7 LTCs; 12 MAJs; 13 CPTs; 3 1LTs
 - ~ 60 civilian audiologists
- Army Hearing Program Office (USAPHC-Provisional)
- Research Labs
 - Army Research Lab
 - WRAMC
 - United States Army Aeromedical Research Laboratory (USAARL)
- AMEDD Center and School
- Proponency Office for Preventive Medicine (POPM)



ARMY HEARING PROGRAM

Key Elements

1. Hearing Readiness

- Health education
- Hearing readiness monitoring

2. Clinical Hearing Services

- Hearing injury evaluation/treatment

3. Operational Hearing Services

- Communication Enhancement/Hearing Protection Devices
- Noise Monitoring and Control

4. Hearing Conservation

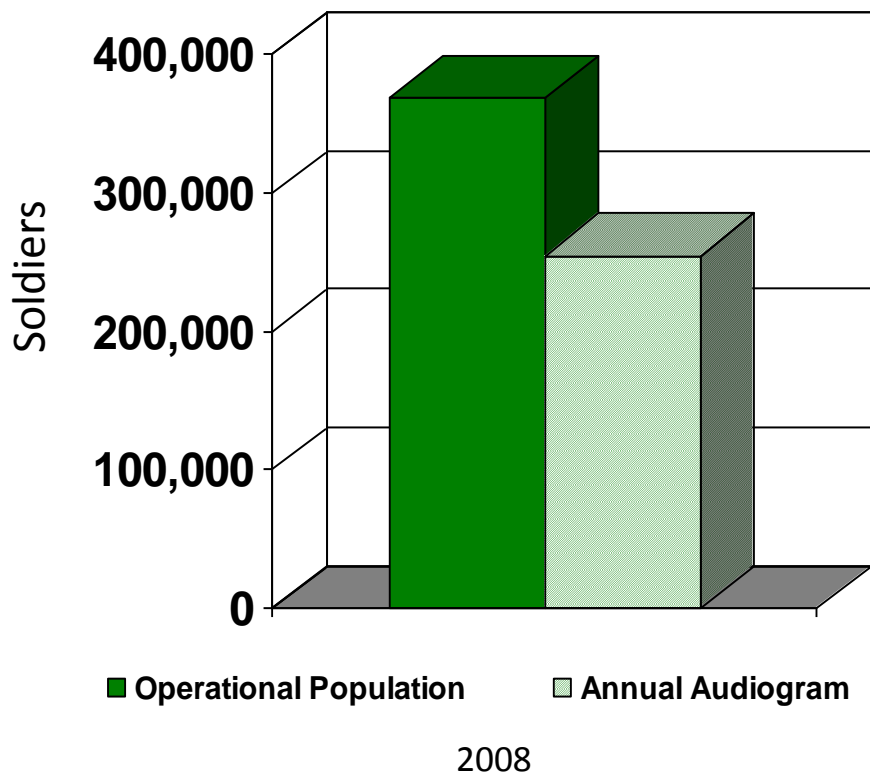
- Garrison-based occupational/industrial HC services

Hearing Class 1 and 2: (Fully Medically Ready)	Green
Hearing Class 3: (Not Medically Ready)	Yellow
Hearing Class 4: (Undetermined)	Red

*****TOE mission should mirror Garrison/training mission *****



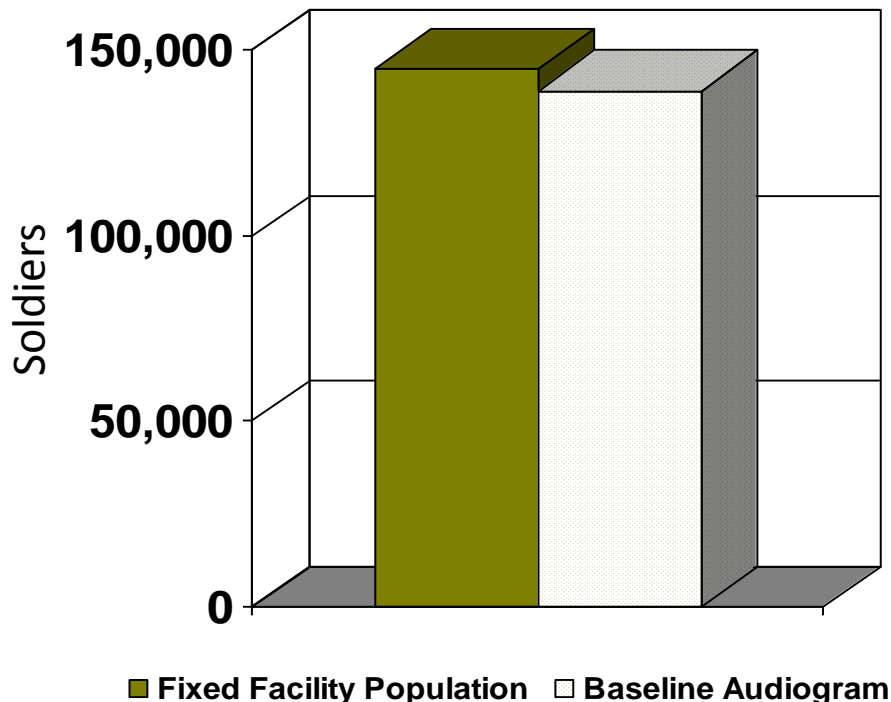
COMPO 1 Hearing Readiness Compliance Operational (TO&E)



