



ARMY HEARING PROGRAM IN EUROPE

Program Status Report

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Introduction

The Army Hearing Program Status Report - Europe (AHPSRE) provides a means for the Hearing Program Manager for Europe (HPM-E) to monitor, assess, and report aspects of the program as required by Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 6055.12, Department of the Army Pamphlet (DA PAM) 40-501, Army in Europe Regulation (AER) 40-501, and the Chief of Staff of the Army's Safety and Occupational Health objectives.

IAW AER 40-501 7(a)(17) the HPM-E is responsible for reporting program participation and progress metrics through the OCSURG, HQ USAREUR, to the CG, USAREUR on a regular basis. Chapter 9 of DA PAM 40-501 directs HPMs to collect and report certain metrics for the purpose of program evaluation. The report captures all of the required elements in the chapter and provides a vehicle for the collection of Measures of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectives (MOE) in order to report the metrics as directed.

The report is divided into four sections that correspond with the reporting requirements detailed in DA PAM 40-501: Hearing Readiness, Clinical Hearing Services, Operational Hearing Services, and Hearing Conservation.

The program consists of 2 military audiologists (72Cs), 2 civilian audiologists, 4 civilian technicians, 6 contractor technicians, with all other sites operating on borrowed military manpower. Hearing readiness and hearing conservation surveillance testing is performed routinely at 16 sites across EUCOM and CENTCOM AORs.

Clinical service areas include Vilseck, Grafenwoehr, and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center with teleaudiology appointments available at Vicenza, Ansbach, and Stuttgart. The clinic performs diagnostic audiology, hearing aid, hearing readiness, hearing conservation, and SRP services to all units and entities (all branches and components) within the health services area.

Executive Summary

This report provides the data for the responses recorded from **September 2021**.

Hearing readiness remains above the Army goal of 90%, and is essentially static over the previous months. The incidence of Hearing Health Injuries for Military increased from the previous month and is currently AMBER. MIL injury rates have steadily increased over the past 12 months from 4% in OCT 2020 to over 5% in SEPT 2021. Civilian rates are GREEN at 0%. While these rates are highly variable, the overall 12-month trend is generally flat. MIL STS Follow-up rates continue to improve, but are still below the average for Compo 1, and remain below the 70% goal (67.69%). CIV STS Follow-up rates are RED at 29.73% and have fallen over the past two reporting periods. These rates are significantly below the averages of other regions and installations within the active component.

AHP-E reported 4 DOD recordable hearing injuries in September 2021, all in Military personnel. This represents a significant decrease from August. These injuries are required to be investigated as Class D accidents and must be entered into the OSHA 300 log for CIV and into ASMIS 2.0 for both MIL and CIV.

USAREUR-AF published an Army Hearing Program command emphasis letter 04 OCT, which is anticipated to engender greater participation in the program at the unit level and lead to increased follow-up rates and decreased injury rates through improved local implementation.

September 2021			
	AHP-E	AHP Goal	Vs. August 2021
Readiness			
Hearing Ready	93.87%	>90%	↔
HRC 3	0.84%	<1%	↑
HRC 4	5.3%	<6%	↔
Workload			
Readiness Tests	2604		↓
Hcon Tests	114		↕
Diagnostic Encounters	226		↕
STS			
STS-MIL	5.7%	<3%	↑
STS-CIV	0%	<4%	↔
Follow-up			
F/U-MIL	67.69%	>70%	↑
F/U-CIV	29.73%	>70%	↔
Injury			
Recordable Injury - MIL	4		↓
Recordable Injury - CIV	0		↔

Hearing Readiness

Deployability status

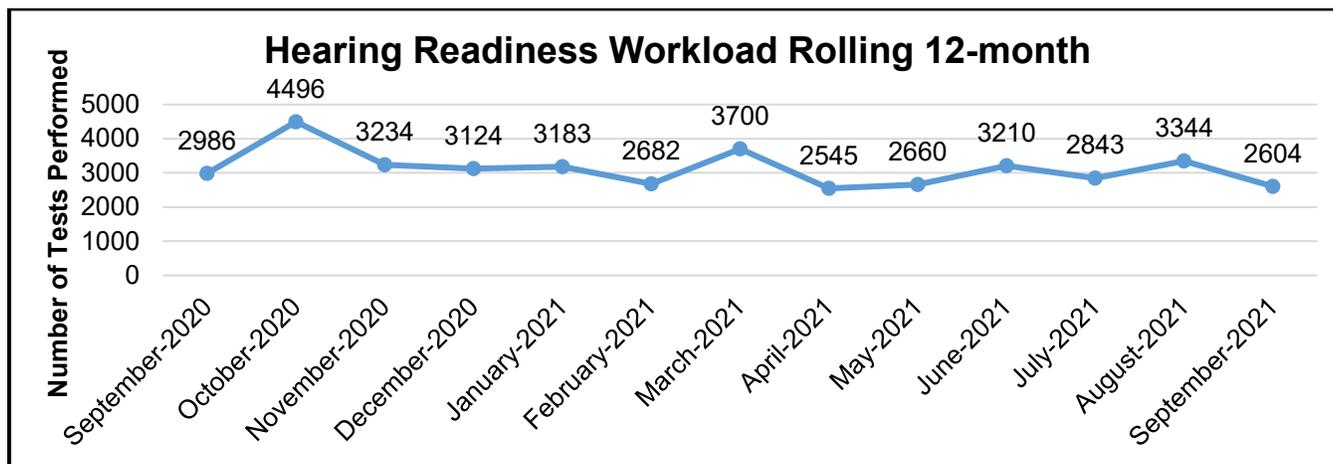
DA PAM 40-501 9-3a requires reporting on the number of Ready (Hearing Readiness Classifications [HRC] 1 and 2) and non-Ready (HRC3x and 4x) Soldiers at least quarterly. The Army Hearing Program goals for Ready Soldiers is 90% or greater. The goal for HRC 3x is less than 1% and the goal for HRC 4x is less than 6%. As of the end of September 2021, USAREUR-AF had an active duty Ready percentage of **93.87%** (18.9k/20k). HRC 3x is **0.84%** (169/20k) and a HRC 4x is **5.3%** (1067/20k). AHP-E number of Ready Soldiers is significant better than the active component. There is slight decrease noted from August for HRC3x. However, HRC 4x rates are stable compared to August 2021. The MEDDAC-B military provider was away from clinic for two weeks in September, leading to fewer clinical encounters which impacted the HRC3x metric.

