

## I. INTRODUCTION

To test the hypothesis that the Warrior Optimization System (WAROPS) training program is feasible, acceptable, and effective we utilize a mixed methods program evaluation approach. The rigorous technique includes analyses of quantitative measures (functional/clinical measures, health status outcomes, etc.) and qualitative data (interviews with participants, observational data, and administrative data)

Quantitative outcomes evaluation results are strengthened with the identification of potential mechanisms that account for success or failure of a program. The program structure, logistics, replicability, and quality can only be evaluated through qualitative inquiry. Implementation issues can be gleaned through observational data collected by evaluation staff. Further, soldier acceptability and satisfaction with a program, their attitudes, beliefs, and opinions be captured through interviews with participants. By using mixed methods, our program evaluation adopts a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, which allow statistically reliable information obtained from numerical measurement to be backed up by and enriched by information about the program participants' explanations.

In this report we present results from the qualitative analysis of the soldier interview data at pre- and post-deployment following the WAROPS as well as data from interviews with the program staff trainers. The analysis focused on structure and implementation issues through the review of interviews/focus group data. We collected data on the feasibility and replicability of the program,

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on the organization, training program content, staffing, usefulness of the program to the soldiers during deployed and reintegration, and comparisons to other resilience programs they received.

A short section offers a description of the soldiers who were given the “sustainer” module which was intended to offer skills so that medics could support the use of the training tools during deployment.

The last section in this report offers themes from the trainers’ perspective. Issues around logistics, implementation, and feasibility are of particular interest in the analysis of the trainer interviews.

The fidelity of the training program was very low due to continuous program improvement making the program delivery a moving target for the evaluation staff. The constant changes to the program warranted that data collection continue during the course of the training cycle and justifies the large number of interviews that were conducted. It should also be noted that in the post deployment group only 54% had received the training prior to deployment. So among the post deployment group there was also a large group who were receiving the training for the first time i.e. only post-deployment.

## II. METHODS

We developed a semi-structured interview questionnaire based on the outcomes developed from the program theory-driven logic model (Alkin, 2004; Donaldson, 2007; McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Patton, 2002). Within the model a key data element is process implementation, as opposed to context/structure or outcomes. Process refers to what actually happens in the real world as opposed to what is planned on paper. Process data are obtained by asking participants about their

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experiences and by observation. These data are qualitative in nature. To analyze these qualitative data we utilized a grounded-theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This technique was selected rather than other qualitative methods because our goal was to discover key processes within the WAROPS program implementation as seen from the perspective of the participants rather than testing an *a priori* hypothesis. These qualitative data supplement the health outcomes quantitative data that maps to the logic model short, medium, and long term impacts. The qualitative data allow us to explore in depth and in the words of the soldiers the meanings they attach to their evaluations. Rich descriptions like those elicited from interviews are not possible to collect with quantitative methods.

We conducted in-depth interviews using focus groups and individual interviews with the participants during three periods: early in the training cycle (April 2009), during the middle of the training cycle (July 2009) and at the end of the training cycle (September 2010). Small focus group interviews were conducted with the use of stratification based on rank in order to maximize participant response variance and to limit halo effects (Bauman & Adair, 1992). Further, this technique allowed for the lower ranks (E1-E4) to speak their minds more freely and not defer to or be influenced by the higher ranks (E5-O2) during interviews. Interviewees were chosen by who volunteered to participate.

We used a semi-structured questionnaire for interviews with probes that could help to guide the participant and the interview and provide us with the most relevant information on given topics. This also insured some uniformity in the data collected about set topics across the many interviews and focus groups. The questionnaire was designed to collect information about knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, and satisfaction from a perspective of the soldiers immediately after they

received the training. Some of questions covered specific topics such as: Prior expectations for the training and if the expectations were met; Overall comments about the training; Was there information presented during the training that could helpful or useful; How does the training compare to other trainings that they had received; and What did they think of the trainers, content and handouts.

The interview questionnaires can be found in Appendix A. Each interview was recorded. The interviews were voluntary and an informed consent process was utilized. The project received human subjects' protection committee (IRB) approval from RAND Corporation and Fort Carson IRB.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

At the end of the data collection all of the recorded interviews were assigned to individual transcribers who conducted the interviews. The transcribers followed a template that organized the responses by thematic content based on the program theory driven logic model. Then all of the transcriptions were uploaded into qualitative text analysis software (Atlas.ti) and tagged with the relevant marker code that indicates which interview question it answered. This process successfully allowed us to search for keywords, concepts and ideas in the data that will help outline the analysis, *before* any analysis took place (Namey, et al., 2007). Simultaneously a code book was developed in Atlas.ti. Once all responses were coded according to the interview questions, they were printed out by topic (i.e. overall comments about the training) and disseminated to a group of 5-7 people for sub-code development. These sub-codes are the basis for the analysis.

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Since the sub-themes needed to be coded in Atlas.ti, the team conducted inter-rater reliability exercises using University of Pittsburgh Coding Analysis Tool (CAT) with teams of two coders double-coding interviews. The CAT produced Fleiss' Kappas (Fleiss 1981) which were reviewed by the team. The final overall Kappa score was 0.76 which is considered substantial and acceptable for reliability (Landis & Koch, 1977).

### IV. SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

#### a. Soliders

There were three rounds of qualitative data collected on soldiers for this evaluation. First the 3-4 received *post-deployment* training in the spring of 2009, second the 4-4 received *pre-deployment* training in the summer of 2009 and third the 4-4 received *post-deployment* training in the Fall of 2010.

The total number of interviews that were conducted in 2009 consisted of data from two Brigades, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, during April and May of 2009. The 3-4 were in the post-deployment phase and the 4-4 was preparing to deploy. There were 73 interviews from the 3-4 and 29 interviews from the 4-4. 83% of focus group interviews were conducted with only males, while 5% were females and 12% were mixed male and female. Of the 102 interviews 36 were individual interviews and 66 were focus groups that consisted of 2-8 soldiers. There were 173 soldiers interviewed from the 4-4 and 226 from the 3-4. The rank of participants ranged from E1 to O5. The majority of interviews were with E1-E4 (51%), then E5-E9 (33%) and the least was O1-O5 (16%). The participants were also asked if they had been deployed before and 69% had been previously deployed at least once.

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The total number of interviews conducted in 2010 consisted of one Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in their post-deployment/reintegration phase. Of the 83 interviews 25 were individual interviews and 58 were focus groups. There were 226 soldiers interviewed. The rank of participants ranged from E1 to O5. The majority of interviews were with E1-E4 (57%), followed by E5-E9 (34%), Officers O1-O5 (8%) and Warrant Officers (1%). 66% had been previously deployed which was not surprising since soldiers move and separate after deployment and new recruits will have joined up.

We conducted a sensitivity analysis to test whether we could combine the data collected in 2009 from the 3-4 with the 4-4. There were so few codes that showed any differences between the brigades which supported combining these data for analysis.

### b. Sustainers

We spoke with a small sub-group of soldier who comprised what the WAROPS trainers called the “sustainer group.” There were 18 soldiers who volunteered to speak with researchers after the sustainer training. We divided them into four focus groups based on their rank. We interviewed one E-3, three E-4’s, four E-5’s, nine E-6’s, and one E7.

### c. Trainers

We conducted interviews with seven staff members as follows: one CEO/Director, Three Lead Trainers, two Assistant Trainers, and one Logistics Coordinator. All but one of the seven staff interviewed have military backgrounds.

## V. RESULTS OF SOLDIER INTERVIEWS

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In this section we will examine both the pre and post deployment themes that emerged from the analysis of the data on soldier interviews. The data has been organized in the following way:

1. Expectations
2. Organization of the program
3. Content of the program
4. Delivery/Program trainers
5. Assessment of the program
6. Comparison to other programs
7. Implementing the program
8. Pre-Post- Deployment Comparison
9. Reintegration

### **1. Expectations**

The majority of participants' (66%) had no expectations for the training program. Over a third of the participants mentioned that they had heard it was going to be

“Mental Toughness” and “expected a lot of psychological questions”.

Participants had also heard that it would be a “Behavioral Health Training” such as suicide prevention, stress management, or anger management or a type of evaluation to make sure that they “are all okay upstairs”. General negative comments (30%) included being forced to come to

the training or having better things to do and expectations that the training would be boring or long. There were a handful of responses about the training having a physical aspect or that they would gain some helpful new knowledge. There was not a statistically significant difference between the opinions of the soldiers based on their rank and their expectations for the training but there was for RANK on opinion that training was below expectations. There was also significant difference by brigade.

The majority of participants (69%) felt that their expectations for the training were exceeded because they

“learned a lot of stuff that will probably calm [them] down in tough situations” and it was better than what they had envisioned or been told by their peers. A small number of soldiers (11%) reported that the training did not meet their expectations because of “time constraints” or that they expected to hear more about how to deal with these topics instead of noticing the signs that would proceed stress, anxiety, and depression.

## **2. Organization of the Program**

### *2a. Length of the Program*

When the pre-deployment group asked about the length of the training the participants responded with primarily four different themes; length appropriate, length too long, length too short, and train to standard. Most soldiers (60%) reported that the training length was appropriate and that

“the time was managed well for the amount of information that they gave”.

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Approximately a third of the soldiers felt that the training was too long and that “towards the middle [they] found it hard to focus”. Only a few soldiers (14%) said that that the training was too short and would have liked to have the training spread out over a few days or weeks so that they can understand the topics more in-depth. A few soldiers used the phrase “Train to standard” which means that time doesn’t matter, [they] should train to a standard not to a time. There was a statistically significant difference between Brigades in the opinion about whether the training was too long, the 4-4 had a higher response that training was too long.