- Active Duty (TOE) = **90%**
 - N = 406,488 tested
- Compared to:
 - **59%** in 2006
 - **72%** in 2008
- ARNG – **92%** in 2010
 - N = 361,858
- USAR – **92%** in 2010
 - N = 267,469



COMPO 1 Hearing Readiness Compliance Fixed Facility (TDA)

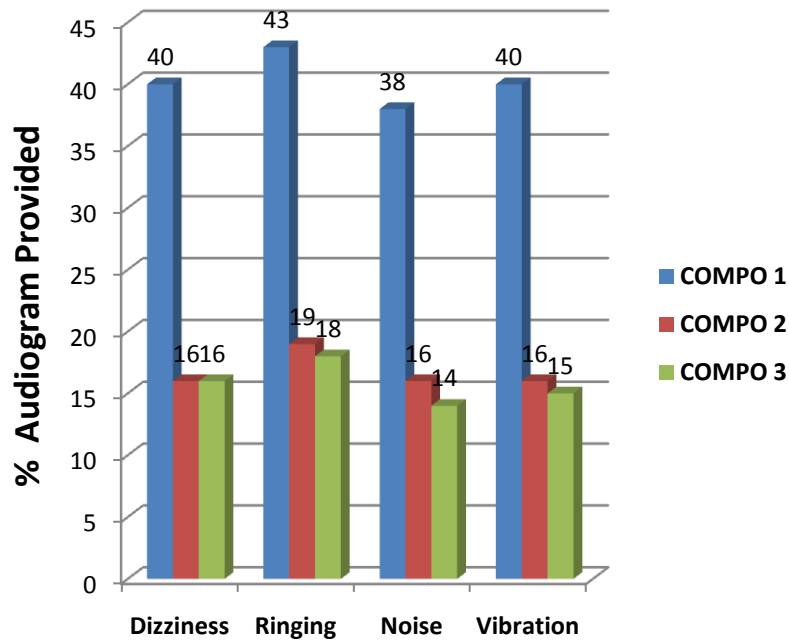


2008

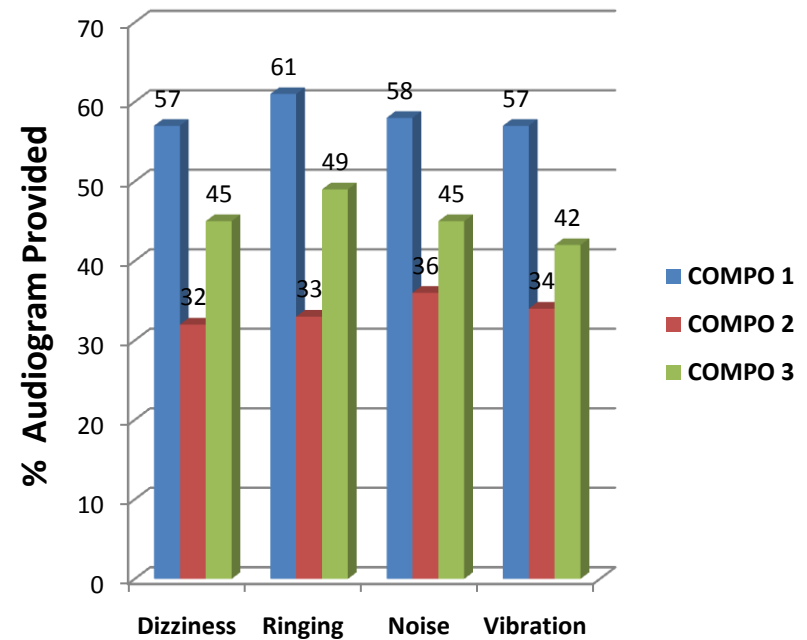
- Active Duty (TDA) = **98%**
 - N = 154,462
- Compared to:
 - **96%** in 2008

Percent Audiogram** Provided Within 6 Months of Reporting Noise Symptoms or Exposure on PDHA*

March 2003 thru September 2007



January 2009 thru June 2010



*Analysis performed by the Defense Medical Surveillance System; Date of Reports: 24 Mar 08, 13 Sep 10

**Procedure Codes 92552, 92555, 92556, 92557, or 92559



Accomplishments

- Hearing tests on all new accessions at Basic Combat Training sites fully implemented
 - Combat Arms Earplug (CAE) Best Practices Initiative in progress for all new recruits
- Rapid Fielding Initiative (RFI) for Combat Arms Earplugs (CAEs) for deploying Soldiers
- Ten 72Cs have deployed in support of OEF/OIF/OND



Challenges

- Personnel resources
 - Vacancies exist
 - New authorizations obtained where previously one deep
- Large surveillance programs
 - 1M DOEHRS-HC audios Army-wide in 2010
 - Program oversight
 - Implement and standardize leading indicators for assessing program effectiveness



Way Forward - Research

- Shortened alternatives to the SPRINT test
- Possible speech materials and maskers to obtain an efficient clinical measure of fitness for duty
- Functional auditory tasks in normal and blast exposed listeners
- Simulated hearing loss systems to allow evaluation of objective impact of impaired hearing and communication on military effectiveness
- Impact of occlusion on speech intelligibility in noise with the Combat Arms Earplug
- Hearing protection fit test systems for potential use in all Army Hearing Programs



Way Forward

- Bring minimum standard of care to all COMPOs
- Development of evaluation criteria for hearing protective systems (hearing protectors, tactical communication and protective systems)
 - Qualified Products List (QPL)
- Work collaboratively with other Services and Audiovestibular Center for Excellence to move forward on IOM and GAO recommendations

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