Source: MEDPROS Hearing Readiness Report

Workload

DA PAM 40-501 9-3b(1)(a) requires at least monthly, that the HPM report the number of Solider hearing tests provided at a given location based on the DOEHRS-DR Records Received Report. During September 2021, 2,604 hearing readiness tests were administered across the USAREUR-AF footprint. Historic information is displayed below.

Source: DOEHRS-HC Daily Summary Report

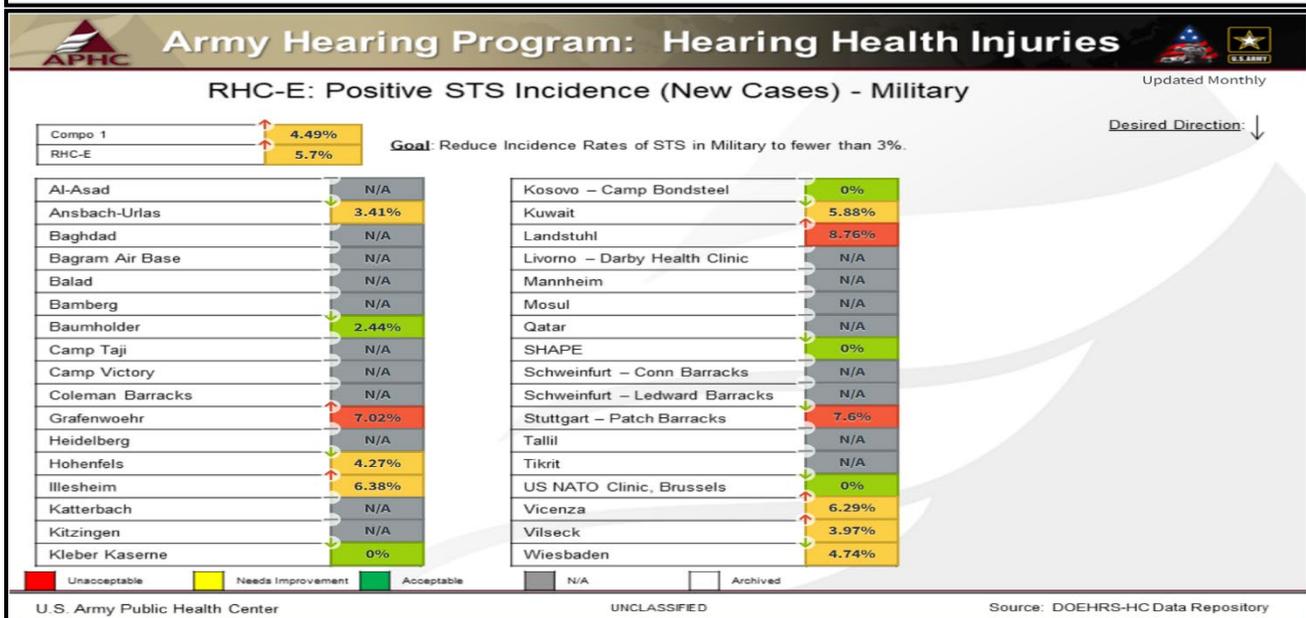
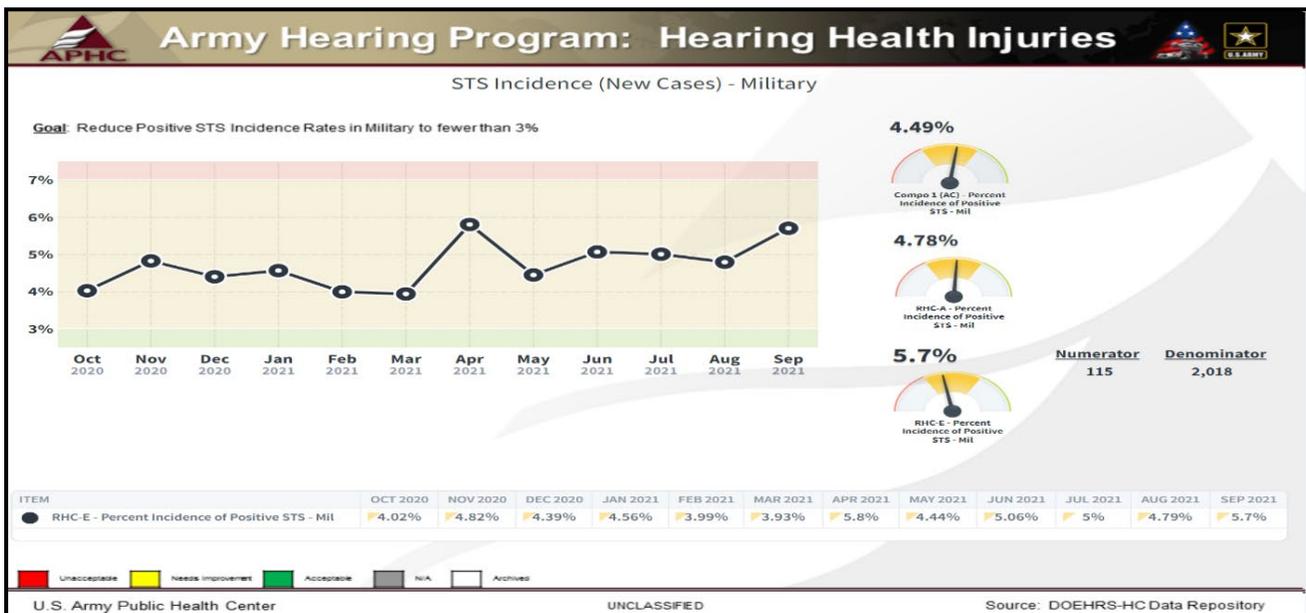