### *2b. Placement/Timing of the Program*

The training was given to two groups of soldiers, one group received it after they had returned from deployment and the other group went through the training approximately a month before they deployed. After receiving the training the majority of the pre-deployment participants (65%) reported that they would like to have the training Pre-Deployment because it

“is a great idea having training before [and] it is something they can actively do while in combat”.

About half of the participants (49%) believed that it would have just as big of an impact if they received it Post-Deployment and be more useful because they know what to expect now during deployment and in which situations the training would be applicable. Other soldiers believed that the training should take place solely during basic training (19%) or during Deployment (19%).

“This block needs to be incorporated earlier. Even if the soldier never deploys there will still be stress in their jobs. Should be part of all training. And then get again before they deploy. They would have baseline to show the effectiveness. Will be a challenge gearing it to specific groups knowing their experiences will be different.”

The post deployment respondents reported that the best time to provide the training is post deployment (56%) followed by pre deployment (41%). Pre and post deployment included immediate and up to 3 months from the day of the deployment status. The participants that reported the best timing during post deployment indicated that

“because we didn’t have anything going on, I mean this is after the block leave and everything, we already went to vacation, home and back to work everything”

or suggested before block leave;

“this training should be a little earlier, when we have lots of stress, before block leave in a way that people will not do anything dumb during block leave” and at times were “we have a lot of half days, so throw it there because stress relief process would be nice”.

“probably the first time exposed to this training, which is more likely to help them in the future” and “it should be 2 to 3 months before we are send on the plane”.

“it is hard to just you know go and teach this stuff after deployment, after we have spent a full year doing what we’re doing, finding our way of coping with things, and what helps us relax and everything, and then come and teach us all this stuff that’s probably better, but you know we have just been use to this one way”

“Training for a new weapon or something you just have to get practice on it and with it, and eventually it just becomes second nature.”

Suggestions of having the training before deployment include the period of time of JRTC (training before deployment). Some participants indicated that

“This training would be perfect for right before our JRTC

### 3. Content of the program

#### *3a. Distributed Materials*

As a part of the training the participants were handed a small spiral bound notebook, a laminate card, or stickers with information printed on them. They were asked about whether they felt these materials would be useful. Among the pre-deployed the majority of the soldiers (62%) said that they would definitely use it as a refresher or share it with a spouse or leader, however there was a statistically significant difference between the rank and their perceptions of the usefulness of the handouts: Enlisted soldiers felt that the handouts would be most helpful (79%), then NCO's (74%), then Officers (44%). Since the participants received the pamphlets during the training some of them (32%) reported that they did not have a chance to look at it or would

“maybe look at it in the future”.

Other soldiers felt that the materials were not useful (23%) and that it would just end up ruined or in the trash because they

“get so many different handouts”.

The participants also had suggestions (22%) for improving the handouts, such as making it electronic with a DVD or website, or that

“they should have pictures of the core exercises so [they] can see if [they] are doing it right” and make it smaller so it can fit in their pockets.

Most of the post-deployment participants felt that the distributed pamphlets were useful (60%).

Among those who reported the distributed material useful it was mostly because it will

“help remembering, keeping it fresh”

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and for teaching purposes. Some participants (47%) didn't have the opportunity to look at the material or didn't have an opinion in regards to the material. Some others provided suggestions to improve the content or structure of the material distributed. Some Service Members indicated that the printed material was perceived not useful because they did not use it during deployment or mostly because of the format: Like the pre-deployed group the post group suggested the dissemination of the material should be electronic or in forms of card that will fit in the pocket.

Among the post-deployment group those who had done the program before deployment noted that the training was different due to new components in the content because the

“the videos were new “ and “they showed different slides and touched on a lot more points than they did the last time“.

“it pretty much covers all the things they went over, it was pretty good”, also “I will have it there for my use, it is good to have”.

“I could show somebody; hey you should try this and show them the material”.

“some sort of digital media, like the internet or an application you could have on your phone” and “at least I know all of my soldiers, cause I know them well, we are more audio visual”.

“Have us hold onto a book and carry it around, we just have so many other things going on”.

### *3b. New Material*

The participants were asked if the information that they received during the training was new to them. Many of the pre-deployment respondents had never heard the information before (for 21%

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all of it was new and for 28% most of it was new) and were seeing the techniques for the first time (40%). Some felt that they had heard the information before, but now it was presented to them in a new framework (26%). Of the group that had experienced the training techniques before, 8% said they had learned them playing sports and 9% said that they had seen them before during another Army training. 29% of the participants mentioned a specific technique that they had learned before such as the breathing skills during previous Army trainings such as marksmanship.

### 4. **Delivery/Program trainers**

#### *4a. Delivery*

There was an overwhelming high number of pre-deployment participants that felt the training was clearly presented (78%) and this made the training more

“effective because someone who had no training or experience could use the skills”.

Some respondents noted that the main reason why the information was not clearly presented was that the information was too scientific (8%) and

“some of the technical stuff might have been a little too in depth for some of the crowd”

A few respondents felt that the content was too repetitive and that components were not synced

#### *4b. Trainers*

Satisfaction was very high overall when soldiers were asked what they thought about the program trainers. The soldiers tended to be most impressed by the credentials or experience (62%) of the trainers or their skills (62%). They believed that skills such as knowledge on the subject, organizational skills, and overall presentation abilities added weight to the program. Their expertise

“conveyed that [the program] was something credible and practical to actually use”

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Other positive comments (33%) about the trainers being exciting, the

“best trainers that [they] have had since [being] in the army”

and their attitudes, for example being energetic, friendly and enthusiastic really enhanced the content of the program for the soldiers. A small number of participants remarked the trainers roles were undefined.

One comment that was made was that the trainers lack of affiliation with their immediate platoon or company, that they were

“outside army professionals” and “it was a pleasant surprise that the training was done by ex-military especially since high ranking”.

The post-deployment soldiers were equally complimentary. The credentials or experience (67%) that the trainers had was reported to be valuable since

“ It doesn’t make any sense for me to have anybody give me a training of how to recover from combat experience from somebody who has never done it”. Also “being a military is a big plus” and being “elite soldiers, they were special forces, SEALs” was valuable because “we can relate to their memories and what they’re talking about”.

“just the way they relate to us and that I guess they have been in all the same situations” and “it is better when you have somebody that have been there done that”.

The military experience as well as the background were thought to be essential in the delivery of the training and the acceptance of the material among the Service Members. The trainer’s military background played a role in the credibility of the material as well as the expectation of the training’s effectiveness.

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Most of the participants also described the trainer's skills (65%) as a positive characteristic. They reported that the trainers were

“really knowledgeable, they know what they are talking about”, “Pretty confident and talented”. “intense trainers, they were in the same situation like we were”,

also they were described as energetic, enthusiastic, interesting and excellent presenters. Overall, the participants provided positive comments about the trainers mostly because they are

“military and know that this work for this kind of situation.”

Service Members could relate to the trainers due to similarities in military experience, being a similar generation of veterans. Those who received the pre-deployment training reported that the new team of trainers was better than the ones prior. There were comments in regards to the ages of the trainers. The post-deployment trainers were younger, making them veterans of the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

### 5. Assessment of the Program

5a. Overall the training was well received with 63% of the soldiers offering positive comments while only 7% had negative comments.

#### 5b. *Helpful*

The soldiers were asked if any of the information that they learned during the training was helpful. About a third (34%) of the pre-deployment participants felt that all of the information was helpful. The majority however reported that the components of core training (63%) and breath control (51%) were the most helpful because with breath control it

“it doesn't matter what you're doing you can always do it”.

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The simulation techniques were noted as extremely helpful (33%) because soldiers can feel in control of a situation and

“go to that happy place understanding that you can go there even in stress to help you regulate yourself, your breathing and heart rate because when my soldiers are in a situation and they have to be behind the trigger with someone in their scope they need to be able to get the shot, or keep people from panicking or defend this area so they can fight and not flight” .

Some also found that the components energy management, nutrition and sleep , and brain/body performance were also helpful. Breathing exercises were reported (74%) as the technique that was most helpful;

“breathing management thing is always useful, especially during PT”.

The core exercises were also reported (51%) as

“The stress relievers, the fact that you got to burn yourself out to relax”.

The effect of the core exercises was described as

“My legs feel like rubber bands right now, but I know when I go to the gym, run, lift weights, and do kettle bell training, and I got some of the same results, but with parts of my body that I never use”.

Service Members expected to use the breathing exercise and simulation during a daily routing in a variety of situations in Garrison as well as during deployment.

*5c. Not Helpful*

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Answers to the question regarding what was not considered helpful information during the training included that attention control (14%) and simulation (13%) would not be useful because they are

“common to a soldier” .

The breathing technique was seen as not helpful to some (12%)

“because a lot of other trainings already teaches [them] that”.

“situations like shooting, the simulation I think it would be useful, the breathing definitely not”.

During the attention control exercise, the trainers threw a ball back and forth between them and the participants. Despite some participants reporting attention control to be useful, some expressed that

“throwing the balls, I didn’t see the point” and that “The attention one, that it is good, but I think that maybe there could be better practical exercises to demonstrate that”.

“I didn’t like, I don’t think anybody liked the little pop gun thing they did. I get the context of what they were trying to do but I just think there’s just not enough time in the day to cram it in and really break it down for people cause I think it just freaked everybody out more than anything.”