Location	Tests	Change	Location	Tests	Change
Ansbach	126	↓	Kuwait	119	↑
Baumholder	236	↑	Landstuhl	331	↑
Caserma Del-Din	82	↓	SHAPE	47	↔
Grafenwoehr	404	↓	Stuttgart - Patch Barracks	321	↑
Hohenfels	141	↑	US NATO Clinic, Brussels	22	↑
Illesheim	102	↓	Vicenza	212	↓
Kleber Kaserne	38	↓	Vilseck	174	↓
Kosovo - Camp Bondsteel	18	↑	Wiesbaden	231	↓

Hearing Health Injuries – MIL

DA PAM 40-501 9-3b(2)(c) requires reporting of new noise-related injury cases, using the positive Significant Threshold Shift (STS) report, at least quarterly. The percent new cases identifies the incidence of hearing health injuries at a given installation. The AHP goal for military new cases is less than 3%. AHP-E had a new case rate of **5.7%** for September 2021, no change from August 2021. AHP-E injury rates for military personnel are slightly worse than the active component average and ranks third of the four Regional Health Commands. More concerning is the upward trend noted over the past 12 months.

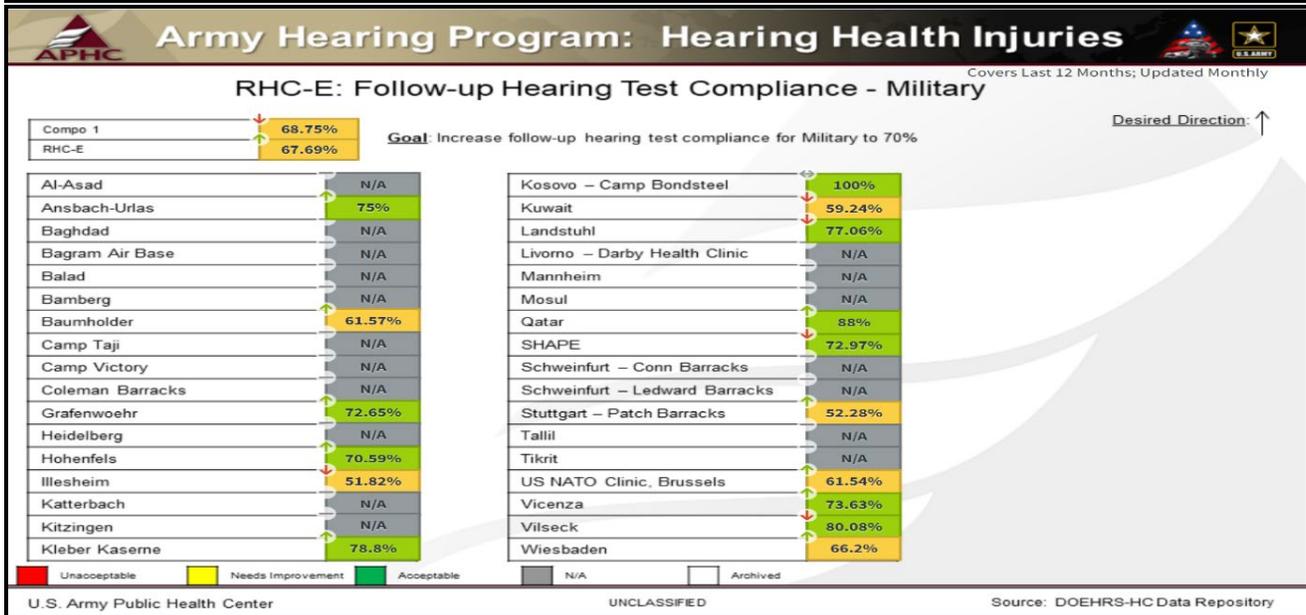
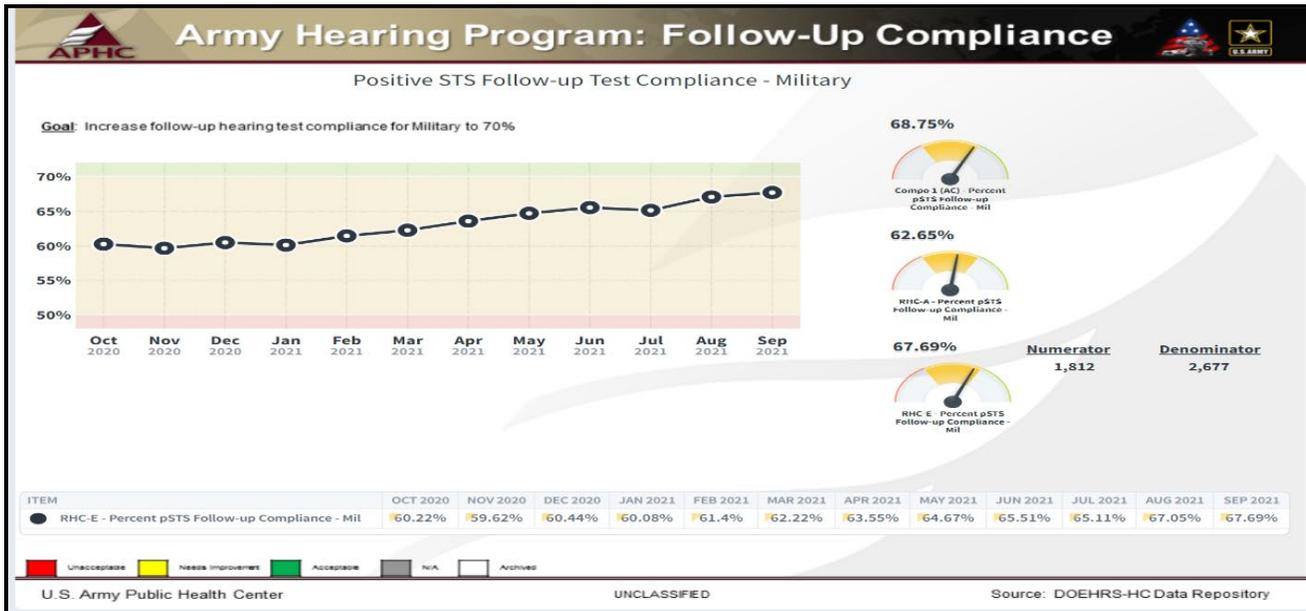
Source: DOEHS-HC DR STS Summary Report



STS Follow-up Rates

DA PAM 40-501 9-3b(2)(a) requires the reporting of STS follow-up testing compliance. Follow-up is required per DODI 6055.12 and DA PAM 40-501 when an STS is recorded on a periodic test, and must be completed within 90 days for Soldiers. MEDPROS tracks follow-up compliance as a readiness issue, and Soldiers who present with an STS on their periodic examination will remain 'not-ready' in MEDPROS until the completion of the follow-up process (HRC 4B). If not completed within 90 days, they will become HRC 4C and will remain 'not-ready' until the process is re-initiated and completed. The AHP goal for follow-up compliance is greater than 70%. AHP-E follow-up compliance for Soldiers' STS is **67.69%** for September 2021. Trending shows continual improvement, and AHP-E's follow-up compliance rates are slightly worse than the active component average.

Source: DOEHS-HC DR STS Summary Report



PTS/TTS

DA PAM 40-501 9-3b(2)(b) requires reporting of the rates of permanent threshold shift (PTS) versus temporary threshold shift (TTS). However, these data are dependent upon personnel completing the required post-STS follow-up. If one exhibits an STS on their periodic examination and does not return for follow-up, the STS is necessarily considered a PTS since there are no data to rule it out. However, if one returns for follow-up completion, it is possible that the STS will resolve following auditory rest and can be counted as a TTS.

Because AHP-E follow-up rates have been historically low, TTS/PTS rates cannot be considered meaningful at this time.

Any STS, temporary or not, is an indication that personnel have been over exposed to noise and/or ototoxins and provides an opportunity for intervention by AHP personnel to re-educate and refit hearing protection devices.

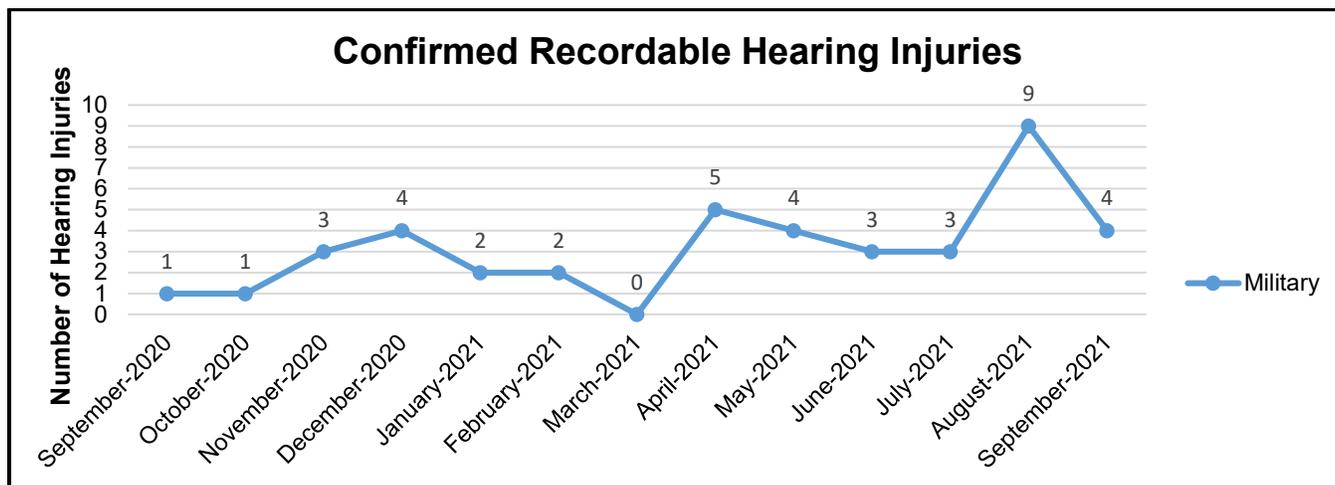
Hearing Health Education

DA PAM 40-501 9-3c calls for reporting of the number of units provided hearing health education (HHE) as required in DODI 6055.12. AHP-E has not provided unit-level hearing health education since 2019. For September 2021, AHP-E delivered HHE to 0 Soldiers. Unit level hearing

Recordable Hearing Injury (MIL)

DA Pam 40-501 9-3c(2) requires reporting hearing loss rates to the Safety and Occupational Health offices. This report is compared to the accident reports generated by commanders and safety office. DODI 6055.07 and DA PAM 385-40 require reporting of occupational hearing illness and injury, which is classified by AR 385-10 as a Class D accident. Confirmed recordable losses for Soldiers are listed below. AHP-E had 1 confirmed DOD recordable hearing injuries in September 2021 and the number has been at 5 or fewer over the past 11 months, but the overall trend is moving in the wrong direction. This has to be interpreted carefully, however, as the increase can potentially be attributed to increased reporting rather than an actual increase in injuries.