### *5d. Useful for Deployment*

The training was designed to be useful during the deployment cycle so the feedback from the soldiers on whether or not it is, which techniques, and in what situations provides insight into the usefulness of the program. A relatively large number of the pre-deployment group responded that the training would be useful during deployment (38%), but 14% also thought it would not be.

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The soldiers who said that it was useful during deployment typically mentioned a specific technique that they would use. Breathing was the most commonly mentioned one because

“it helps [them] relax and [they] can concentrate”.

Soldiers also walk for hours a day while carrying large packs and the core exercises were thought to

“help to relieve some stress in the body, that’s important because [they] don’t focus on it enough”.

Attention control

“was useful and could actually help in the field for keeping focus in the battlefield”

Two other techniques that were mentioned as useful during deployment were simulation and energy management. Situations in which the training was applicable centered around the mission (24%) was valued. The most common time to use the training was thought to be during or after a mission because:

“You can use a little piece of this in every situation, especially in combat situations. You’re not only going to be facing the enemy, sometimes you’re going to be facing your squad leader because you got into an argument in the truck. Some of this can actually calm you down and relieve some of that extra energy.”

“the breathing training I used up until all the time we deployed in stressful situations and always helps”, in situation like “I would say to help control yourself before you take a shot and after you take the shot” and “to control your heart rate, in highly emotional and highly dramatic situations, the more level headed and the more calm you can be the easier it is to make the right decision when the time comes”.

“breathing, energy, like the little things to get our energy out so we have more energy to, like, you know, if we have to go out, if we have to run away from an incoming round, something like that, um, stimulation, like you’re out in a fire fight, you see yourself, you see what’s going on before it needs to be done, then yeah I see myself doing all of those things”, also in situations when “in panic mode like going in a convoy and being attack”. “rehearsals all the time, think about it all the time, okay this is what we are going to be doing” or for relaxation; “kind of put your mind at ease and release all the stress”.

Participants that didn’t have previous training foreseen the simulation as

“something I will personally use, for myself, just you know if I’m gonna do close quarter combat, range, or whatever, I’m gonna simulate going through the steps there”.

### *5e. Useful Outside of Deployment*

The majority of the pre-deployment participants felt that the training would be useful in other situations besides deployment and mentioned a specific technique; only 2% said that the training would not be useful. Core training was one of the exercises that

“you can use it every day when you wind down, when you are stressed you can recover from that or relax for the rest of the day”. The breathing exercises are useful because you “could control anger, if you see yourself getting angry you could cool down, while at work if you get mad you can chill out.”

Other techniques thought to be useful when not deployed are the simulation , attention control , energy management, body/brain performance , and nutrition/sleep.

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The soldiers thought the training could be used for “any stressful situation”(35%) and general stress (18%), but some felt that it would be used specifically “during stressful situations with [their] family” (21%) or stress in the work place, for example

“Post deployment the soldiers are trying to get used to the op tempo back here versus in Iraq, now that they are back they need to deal with the issues back at the home front and they get very stressed.”.

The most common application for the skills mentioned was anger management (14%) because

“A lot of people have anger problems especially coming back from deployment so to receive that information and say hey I could possibly calm myself down and get myself out of a bad situation is really awesome.”

Other reasons to use the skills were to improve sleep, ease back pain for reintegration and for sports . The soldiers felt that the training would be applicable to their family members and other soldiers (16%) and that they would teach it to other people.

### *5f. Improvements*

Without being specifically asked about the structure implementation of the training the participants did make recommendations or comment on the delivery of the training. The participants felt that the training was

“a lot better, most of the trainings like the suicide prevention that touches mental toughness a lot is just death by powerpoint and it is just clicking through but this was hands on and interactive”.

They also believed that the time (27%) of the training

“should be shortened, information was put out perfectly but there was so much of it, if it could be modified and explained in simpler text, having everyone sit around for 4 hours by the time the 4<sup>th</sup> hour comes around its long” and could “maybe break it out in 2 half days”

When it came to group size they said that it would be good

“at a unit level, there’s a way we have to make everything connected body and mental and emotional” and

“the best way to present it, but it would require more session, is to have smaller groups”

Expanding the training and incorporating it into more of their daily activities would be a good idea and the training is

“all great but it needs to be more repetitive type training because soldiers are not going to do the practical exercises unless they are made to do them. It should be integrated at the unit level. The more we get them to do it now, the more useful it will be when we get over there. It’s like muscle memory. All these tools would be useless unless done in units.”

### **6. Comparisons to other programs**

Those who took the WAROPS training program were asked how it compared with other Army trainings they received: The majority (68%) of the pre-deployment group liked the program better than other programs that they had attended because others tended to be

“death by PowerPoint” or “check the box”

meaning the program was boring. The soldiers as a whole gave the training very high marks and would comment that it

“far surpasses other trainings” and that “this training was ten times better than other trainings”.

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Although the participants were not asked to compare WAROPS with a specific Army training, they most often offered a contrast with Battlemind training against this one. They mentioned that

“Battlemind is everyday stuff, don’t do drugs or beat your wife but this is all you get. This training is all kind of different stuff you can learn about yourself. I can help my soldier’s especially new ones coming in, they could come to something like this.”

they also commented that

“Battlemind explained what it was and how to avoid whatever, but to actually put it into practice it is more emphasized in this class right here. This is before, during and after a three step process.”

“Compared to Battlemind, Battlemind purposely gets you to stress certain subject, but this training helps you to relieve the stress.”

“Battlemind is one of those that you sleep through and sign in a roster, it is a check in the box that they did it, it is a repetition there it seems that there is no development with that Battlemind, they don’t gain feedback.”

“Instead of going to previous military classes where they ask us about our battle mind training so on and so forth... a lot of times the people giving it are in the military themselves or and they really don’t want to give the class and they have been told a couple days before that they have to give it and they assess us ...you can tell they want to get it over with and that’s why the class is so short or we are just in an assembly line. These instructors they were trying to focus to everybody and talk to every individual to get everyone involved.”

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Other programs that were mentioned in the comparison category were suicide prevention, SRP, and TDT. There were a very small percentage of soldiers that believed the training was worse (3%) than other trainings that they had taken while in the Army. The training was also categorized as different not because it was necessary better or worse, but just had components that were unlike than other trainings.

Participants that were receiving the training for the first time among the post-deployment soldiers were also asked how the WAROPS training compared to other trainings taken in the past. Most of the participants (57%) considered the training better than other trainings. The structured of the training

“wasn’t the same death by powerpoint”, the instructors were military; “these guys tell you their stories” that can relate to the Soldiers.

Receiving the training by military experienced professionals made it

“more interactive” and “we got up we moved around, we practiced what was being taught, and it was also cool to be able to relate to guys who have been in the service, who are navy seals, Special Forces operator, and air force”.

The skills that were taught

“helps people to understand stress management, energy management, and everything like that, so far it has been the best I’ve seen”.

Some of the participants (25%) mentioned and compared various trainings taken during their military career and prior to military service. The skills taught like

“breathing was taught in rifle training but not to this extent”,

They also indicated that WAROPS training

“It is better than PTSD training from the Chaplain”.

Some of the components that made the WAROPS stand out from other trainings was the military experience of the instructors that the Soldiers could related to, the mode of delivery with interactive exercises (hands on) and the communication between the trainers and the participants. Overall, participants indicated that the training

“was not the typical training” and that “I haven’t had any kind of training, anything like this before”.

### **7. Implementing the Program**

#### *7a. having the program implemented by the command*

The participants were asked if the training has been implemented to the physical training (PT) at any level (platoon, company or unit). During physical training (PT) skills that the military accepts as useful are implemented during this routine of exercises. Some participants (38%) reported that the techniques haven’t been incorporated during PT sessions and the majority (54%) said the use of the WAROPS skills during PT session was minimal, however, most of the participants had suggestion in how to implement the skills during PT sessions. Having “buy-in” and “push down” from leadership was the main message reported by the participants and their suggestions in regards to the timing during PT. The training as a mandatory practice was thought to be necessary to be able to be implemented and utilized by Soldiers:

“I think PT is a discipline thing. You want to go forward. You’ve got to do it on your own. You can’t have somebody push you all the time. It’s just not, to me, it’s not right. You have to have discipline. And a lot of people don’t have that. If it was up to some people, they would never do PT, to me, its just do it on your own.”.

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The participants that indicated that the skills were not implemented into PT provided various reasons like;

“In normal PTs, we do our thing, do a little bit of warm-up then we stretch and we do our PT drill”, “depending on who remembered it and who decided to use it” or because of the routine; “We normally go to the gym, run the track, fire arms.”

There were various suggestions provided for the implementation of the training skills during PT

“It should be practiced after PT and at a larger level just like you practiced taking your weapon apart.”, “should be incorporated 5 to 10 minutes at the end of the PT but before the final stretches” and “if the top leadership were providing it and the soldiers said if they start pushing it”.

### *7b. Implementing the program themselves*

This question of implementation also referred to the ability and authority of the higher rank participants to implement the training with their Soldiers. Many of the participants (20%) reported that they have the authority to implement the training but some (11%) reported that they do not have the ability or authority to implement the training. Those who reported not having the authority to implement the training said it was mostly because they lacked a direct impact by command. Overall the respondents felt that the training could be implemented by command but it will all depend on the rank and position of the participant in the chain of command.

“We have probably to tell them (our soldiers) to do it”,

“I’m in charge of telling guys what to do and I supervise and I know how they feel because I was there once and they get stressed out about it” and “This basically the training, I have the authority to do extra stuff or different stuff”.

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“It is up to my commander, any suggestions he can sign off on”

or “at my level, my guys, yeah I can do it, but its up to the next guy if he wants to expand it, make it over the whole company or the whole battalion and so on and so on.”