Source: AHP-E Internal Recordable Hearing Injury Tracker

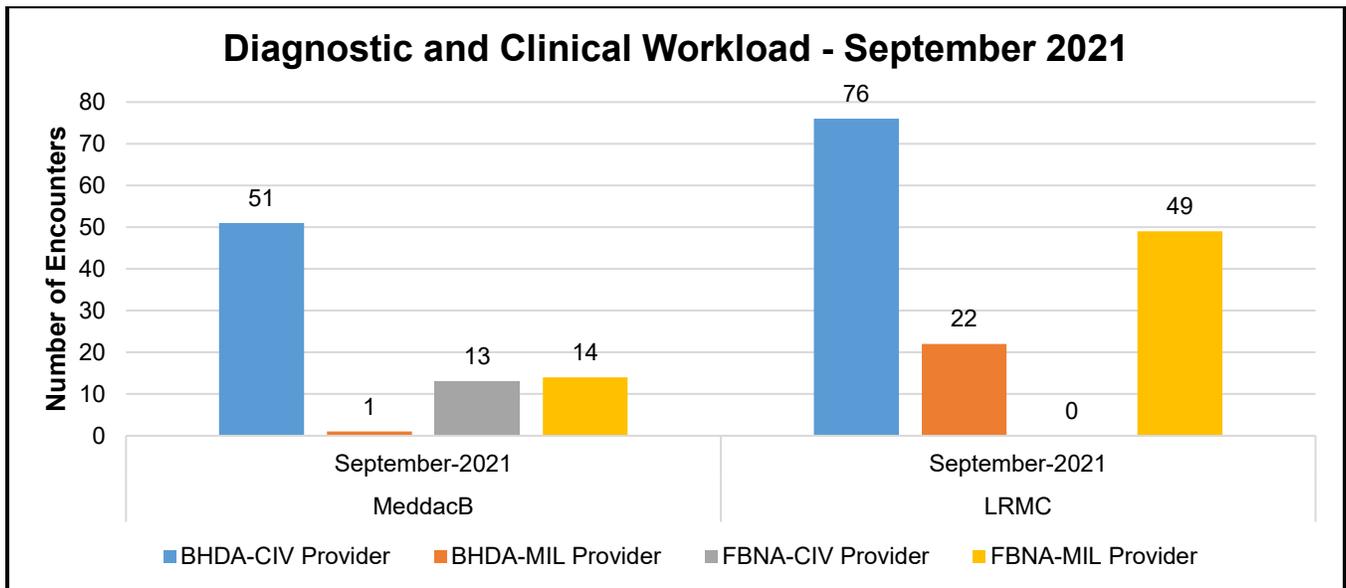
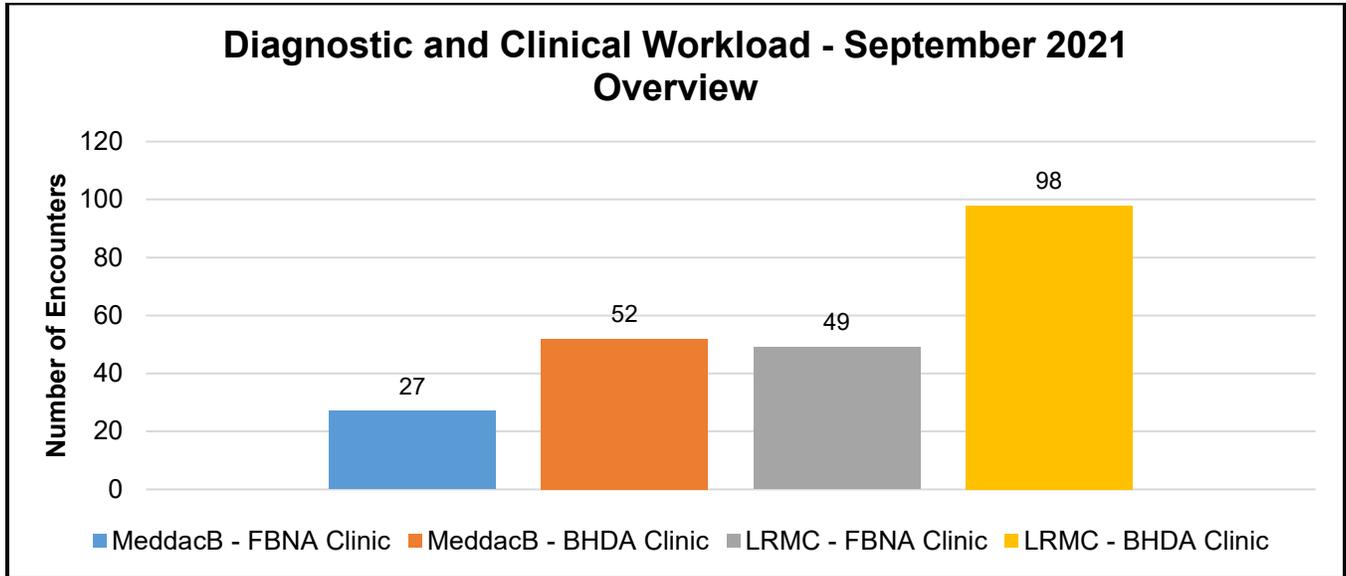


Clinical Hearing Services

Workload

Workload accounting for diagnostic and clinical audiometric encounters performed by Civilian and Military audiologists is below. LRMC MIL Provider includes 1 Army audiologist and 1 Air Force audiologist (Army – FBNA – 38, BHDA – 4; Air Force – FBNA – 11, BHDA 18). The decrease in clinical services provided at MEDDAC-B in influenced by the absence of the MIL provider for much of the month due to missions and training outside the clinic and annual leave.