Also army doctrine plays a role in the trainings that will be implemented;

“the army obviously is doctrinally based. Everything is done based on doctrine and it usually takes a while for doctrine to rule out”

and it could be also affected by bias from the higher ups;

“I get resistance from higher up to implement things like yoga and things like that”.

More than half of the respondents (57%) felt that the training should be Army-Wide. They were generally enthusiastic, with responses from “yeah” and “absolutely” when asked.

“Should be standard operating procedure to all the military from the top to bottom and I mean basic training and AIT, it would have been super useful, especially with the kids that made the wrong decision.”

Only 1.3% said that it should not be Army-Wide mainly because

“people don’t do it to be honest”

### *7c. Adequacy of implementation*

The participants were asked if they received enough training during pre-deployment to use the skills during deployment. This question was asked only to those ost-deployment who had previous training.

The participants that reported that they received adequate training (19%) indicated that

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“They did put it across very well” and “none of the tasks were too difficult that required a lot of training and practice”.

Almost equally number of participants (17%) reported that they didn’t receive adequate training, mainly because they didn’t remember;

“I had forgotten about this entire thing before I had gotten told to come to it again” due to “being so close the beginning of deployment there were so many other classes and so many other things going on”.

Also the participants indicated that there was not in depth training and no follow up during deployment so those were the main reasons they forgot. The integration of the training

“unless you have the NCOs, the senior NCOs on board and actually tracking what’s going on with it, it’s not going to filter down”.

Some examples provided included the program

“Cross Fit just became a huge thing because our battalion commander swore by it because couple of doctor swore by it and then it just got use because everybody was hooked up by this”.

Most of the participants (49%) reported that the training could be improved by having better materials that will help remind them about the exercises;

“If we had something saying these are the different steps you would take to relax the core muscles, rather than how did we do that” or

“Had the core muscle exercises maybe on a large sheet in the gym so that I can read about after I am done exercising“.

Also a smaller group size and better coordination with other activities was mentioned.

“Split up so that you can focus on the training one day and the computers another day” and “break it into different days, shorter, smaller groups. Cause in the end, even if it is interesting and beneficial, you get tired of sitting around in a room”.

Various suggestions were provided to make this training a train the trainer program;

“Take the leaders of the unit, teach them these techniques, and then do it in a way so that they can teach it to their soldiers, kind of the same way that the army has their combative program”.

Reinforcement and content were also two main factors in the improvement of the training. The participants felt that

“we should have the sustainers before rather than after”, “to recurring training, being able to remember to do it”, “someone remind us of the training”

and also being provided tools to remind them to do the training. The content of the training was reported as good, however, various suggestions were made to improve the content, like

“more emphasis on how you can cope with it (a buddy dying)”, the inclusion of “Yoga instructors, that will be nice”, new components like “get the knowledge of the effects of yoga”, nutrition and more focus of information about breathing and simulation; “I wish we had gone much deeper into that”.

### **8. Pre-Post Deployment Comparison**

Those soldiers who received the training both pre and post-deployment were asked to compare the post training to the pre-deployment training session’. The program did have revisions made between the pre-and post deployment cycles. Most (58%) of those who participated in the pre-

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deployment training reported that the current training was better than the one taken before deployment, mostly due to the structure of the training;

“It was definitely a lot more interactive” and “they broke a lot of the stuff down, it seemed to me more and I understood it a lot better”.

Other aspects in the difference between the pre-deployment and post-deployment training were how the training was delivered since

“the instructors were more enthusiastic of what they were talking about and it seemed we can relate better” and the structure by “moving of the rooms kept you more alert, awake, and more focused”.

“Better because you have to go over everything again and this stuff was useful and we used it on tour and should be standard operating procedure.”

“I had the training before so it was pretty much the same except for the instructors” and “this is stuff I knew from the training”.

Some participants didn’t remember the previous training and indicated that

“I had never heard of it before until last week when I sent a solider to it”

“my squad leader, I don’t know if he went through the training before or from past experiences figured it out for himself, before one mission before they were going up a side of the mountain he would go around and make sure people were simulating”.

Suggestions of having the training before deployment include the period of time of JRTC (training before deployment). Some participants indicated that

“This training would be perfect for right before our JRTC”,

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A few participant also reported that the training should have follow ups and be incorporated into other standard combat training.

Of the post-deployment respondents who had not had WAROPS forty five percent (45%) reported the skills learned were useful, most of the time indicating specific techniques (48%). Breathing, core exercises and simulation were the most cited techniques that the participants found to be new knowledge for them. Those who felt the information was not new (16%) attributed this to previous army training.

For the post-deployment soldiers the techniques that were seen as not useful by some were brain/body performance , energy management, core training , nutrition and sleep. But most of the participants (52%) indicated that the training skills were all helpful. Some participants consider that in some

The trainers utilized a cap gun as part of the training for attention control. This exercise was highly criticized due to the unexpected noise and the similarity to real gun shots

For the post-deployment group getting the program for the first time the participants were asked if they expected to use or find useful the skills they learned during the training to be used in future deployments. Those of the post-deployment group who received the pre-deployment training were asked if the skills learned during the initial training were useful during the deployment.

Overall, the participants reported that the skills will be useful during future deployments, particularly breathing (52%) and simulation (27%) the techniques mostly reported as useful.

Within those who reported breathing as useful, those who had previous WAROPS training (65%) reported that they used the breathing during the deployment;

Participants that reported the simulation as useful during deployments, most of them (38%) had previous training and used the simulation for combat situations.

Overall the post-deployment training was considered better than the pre-deployment and only 3% reported the training being the worst. The follow up training served as a refresher of valuable techniques recognized by the Service Members as valuable during deployment.

The participants that had the pre-deployment training were asked if they learned from others any of the techniques or skills of the training during deployment. This question is relevant to the train the trainer model since Soldiers that didn't receive the WAROPS training may have learned some of the skills from other Service Members.

Most of the participants reported that they learned the skills from the previous training or that no other person taught them the skills other than during the pre-deployment training. Despite the low rate of responses in regards to learning the skills from other, there were various participants that reported learning some of the skills like breathing and simulation from their leaders during PT sessions.

The interview also included a question in regards to the participants teaching the skills to others. This question was asked only to those who had previous training. Most of the participants (24%) reported teaching the skills to their Soldiers;

“I told my soldiers to stop for me and take a deep breath” in situations where “maybe if I saw one my guys stressed out, I would just talk to him regularly, tell him to breath” in

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places like “the aid station when soldiers came out” and during real scenario when “one of my soldiers was going through a pretty tough time, he came to me with all his problems, and I talk to him about the breathing to relax, the simulation”.

Some participants emphasised teaching to their families, either suggesting that this training should also be delivered to family members or they themselves would teach a member of their families.

Participants who taught the skills to their family included those participants who believed they were in need; not as a preventive measure but as a solution;

“I showed my wife last year”; “shared with my brother, he is a marine, he was talking about his lower back hurting and I showed him the stretches; My daughter has a temper so I’d teach her how to do the breathing to calm down. I’d teach her, you know, simulation, see yourself doing something before you do it before, that way it can help you out with it. The energy, you know, teach her how to get energy, how to burn her energy, all that stuff. Just basically everything they taught us I’d try and teach my daughter. I’d let her read this book, when she can read.”

The skill that was more commonly taught was the breathing exercises like in situations regarding military career when

“we went to the board, and that causes short breath, you know stressed out, sweating, and I told him just keep breathing, especially if you start to stutter, you start to forget stuff, and just take breaths, it calms you down” and “breathing for running, stretching after a RUC march”.

.Despite most of the participants reporting that they did teach the skills to others, some (20%) also reported that they did not teach the skills to others, mostly because

“They all knew the same stuff we knew, we all came together”,

“I did it on my own”,

“I didn’t really have the opportunity to get everybody together and kind of like go through these things together” and

“realistically, if we had extra time to teach them anything it would be about the mission”.

### 9. Reintegration

The participants were asked whether or not the training would be useful during reintegration.

Reintegration is one of the most important phases in the deployment cycle. This question provides a perspective of what WAROPS skills may be more useful and utilized by the participants after deployment.

Many of the participants said that the WAROPS skills are useful (21.52%) during reintegration, particularly breathing (15.19%) and the core exercises (12.66%) which are thought to be the most helpful. Other techniques that the soldiers felt would be useful were for simulation and focus.

Among those who received the pre-deployment WAROPS training, the core exercises, especially for stress and pain were the most used skills during reintegration during various periods of time during the day, like in the morning during PT or at night before going to bed. Some reported that their families have been using the core exercises.

Participants that received the WAROPS training for the first time post-deployment, reported that they expect breathing to be the most helpful technique during reintegration time. The various situations they might use WAROPS was experience with family and duty which were the most common cited.

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For example, the participant that is having family issues

“Breathing, just cause she’s not letting me see my daughter and it upsets me and gets me really angry so like you said, saying I’m angry, doing the breathing the right way until I calm down, and then you know, go on a talk to her. Where normally, it’s just, we’re fighting, we’re yelling. But this way, I can kind of calm the situation down, just by talking and breathing and by doing some of the stuff they taught us”.

A second example was duty tasks that will improve performance

“breathing, like the short breath, I didn’t know that can keep you awake, so in a situation doing tower guard at 4 in the morning and it is cold and you are tired I don’t want to fall asleep and we train like that also.”.

And in PT

“Like running for me out here is really hard cause of altitude so the breathing is going to help me out a lot and I kind of have a temper so the breathing might help me out there too, and I’m startled by like noises and stuff, so calm down, tell yourself that you’re in a safe place, that kind of thing might be pretty helpful.”