Source: AHLTA Reporting



Operational Hearing Services

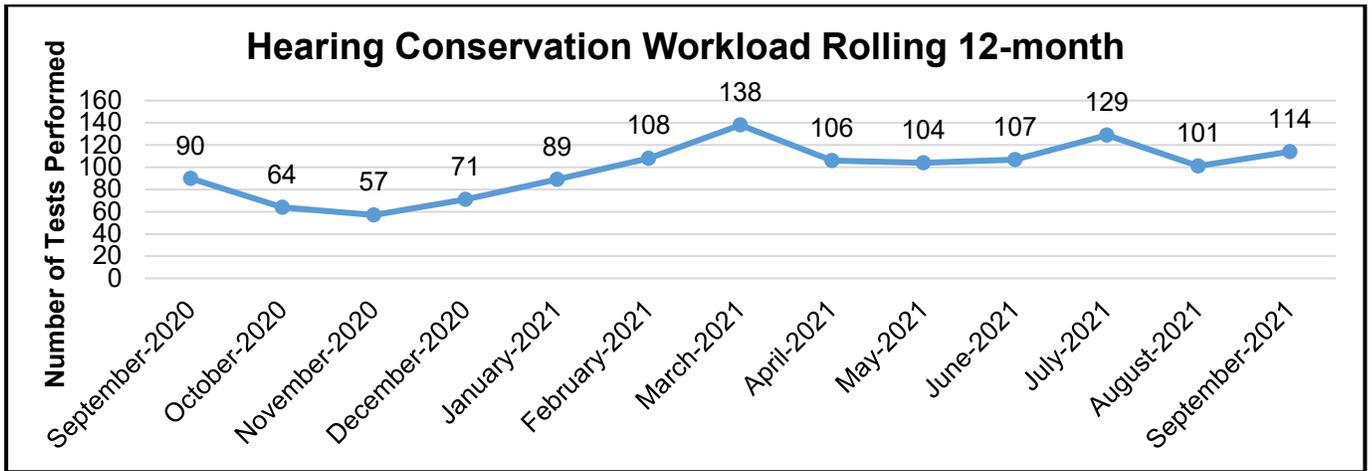
DA PAM 40-501 9-5 requires operational hearing service evaluations, which provide commanders and key leaders with relevant information regarding the hearing health of Soldiers in operational and training environments. Announced and unannounced inspections of unit operations will be conducted periodically, but no less than annually, and will be reported through safety, range control (if applicable), and unit chains of command to the senior brigade-level or higher commander. Inspections include static and maneuver ranges, as well as base camp assessments. AHP-E conducted 2 static range inspections in September 2021, and 1 noise hazard area inspection.

Hearing Conservation

Workload

DA PAM 40-501 9-6a(1)(a) requires that the HPM report the number of Civilian Hearing Conservation (HCon) tests provided at a given location at least monthly. These data are obtained from the DOEHRS-HC daily report log. See workload below. Workload has increased steadily over the past 12 months, indicating an increased testing of noise-exposed CIV personnel. Note: noise-exposed local national (LN) employee are not captured in these numbers as they are tested off-site on contract.

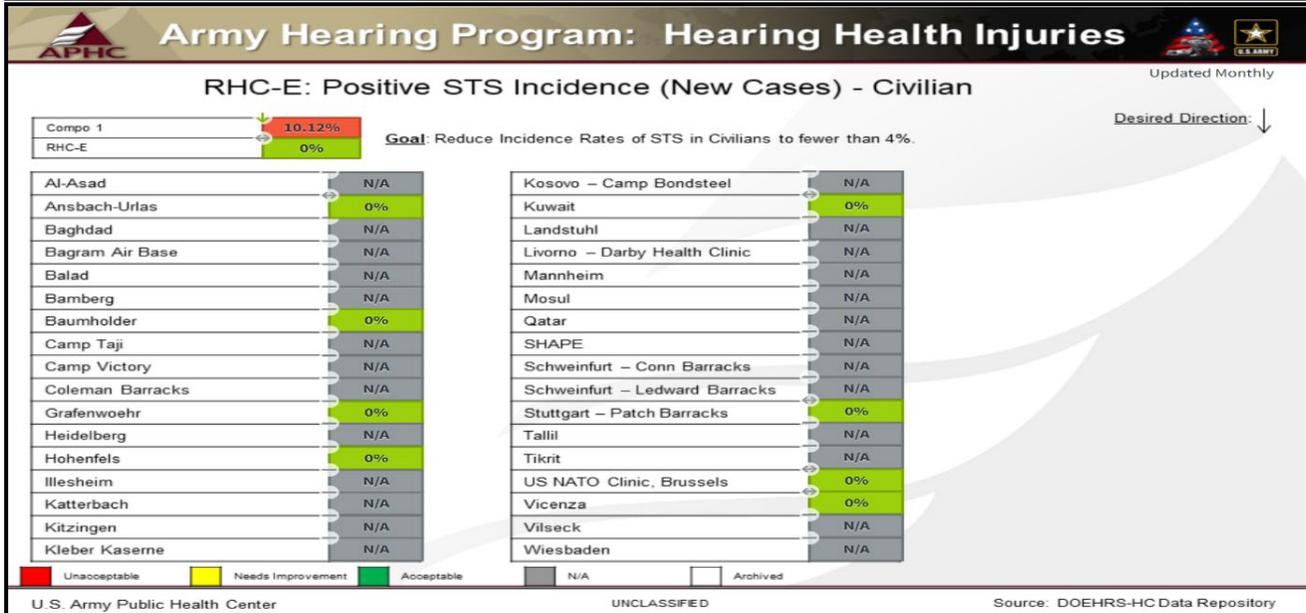
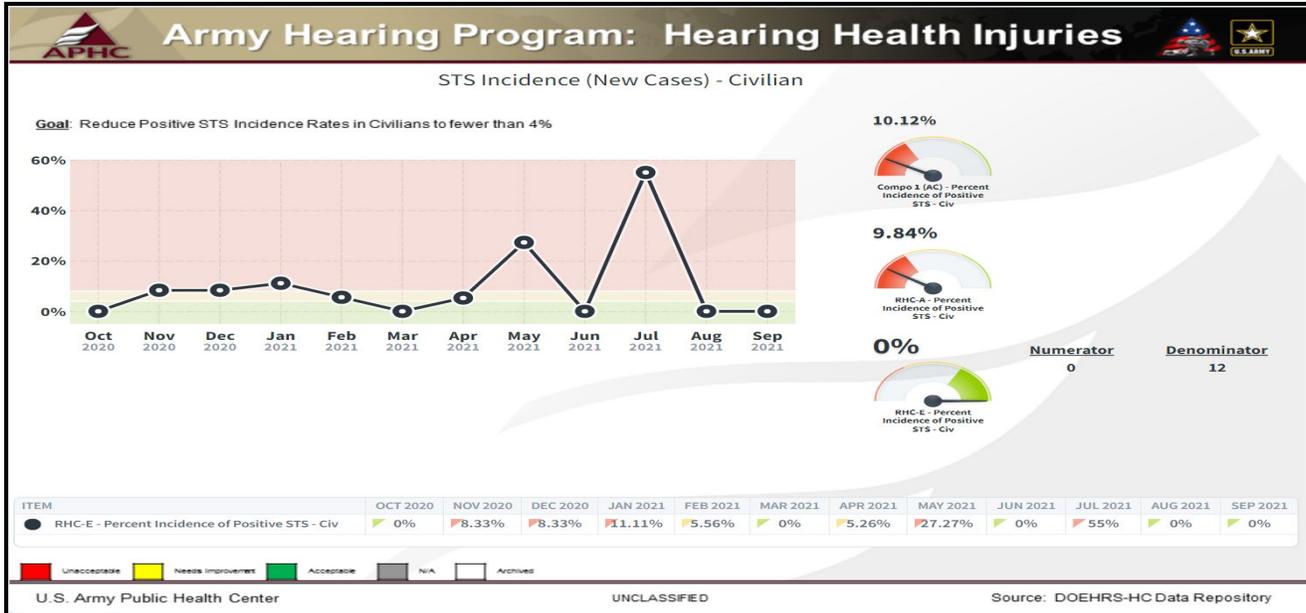
Source: DOEHRS-HC



Hearing Health Injuries – CIV

DA PAM 40-501 9-6a(1)(b) requires reporting of new STS cases attributed to noise exposure, using the positive STS report, at least quarterly. The percent new cases identifies the incidence of STS at a given installation. The AHP goal for Civilian new case STS is less than 4%. AHP-E had a new case STS rate of **0%** for September 2021. The new case STS rate for Civilians is highly variable due to the relatively small numbers of Civilians tested each month. AHP-E CIV STS rate is significantly lower than the active component, as well as the other RHC areas.