The participants also used the training for road rage/driving , sleeping, general stressful situations , and in the work environment. Only 6.33% said that the training would not be useful during reintegration.

The soldiers who had the WAROPS training previous to their deployment (61%) were asked if it helped them with handling stress differently. now that they have had the training. Over a third of

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the soldiers (35%) responded that they do handle stress differently since having the WAROPS training.

“I think just being through the training I am able to handle stress a lot easier than before I deployed.”

Many referred to the breathing exercises as a useful tool to handle stress.

“With me, knowing the breathing, there were many situations I handled differently cause I did just exactly what he said, stop, you take a breath and your whole decision making process changes. It’s like it clears the clouds out of the way.”

Some participants reported that they have used skills from the training specifically to calm themselves in a stressful situation.

“Before going straight into it like I used to and making a situation worse or taking it home with me, I just take deep breaths and relax...”

Others reported using it while driving, typically the breathing exercises to deal with road rage, handling work related stressors differently was also commonly mentioned.

“People and things can aggravate you more easily, you do the breathing exercise they shouldn’t if you take the time to calm down.”

Home stressors were also reported as an area where soldiers felt they were using breathing techniques to deal with spousal and child related interactions (15%).

“There are different ways to handle it now.”

Some soldiers also mentioned handling combat related situations differently .

Another group of soldiers (27%) didn't feel their handling of stressful situations changed after having the training. The last third of participants weren't sure if or how their handling of stress had changed after having the training. Those that felt the training did impact their handling of stressful situation, reported the breathing exercises as most helpful in providing a tool to handle these situations more effectively.

### **VI. CONCLUSIONS OF SOLDIER ANALYSIS**

The great strength of qualitative data is that it not only provides data about the evaluation of the program but it tells you what the meaning of the data is to service members. Through their own words you are able to see the various ways in which they respond to the same program and the ways in which they incorporate the training into a whole range of activities in their own lives. One conclusion we can draw from the data is that the majority of the soldiers responded positively to WAROPS and in comparison to other programs they had had in their training, much more positively.

Two factors seem to contribute most to this response. The first was the trainers. As ex-military, and as ex-elite soldiers, Seals etc, and because of their age, recent combat experience of the trainers, the soldiers felt they were being taught by persons who understood what they are going through. To that extent the trainers can “walk a mile in their shoes”. This gave the trainers credibility in the eyes of the soldiers.

Secondly the training provides very pragmatic exercises that the soldiers can use in a wide range of situations from combat to road rage to domestic disputes. As a means of reducing stress the

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soldiers could see that many of the exercises worked. They could also see the usefulness of the techniques for their family members. This is probably quite unique among the various programs like this that are geared for the warrior or for battle.

Another conclusion is that this program gets much higher ratings from the soldiers than do the other programs such as Battlemind. The comments about the latter were very negative. A major difference seems to be that WAROPS is not just ppts and explanations but involves physical exercises which the participants can master and can see the usefulness of immediately. The very physicality of the program might be a large part of its attractiveness. It fits in very well with the physical nature of their training generally.

Despite being well received, the soldiers did make suggestions about improvements. The first had to do with when the program is given. They felt it should occur earlier in their training. But it should also be done both pre and post-deployment. The second had to do with making it army wide and mandatory. They felt it should be an integral part of their overall training and to be truly effective should be mandated. The soldiers also felt it should be repetitive both to enhance the learning but also to reinforce its importance. Other suggestions included breaking the program up into shorter sessions with smaller groups. The material distributed was seen as a bit impractical and should either be redesigned for easy carrying on the person or should be on line or video.

Comparing pre and post-deployment did not show large differences in opinion. Those who had it prior rated it positively, those who had it both pre and post did so as well, as did those who only had it post. The conclusion from this would be that it is useful no matter when you give it.

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If we conclude that this program was highly rated by the soldiers and that they would recommend it be continued then the issue of implementation became a crucial one. The soldiers identified that this has to happen at three levels. The first is at the system level where command has to decide it is part of the PT and system wide and mandatory. The second level is at the local level where squad leaders must implement it. The last is the personal level where the soldiers must do it themselves but not only for themselves but with their buddies and/or families. They also noted that it has applicability for all soldiers in all functions not just for combat.

### **VII. SUSTAINER-SOLDIER BACKGROUND**

One of the strategies outlined in the training program was the reinforcement of WAROPS skills by a group of soldiers referred to as “sustainers”. This group was given an additional and different training tailored to teach soldiers how to support others in the utilization of the WAROPS skill set. This group was hand-picked by commanders based on their MOS. Most were medics. The observed training offered some skill reinforcement, but it also introduced new topics not covered in the core training such as the concept of periodization in exercise training and the memorization of the nine classes of supply for the medics. Our sample was comprised of 18 soldiers who volunteered to speak with researchers after the sustainer training. We divided them into four focus groups based on their rank. We interviewed one E-3, three E-4’s, four E-5’s, nine E-6’s, and one E-7. The focus group probes are in Appendix A.

### **VIII. SUSTAINER-SOLDIER RESULTS**

#### **a. Satisfaction**

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One of the first questions asked of training participants was “how would you rate the training on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the highest score). The scores were very high with an overall average of 8.5. The high ratings were supported by comments from respondents like, “It’s a first for an Army training where you can actually use all the components!” One respondent liked the training because it was different from the “The old set Army way of doing things”. Another soldier appreciated learning the science behind the way the brain affects the body and the control you can have over stress.

### b. Better in Small Groups

The sustainers should have received the standard WAROPS post-deployment training offered earlier in the month—some did not. The standard training was implemented in large groups, but the sustainers preferred the smaller group size of this training mentioning that it was simply “too crowded” when the whole group was attending. The side bar conversations that soldiers conducted were distracting to some soldiers. Others felt that if you taught the training at the platoon level, there would be smaller groups who normally work together getting the same information at the same time.

### c. Good Trainers

The sustainers echoed the comments of the whole brigade on the theme of high satisfaction with the quality of the trainers. One respondent said, “People who are still active military are more believable than a 60 year old retired military.” It was not only a matter of acceptability of the trainers for their military experience, but also their current events experience was of importance to the soldiers. They felt that the younger, professional staff approached soldiering in different way,

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“more efficient”. The positive comments contained a suggestion that the soldiers would benefit if the trainers ran PT for their company.

### d. Must be volunteer basis

One participant noted that he would have given the training a 10 if it would have been volunteer basis, but the sheer fact that his commanders required him to attend a training made his interest level and satisfaction drop a point. This comment echoed others comments about who should be involved with sustainer training which is an implementation issue discussed later in this report.

### e. Too long to sit in a classroom

One comment mentioned that the length was too long because soldiers do not like to sit for hours on end. Similarly, several felt that these types of skills do not lend themselves to classroom setting.

### f. Not good fit for reintegration

A powerfully negative comment from a soldier with 17 years of service in the Army addressed the main objective of reintegration. He said:

*“When it comes to reintegration these trainings do not really pertain. They should center around family and friends. Reintegration is not consistent with sitting in classroom and it does not help. I need information on how to reintegrate with my two year old son who has not seen me in 15 months, “who daddy is”. How do I reintegrate with a wife who has run the house on her own for 15 months. How do I not just take everything over from her? More time with family, not two weeks of trainings in classrooms. Give us that time at home.”*

### g. Knowledge for sustaining training

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There were mixed replies about the self-efficacy in the group increased skills for implementation as continued use of the tools with soldiers during deployment. Part of this issue was that they felt they needed more training and background on the science to help increase knowledge about how the tools worked. They also wished there were more materials to access for reinforcement of training knowledge. Some of the soldiers felt that the training was more appropriate for self-help rather than teaching others. And some felt that they were given some helpful tools that had real proof of effectiveness. One medic said that, “The breathing was something I taught to soldiers in Afghanistan who were having a hard time.”

### h. Implementation/Practice/Logistics

Some of the other issues for the sustainer group were on implementation, practice, and logistics. The sustainer group felt that WAROPS would be too difficult to integrate during deployment because of the other demands on them and soldiers. They made comments about how leadership would need to be more involved in getting the sustainer training so that there was top-down implementation of the tools. The medics pointed out that they are not responsible for commanding soldiers during deployment so it would be the leaders in charge of implementation.

## IX. TRAINER BACKGROUND

In this phase of the WAROPS program evaluation we focused on structure and implementation by gathering data via interviews from the Magis Group staff. Structure evaluation was used as a framework to collect data on the intervention components to assess feasibility of proposed activities and to provide recommendations for improving intervention structures and processes. We

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collected data on the organization, training program, and staff. Process evaluation was used as a framework to assess the extent to which the intervention components are implemented as planned, assess fidelity and variability, and program refinement in terms of feedback loops.

We chose staff using purposive sampling to ensure that we included the full range of staff (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). Interviewees were chosen who reflected different levels of staff categories: CEO, Lead Trainers, Assistant Trainers, Logistics Coordinator.

### a. Methods

We developed a semi-structured interview guide based on the logic model topics from program evaluation (Alkin, 2004; Donaldson, 2007; McDavid & Hawthorn, 2006; Patton, 2002). The questionnaire was designed to collect information about structure, development, and implementation of the WAROPS training from the perspective of the trainers. Our interview protocol consisted of a list of questions that assessed perceptions of training staff about (1) the organizational structure of the training company; (2) the background, qualifications, and training of staff; (3) the program itself: what worked well, what did not work well; (4) refinement of the program, feedback loops, and mid-course corrections; and (5) whether the program met its goals and expected outcomes/impacts.

To identify key concepts important to the structure and implementation of the training program, we used an exploratory technique described by Lincoln and Guba (1985). This technique is similar to free pile sorting methods used by cognitive anthropologists (Weller & Romney, 1988). First, we read each set of transcription field notes and grouped the similar comments together into piles and named them with overarching domains. Next we created themes that emerged from the text which

represented smaller groups of comments within the overarching domains. Outlier comments were set aside for further analysis in case they were found to have tangential importance to the evaluation.

### b. Semi-Structured Interviews

We conducted interviews with seven staff members as follows: one CEO/Director, Three Lead Trainers, two Assistant Trainers, and one Logistics Coordinator. All but one of the seven staff interviewed have military backgrounds. All interviews were audio taped and transcribed into field notes by independent transcribers. The mean duration of each interview was 25 minutes (range 14–33 minutes). Interviews were conducted using a standard interview guide, consisting of open-ended questions with probes for clarification and additional detail (Bernard, 2005). The interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

## X. TRAINER RESULTS

### a. Magis Group and Training Program

#### *i. Organizational Structure*

The resilience training company, the Magis Group, has an organizational structure composed of a founder who is the owner, CEO, and Lead Trainer with a staff of consultants who report directly to him. The staff is divided into two types of personnel, trainers who deliver the program and support staff. The support staff consists of a set of subject matter experts who developed the training materials, an administrative assistant, and a marketing and research coordinator. In terms of the trainer staff, there are four categories of trainers: Lead Trainer, Trainer, Assistant Trainer, and

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Logistics Coordinator. A “Lead Trainer” can provide all the components of WAROPS as well as train others and coordinate training in the field. “Trainers” have information they can “deliver down effectively”, but have not yet mastered all components, the expertise to coordinate the team in the field, or the knowledge to train others. “Assistant Trainers” can deliver some components but not all components. “Logistics Coordinators” set up equipment and assist with logistical issues and are new to the training process. In all of the trainer positions (except lead trainer) staff members are in the active process of instruction to step up to the next level in the training hierarchy.

Early in the WAROPS training at Fort Carson the Magis Group had seven trainers proficient in the program with a goal of retaining and training up to 60 new employees. The Magis Group did not realize its goal of rapid expansion in 2010. There was a turn-over of several key employees during the down time between trainings at Fort Carson. A Lead Trainer resigned, the Magis Group founding partner resigned, and an Assistant Trainer went into active duty. These trainers were replaced so that by the end of the post-deployment training cycle, the original number of trainers had not changed from the beginning of the training cycle.

### *ii. Long Term Goals and Scope of Training*

The Magis Group has optimistic long term goals for expansion of the resilience training program. The range of comments on the direction they would pursue for future trainings fell into the following categories: military, other government, and private sector. Most of the focus for expansion is within the military. The trainers said, “We excel at training for combat stress” so it is not surprising that they are pursuing an expansion area of interest with the Army, Marine Corps,

and the Navy. They have not made any connections in the Air Force at present time of the interviews.

One of the trainers mentioned that because the training is applicable to other government markets such as the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, that they will begin to work through outreach efforts with the “alphabet soup” of government organizations. They mentioned easy “cross-fertilization” into the police, fire, and EMS. They would like to expand trainings to first responders as well.

In terms of the private sector, it was mentioned that the resilience training was actually originally started in the corporate market so that the intention is to eventually come back around into the private sector. No specific outreach efforts were mentioned in this arena. Further, the WAROPS program is being restructured for focus on performance enhancement for athletics, called FIT-OPS, for the National Strength and Conditioning Association in Colorado.

### *iii. Staff Background, Qualifications, and Pre-Requisites*

The Magis Group trainers were asked about their backgrounds and qualifications and offered opinions about what it took to be a strong member of their team. While several mentioned that they have varied backgrounds and bring different qualifications, they agreed there was a set of characteristics that was essential for success. They mentioned the importance of having a background tailored to the audience, that strong presentation skills were needed, a degree was preferred, and that a personal connection with the program was a must.

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By far the most important characteristic that influences the hiring of a new trainee is that his background match that of the audience. In the case of WAROPS, prior military experience was required. One trainer said that it would be preferably in combat arms or special operations, while another disagreed noting that, “the critical component is having been deployed into a theatre of operations, not necessarily in combat arms; they need to have had a deployment experience and be able to bring that experience into their performance as a trainer.” This theme was echoed throughout the interviews. The trainers felt that having a similar background was the very best way to be able to connect with their audience, through shared experiences, language, and culture. For training operations outside of the military or for spouses or corporate marketing than military experience is not required. When Magis Group is asked to train police officers, they bring in police officers trained in the Magis program to do the trainings to speak the language of law enforcement.

A strong presentation skill set was the second most mentioned topic within the domain of qualifications. Possessing a background as an instructor is preferable in a new hire. One trainer said, “We don’t bring in the brilliant guy who has poor presentation skills. It’s better to get good presenters who know the background of the soldiers with some physiology knowledge, then train them up.” In other words they have to have solid public speaking skills or the ability to learn them quickly.

Personal integration of the resilience program was seen as a positive characteristic if a trainer was going to be success with the Magis Group. The trainers need buy-in themselves to believe the program will work and use it themselves. One interviewee stated that a success trainer needed to possess, “a strong drive to integrate one’s life experiences and operate from a place of personal mastery.”

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In terms of degree requirements, a university or college degree is preferable if it comes with acumen for training and adjusting information quickly, but it's not required. However, it was noted by one trainer that the core exercises component required a Masters-level Licensed Professional Counselor in case people go through "intense experiences" and need treatment.

### *iv. Program Training and Preparation*

The director and lead trainers outlined the training and preparation that goes into conducting the WAROPS program. The training model is a formal process tailored to fit the needs of each trainer, by filling in gaps when a trainer lacks a specific skill set. Trainings include focus on program content, presentation skills, and philosophy of Magis Group.

First, there is an intensive "train the trainer" week-long session of 40 hours incorporating the following elements as described by Magis Group: Completing a reading list, studying PowerPoint slides, reviewing discs for ftp access of recordings Magis has made, finishing various other assignments to prepare for actual training, completing testing, getting in front of a group and demonstrating capabilities as a facilitator.

If the trainer passes through the week-long session, they move to an observational component in the training cycle consisting of several months of practice with other trainers as their audience. Here the focus is on one component of the training. Once the trainer masters that component, he moves on to the next component. During this phase, trainers have materials that they study which are more complex than the materials distributed to the soldiers, but primarily similar so that they learn to focus on the topics that the soldiers will see in front of them in handouts. During this phase, trainers watch dozens of hours of themselves doing Magis presentations. They give each

other feedback, switch roles, and challenge each other with positive criticism. One of the lead trainers is a training coach by trade, so he coaches on delivery, connection to the audience, with the idea that you can technically deliver the material perfectly, but not necessarily connect with your audience. Trainers do “interpersonal work” in core exercises, learn BASE-R, neo-cortex, physiology, and nutrition. They work on rigorous presentation and performance training until the trainer is polished.

### b. WAROPS: Implementation Through the Eyes of the Trainers

The trainers were quick to give their impressions of the soldiers’ training experience. The comments they offered were a good insight into their perception of the soldiers’ acceptability of the program, their satisfaction, and the feedback loops they began to build into the program. Further, implementation issues arose that were important barriers to delivery and feasibility.

#### *i. Successes/What worked well*

1. *Soldier Satisfaction:* The foremost interest of the trainers was to get the message across, and they felt highly successful in their attempt. They felt it went remarkably smooth and that soldiers had high satisfaction. First they feel that the framework is so distinctive from what the soldiers are accustomed to, that the feedback is that WAROPS is “dialed in from a warrior’s perspective.” They saw good receptivity from soldiers and believe that they saw real value in it. One trainer said, “The soldiers connected to where the stress goes in their bodies. You see the lights go on at the end when they pull it all together, especially during the core exercises.” The trainers mentioned the feedback they got about how soldiers can apply the techniques

- immediately. Overall, the trainers felt that they are getting the message out to the soldiers.
2. *Military Background of Trainers:* A few issues cropped up as being especially important to the trainers as successes in the implementation of WAROPS. Based on the fact that the trainers are hired for their military experience, it is not surprising that the trainers believe the soldier buy-in of WAROPS to be a direct result of the military backgrounds of the trainers. A number of the trainers are Special Operations who have been trained to teach those who do not respond to traditional teaching techniques. Once trainer said, “We get their ethos down. We talk to soldiers in their own language. Know how they feel when they sit in that chair for a training.” They feel that the cultural connection to the soldiers was a prime reason for WAROPS soldier satisfaction.
  3. *Small groups, Interactivity, Multiple Trainers:* The trainers mentioned a few implementation issues that contributed to success as well. Breaking down the main body of trainees into smaller groups facilitated more interaction between trainer and trainee. Morphing the components that previously had many PowerPoint slides into an interactive presentation with fewer slides and the introduction of videos and music increased soldier interest, it was noted. Finally, as the new trainers gained experience they were added to the team bringing more view points, stories and perspectives to share with the soldiers. Increasing the team and switching up during training was not only valuable for keeping the soldiers engaged and interested, it also allowed the trainers to divide the workload thereby helping with fatigue.

4. *Feedback Loops*: The most important implementation tools for the trainers were mid-course corrections to presentation style and content. They employed a continuous feedback process for program and presentation refinement. They used participant feedback gathered informally after the trainings and through formal assessment surveys collected pre/post training. The director mentioned, “One of our goals is to be able to take feedback and incorporate it as quickly as we can.” One trainer said that because the staff was a small group, they can disseminate updates for changes and improvements easily. They relied upon each other for constant critiques of their delivery to tighten up and tailor their presentation skills. While the presentation skills refinement was an interactive and informal process, the changes to the training curriculum were methodic and more thoughtfully revised. The director and lead trainers revised the training content after the summer 2009 training sessions (pre-deployment for 4-4 and post-deployment for 3-4). They collectively came together and debated the incorporation of new content and revisions of current content. They added more multimedia to the presentations. They increased the practical examples and turned the focus to post-deployment and reintegration. They reprinted the handout materials to create a cleaner, easier to read booklet that mirrored the new training. In one trainer’s words, “We invested a lot of time after last year to revise the training to its present version...it was really in depth. These were technical changes that involved a lot of man hours.”

*ii. Challenges/What did not work well*

The challenges for the trainers came mainly from logistical issues including flow coordination, lack of space, timing of program in training cycle, and workload. Other issues that created barriers

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to success included lack of leader attendance, lack of buy-in from sub-sets of soldiers, and the lack of pre-training information for soldiers.

1. *Flow Coordination*: According to the trainers, the biggest issue was lack of effective coordination in the brigade leadership. The Magis Group was assigned a point of contact for each round of trainings. They would often receive the information about which company was to attend on any given day, but not the numbers of soldiers they should expect from that company. In terms of numbers, often too few showed up, sometimes too many. During the first round of trainings the attendance was between 16 to 170 soldiers per training. They found this to be extremely frustrating and impactful to successful implementation, both in terms of overcrowding and in terms of the importance of getting full participation from a company.
2. *Space Logistics*: Hand in hand with the challenge of the varying numbers of attendees, came the challenge of acquiring adequate space to conduct the trainings. The program was given very small rooms the first week it ran, which were overcrowded making it impossible to conduct the trainings as they had been designed. The second week of the first round of trainings, the gym was provided which brought along its own set of difficulties, namely the soldiers straining to hear the program and the soldiers lack of attention in such a large room. The trainers pointed out that eventually they developed the contacts to help with logistics on site which resulted in the second round of trainings (post-deployment for the 4-4) being conducted in an office building with adequate space.

3. *Workload:* The trainers faced a major challenge of the fatigue of a 70 hour work, for several months. There were very early morning start times, two and three sessions per day and sometimes a truncated lunch break. They acknowledged that “This was tough and emotionally draining, but we see satisfaction at each day our critiques are great!”
4. *Timing in training cycle:* The WAROPS training was supposed to occur before soldiers received other training and performance work ups so it could be ingrained during those exercises. It did not occur as planned. The trainers felt that WAROPS should be early in the training cycle before JRTC and field exercises. Then a short course could be implemented just before deployment. In an ideal setting, they would like to see shorter blocks spread over time doing instruction then application in a titration schedule.
5. *Non-attendance of Leadership:* During pre-deployment training, trainers had a disappointment in the underrepresentation of leaders and sustainers in the core training which was an expression of the command lack of enforcement of attendance. They had no control over it and felt it was  
  
“Absolutely critical that they attend and it can undermine the program efficacy if we do not have leaders.” Therefore to make up for it, when they conducted the special sessions for leader/sustainer training, they had to replicate whole components of the core training which puts the focus on the individual rather than on how to help their soldiers. In the WAROPS training model, everyone must do the core training first, then leaders get the sustainer training.

6. *Buy-in from Hard Cases*: The last main challenge faced by the Magis Group trainers was that of gaining buy-in from soldiers with negative attitudes. The trainers acknowledged that there are, “The 10% that will never crack. The negative group consists of young kids that feel it does not apply because they have not deployed and on the other end the experienced soldier who feels after 18 years into this without this training, so why do I need it? Somewhere in between we get the people that are appreciative and will use it.” They felt the strain of getting up in from of enlisted soldiers day after day but it was toughest challenge for the trainers to get buy-in from the old timers who are set in their ways. Further, to get a new message across to soldiers who are set in their ways in a four-hour training seemed insurmountable to them.
7. *Program Communication*: One minor issue the trainers felt was a hindrance to the program, was the misinformation that was communicated in the FRAGO the soldiers received from commanders pre-training. The program was given a different name (sometimes called “Mental Toughness”) and described (in the eyes of the trainers) incorrectly or not at all. The trainers felt that this wrong description weakened the perception of WAROPS. Furthermore, soldiers frequently had no notification about the length of the training and upon finding out it was four hours in length were negative and resistant. This was an obstacle that had to be overcome by the trainers within the first few minutes of the training session.

c. Intended Impact on Soldiers

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The trainers acknowledge that the adoption of skills and new frameworks is a slow process and that the WAROPS model is a different type of resilience training for many soldiers, which might add to the difficulties of adoption. They feel that utilizing the theoretical portion of athletic performance models that focus on resilience is a vehicle to get the information accepted by soldiers more readily. They designed the program with an intended impact in the short term (i.e., on awareness, knowledge, beliefs), the intermediate term (i.e., behavior and environmental change), and the long term (i.e. decrease in adverse health events).

- i. *Knowledge, Beliefs, Attitudes*: The outcomes most frequently mentioned by the trainers when talking about the intended outcomes from WAROPS, were changes in the participants' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes about stress management and resilience. They hoped to "Open the door to a set of skills that soldiers can use that do not have stigma attached and can help with stress management and resilience." They sought to design a program to create, "Fundamental changes in their level of awareness; how their body-brain-nervous system can effectively respond and adapt and what they can do to support that process - building resilience and adaptation". They recognize that soldiers get placed in situations where they have experienced trauma and they can become totally disempowered. Therefore one of the main goals is to create the perception of empowerment and a sense of owning a degree of deliberate control over their minds and bodies. Through an understanding of how the how to manipulate the involuntary responses in the mind and its connection to the body, trainers aim to increase the perception that soldiers can control their brains and responses, mitigating negative effects. They feel that if the soldiers' perception is that they are or can become more resilient as a result of

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WAROPS than the program has already had a salutary effect. We have planted a seed of awareness; can grow into a very effective approach.

- ii. *Behavior Change:* The WAROPS training program is an individual-level intervention that teaches basic neuroscience along with sets of exercises to mitigate stress. The goal is for the soldier to incorporate the exercises into his daily routine. Many of the components are basic skills that soldiers already possess. For instance, trainers are asking them to take conscious control of their breath and thoughts. In the words of one trainer, “The best outcome would be for a soldier to take a chaotic, tactical, stressful situation and instead of a knee jerk reaction. I want him to create a response that is controlled.” The trainers want to see the application of the new skills on a regular basis by the soldiers as well as the implementation of skills with others (leaders, teams, families). However, in order for the intermediate behavior change outcome of practicing WAROPS exercises to take place, an environmental change needs to occur. The soldiers need the support of commanders to carve out time in the day and to encourage individuals to do the exercises. The WAROPS team would like to work “down range with leaders, platoon sergeants, and individuals in the field, under fire, and they can experience the efficacy of WAROPS. That will support outcomes on the back end.” It was stated that the skills will not be effectively sustained without the participation of leadership. The trainers did not have a clear understanding of the level of commitment of the commanders in terms of participation and implementation.
- iii. *Outcomes:* Ultimately, it was the long term outcomes promised by the Magis Group that got WAROPS training into Ft. Carson. These long term objectives focus on the most important health and social outcomes facing the Army today, including:

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- Significant drop in adverse stress events when soldiers return from war
- Mitigate stress
- Increase resilience
- Performance enhancement
- Suicide goes down
- Domestic violence decreases
- Police incidents goes down
- Increase in effective retention

The hope that these outcomes are achieved was summed up by one trainer:

*“I leave Ft. Carson and I hope it works. It is based on whether they apply what we show them. Did they buy in to it? I just hope they do because it was obvious that some soldiers are on the edge, pissed off at world with 10,000 yard stare, and having tough times.”*

### d. Personal Goals

When asked about whether the trainers had achieved their goal and purpose for the training, they replied that were very satisfied with their work and felt it was a successful undertaking with a few caveats. They felt that it was an effective execution in the face of all the challenges. Most trainers based their success on participant satisfaction. They associated happy soldiers with success. One felt that his job was done successfully because he “Led my horse to water... my purpose was to expose them to a scientific technique that will enhance their skills and help them manage stress in practical applications, then I have achieved my goal.” Another mentioned that his goal is to always have maximum impact in his work and soldiers were the most in need of resilience training. One

trainer's response was representative of the deep care and patriotism exhibited by the Magis Group, along with the acknowledgement that they are professionals making a living from training. He said:

*"We want Magis Group to be successful business, but we also have an intrinsic desire to make soldiers better than they are right now. To protect our country, to protect each other abroad. Today, I taught the medics the nine classes of supply which lives can depend on. They will know this today, tomorrow, and forever. They were amazed."*

### **XI. CONCLUSIONS FOR TRAINER ANALYSIS**

The dominant themes coming from the trainer data were those of trainer commitment, dedication, and motivation. They live to serve the soldier and believe deeply in the information they seek to impart of the Servicemembers. Their military backgrounds put them in a unique position to be accepted by soldiers and to understand what the experience of being "down range". These are essential elements that Magis Group brought to resilience training in the Army.

Because they are experienced professional trainers, they clearly understood and implemented feedback loops for program improvement. They built this process into their daily schedule and would debrief trainings to act in real time in response to participant soldiers' suggestions. They offered a high level of flexibility in delivery. The continuous performance improvement was value-added for the Army, but made it difficult to assess this training program because there was no fidelity between each day, week, and month of training sessions.

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Logistics problems were a major issue for implementation of the large-scale training program and trainers had to be extremely flexible. The space was often inadequate for the experiential elements of the training (exercises in a small room with up to 200 soldiers). The timing was changable. The attendance numbers were erratic. These resource and communications issues are beyond the scope of this evaluation but it should be noted that the trainers responded in profession manner, were very flexible, and continued to exhibit positive attitudes throughout any adversities that they experienced.

The feasibility and replicability of this type of training model which employs a professional trainer/soldier staff is dependent upon the funding the Army is willing to put forth for stand up. As the trainers said there is a special type of personnel that this group would need to find, hire, and train to get the kinds of high energy, highly motivated trainers that we observed in 2009 and 2010. It was clear that the rigorous training and practice the staff undergoes is not trivial. Soldier buy in, satisfaction, and acceptability were very high in direct response to this model.

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## **Appendix A. Interview/Focus Group Questionnaires and Probes**

### **SECTION I: STANDARD TRAINING – LOWER RANKS – NO PREVIOUS WAROPS ATTENDANCE**

### **SECTION II. STANDARD TRAINING – LOWER RANKS – PREVIOUS WAROPS ATTENDANCE**

### **SECTION III. STANDARD TRAINING – LEADERSHIP – NO PREVIOUS WAROPS ATTENDANCE**

### **SECTION IV. STANDARD TRAINING – LEADERSHIP – PREVIOUS WAROPS ATTENDANCE**

### **SECTION V: QUESTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP MODULE**

### **SECTION VI: SUSTAINERS MODULE**

### **SECTION VI. TRAINERS**

#### **Section I: Standard training – lower ranks (E1 through E4) – no previous WAROPS attendance**

1. Is this your first deployment?  
If not, how many times have you been deployed? (combat deployments)
2. What did you think of the training overall?  
On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best), how would you rate today's training session? Why did you give it this score?
3. Was the material new for you (e.g. not part of your pre-deployment training)?  
If not, where did you learn this material prior to today's training?  
Did you learn any of these techniques from other soldiers who took the training previously?
4. Did you learn anything useful/helpful?  
If yes, describe:
5. Did the training cover anything that was NOT useful/helpful?  
If yes, describe:
6. What did you think of the trainers? (their background/experience, presentation,)
7. What did you think of the hand-out/pamphlet?  
Do you expect to use it?
8. Do you expect to use what you learned in today's training during your current reintegration (within the next month or so)?

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If yes, describe how and when you expect to use it (i.e., in stressful situations, with family, relationships, at work, etc)

If not, why not?

9. Do you expect to use what you learned in today's training beyond the reintegration period?

If yes, describe how and when you expect to use it.

If not, why not?

10. Do you expect to use what you learned in today's training in future deployments?

If yes, describe:

If no, why not?

11. What (if anything) would make the training more useful?

12. How does this training compare to other trainings you have received?

13. Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

### **Section II. Standard training – lower ranks (E1 through E4) – previous WAROPS attendance**

Intro: We're going to be asking about use of skills. It might bring up a memory that's uncomfortable for you. You don't have to answer any questions that might make you uncomfortable.

1. Was this your first deployment? If no, how many times have you been deployed?
2. How did today's training compare with the pre-deployment training session? (e.g. structure, content)
3. What did you think of today's trainers?
4. Did you use any of the WAROPS skills during deployment?  
If so, what particular skills did you use? (i.e., breathing, simulation, etc) How did you use them?  
Were these skills helpful? If yes, in what way? Was there a specific situation you know you handled differently because of things you learned during the training?  
If not, are there reasons why you didn't use these skills?
5. Did you show these skills to anybody? Did you learn them from others during deployment? If yes, tell me more about that...
6. Are any of these skills being used in PT or at the company/platoon/unit level? If yes, tell me more about that...when/how did it help? If no, should it have been?
7. Did you have enough training before you were deployed to use these skills during deployment?
8. Now that you have had the training pre and post deployment, how do you feel about its timing? (in the training and deployment cycle) Would you recommend it be given Army wide?
9. Do you handle stress differently now that you've had the training?
10. Did you ever refer to the printed materials you were given? How could they be improved?
11. Are there any other comments you would like to share?

### **Section III. Standard training – leadership (E5 and above and Officers)– no previous WAROPS attendance**

1. Is this your first deployment?  
If not, how many times have you been deployed? (combat deployments)

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2. What did you think of the training overall?  
On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best), how would you rate today's training session? Why did you give it this score?
3. Was the material new for you (e.g. not part of your pre-deployment training)?  
If not, where did you learn this material prior to today's training?  
Did you learn any of these techniques from other soldiers who took the training previously?
4. Did you learn anything useful/helpful?  
If yes, describe:
5. Did the training cover anything that was NOT useful/helpful to you?  
If yes, describe:
6. Did the training cover anything that was NOT useful/helpful to your soldiers?  
If yes, describe:
7. What did you think of the trainers? (their background/experience, presentation,)
8. What did you think of the hand-out/pamphlet?  
Do you expect to use it?
9. Do you expect to use the skills that you learned in today's training?  
If yes, describe how and when you expect to use it (i.e., in stressful situations, with family, relationships, at work, etc)  
If not, why not?
10. Do you expect that your soldiers will use the skills that they learned in today's training?  
If yes, describe how and when you expect they will use it (i.e., in stressful situations, with family, relationships, at work, etc)  
If not, why not?
11. Do you expect to use what you learned in today's training in future deployments?  
If yes, describe:  
If no, why not?
12. Do you expect to use what you learned in today's training with your soldiers in future deployments?  
If yes, describe:  
If no, why not?
14. What (if anything) would make the training more useful?
13. Is it up to you to implement new trainings?  
If yes, will you implement this training with your soldiers?  
If yes, how? If no, why not?
14. How does this training compare to other trainings you have received?
15. Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

### **Section IV. Standard training – leadership (E5 and above and Officers)– previous WAROPS attendance**

1. Was this your first deployment? If no, how many times have you been deployed?
2. How did today's training compare with the pre-deployment training session? (e.g. structure, content)

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3. What did you think of today's trainers?
4. Did you use any of the WAROPS skills during deployment?  
If so, what particular skills did you use? (i.e., breathing, simulation, etc) How did you use them?  
Were these skills helpful? If yes, in what way? Was there a specific situation you know you handled differently because of things you learned during the training?
5. Did you use any of the WAROPS skills with your soldiers during deployment?  
If so, what particular skills did you use with them? (i.e., breathing, simulation, etc) How did your soldiers use them? Do you believe that these skills were helpful to them? If yes, in what way? Was there a specific situation you know your soldiers handled differently because of things they learned during the training?  
If not, are there reasons why they didn't use these skills?
6. Did you show these skills to anybody? Did you learn them from others during deployment? If yes, tell me more about that...
7. Are any of these skills being used in PT or at the company/platoon/unit level? If yes, tell me more about that...when/how did it help? If no, should it have been?
8. Did you have enough training before you were deployed to use these skills or to aide your soldiers in using these skills during deployment?
9. Now that you have had the training pre and post deployment, how do you feel about its timing? (in the training and deployment cycle) Would you recommended it be given Army wide?
10. Do you handle stress differently now that you've had the training?
11. Do your soldiers handle stress differently now that they have had the training?
12. Did you ever refer to the printed materials you were given? How could they be improved?
13. After the last training was it up to you to implement the WAROPS training with your soldiers?  
If yes, did you implement this training? If yes, how? If no, why not?  
How often did you have your soldiers practice the skills?  
When did your soldiers practice these skills, e.g. downtime?
14. Are there any other comments you would like to share?

### Section V: Questions for Leadership module

1. What are your overall impressions of today's presentation?
2. Did your view of the WAROPS program change as a result of this presentation?
3. Does your attendance at today's presentation affect the likelihood of your participation in the upcoming WAROPS training?
4. Do you think your participation or involvement in the upcoming WAROPS training will have an impact on your soldiers?
5. What did you think of the presenters? (their background/experience, presentation,)
6. Did this presentation affect your opinion about whether WAROPS should be an Army-wide program?
7. Do you think this type of program will be effective with your soldiers?
8. Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

### Section VI: Sustainers Module

1. What did you think of the sustainer training overall?  
On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being the worst and 10 being the best), how would you rate today's training session? Why did you give it this score?
2. Do you feel that you are adequately prepared to teach these skills to others?
3. What aspects of the sustainer training were helpful/not helpful in preparing you to be able to teach these skills to others?
4. What did you think of the hand-out/pamphlet?  
Do you expect to use it?
5. What would facilitate/hinder you in teaching these skills to others?
6. During deployment? Other situations?
7. Do you have any other comments you would like to share?

### Section VI. Trainers

1. What is the organizational structure of the Magis Group and how has it changed since last year?
2. How are the Magis Group trainers prepared and trained?
3. What are the qualifications for the Magis Group trainers and staff?
4. Are you planning on expanding the scope of the Magis Group to other Military branches or government organizations?
5. What did you think of the training overall?
  - What worked well? What did not work well?
6. Do you think you achieved your goal or purpose for the training?
7. What changes have you made to the training since last year?
8. What changes did you make to the training throughout this training cycle?
9. What is the process for introducing new items to the training or changing the curriculum?
10. What type of outcomes or impact are you hoping to get from the training?
  - Such as health related outcomes or behavioral changes
11. Are there any changes you plan on making for future trainings?

#### Additional Questions:

Depending on how this training is conducted the following questions can be asked.

1. How was the survey feedback incorporated into the training?
2. What feedback have you received so far from the NCO's during this training?