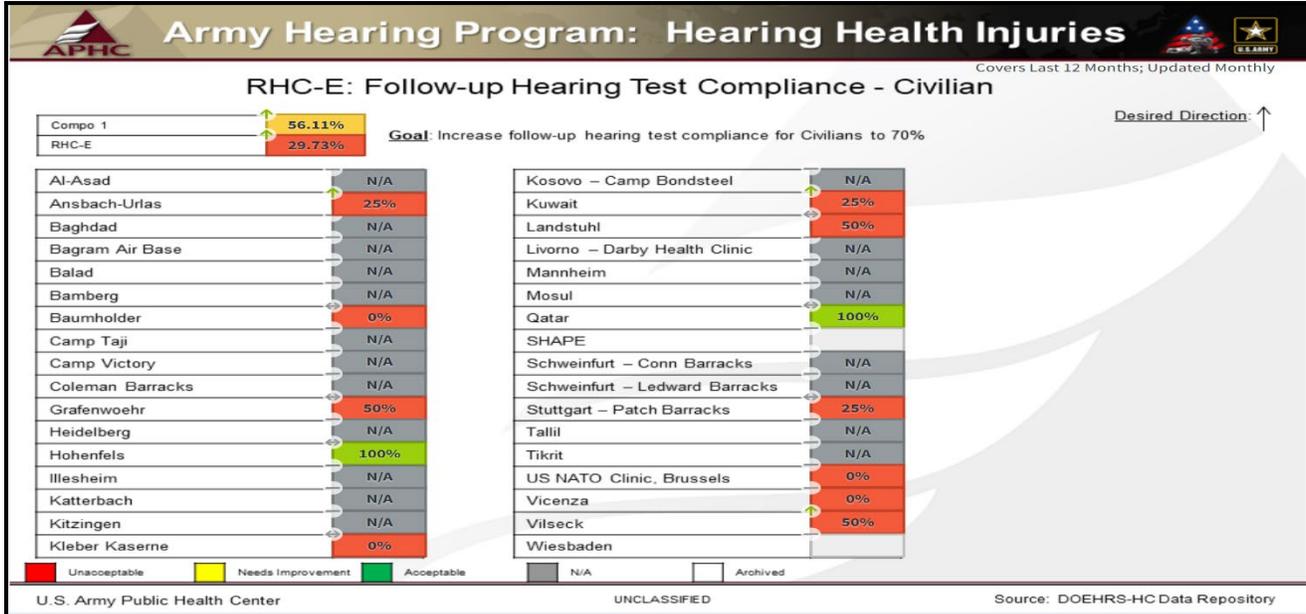
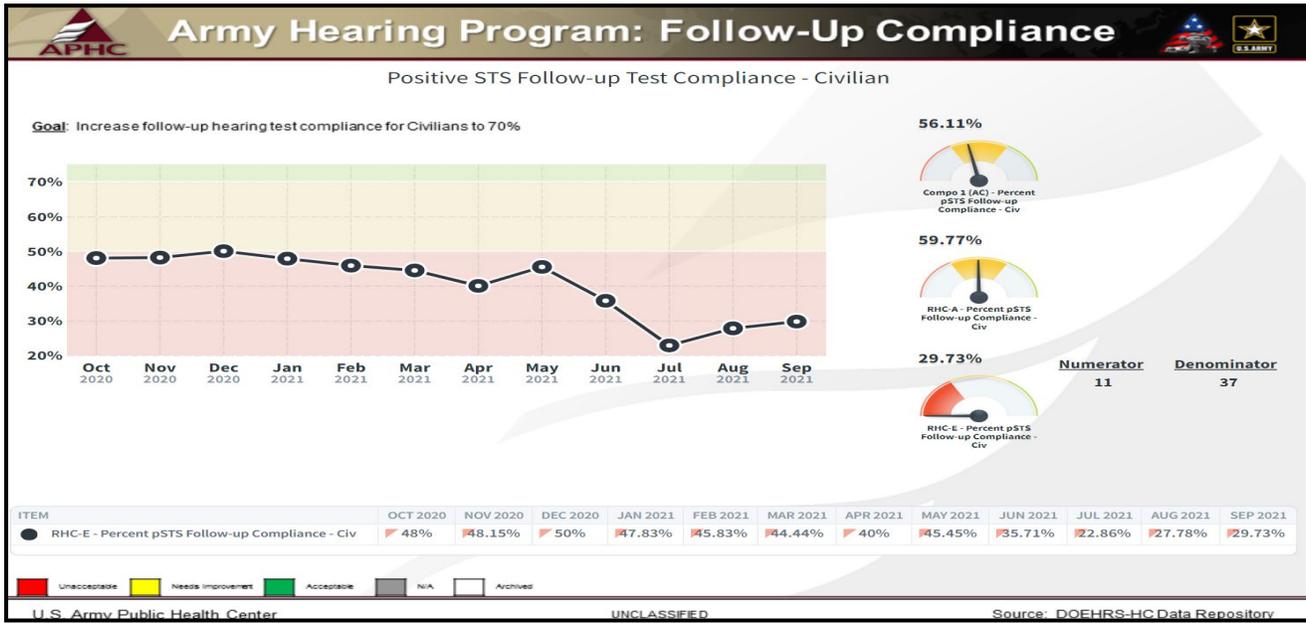
Source: DOEHS-HC DR



STS Follow-up

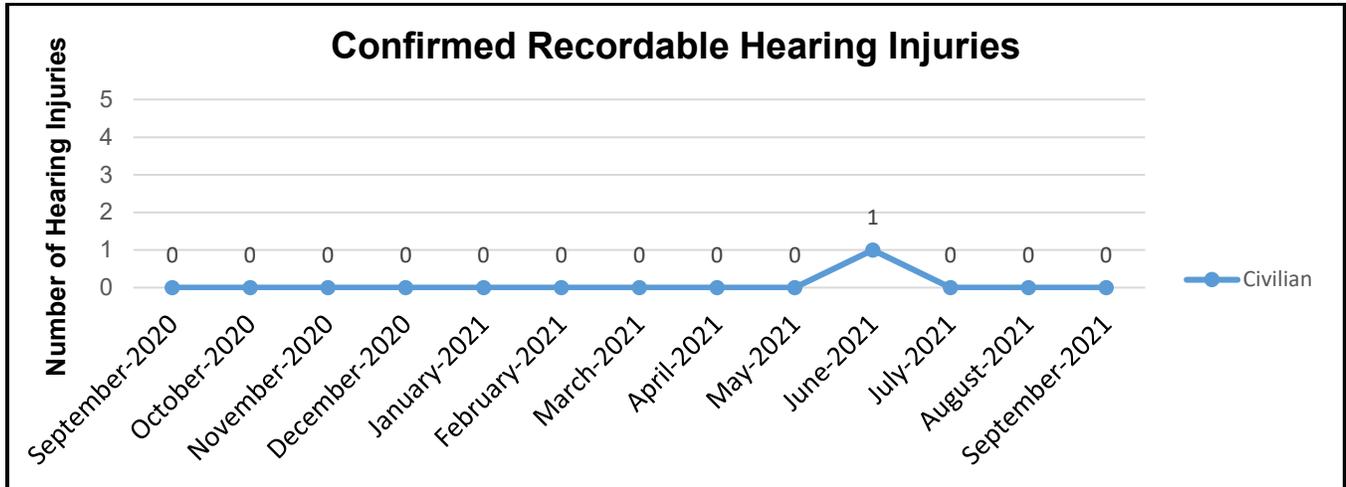
DA PAM 40-501 9-6a(2)(a) requires the reporting of STS follow-up testing compliance. Follow-up is required per DODI 6055.12 and DA PAM 40-501 when a Civilian exhibits an STS on a periodic test, and must be completed within 30 days. The AHP goal for follow-up compliance is greater than 70%. AHP-E follow-up compliance for Civilian STS is **29.73%** for September 2021 a slight increase compared to August 2021. The CIV STS follow-up rates are significantly below all other regions, and have trended downward over the past year. A working group been formed to address CIV hearing program activities, and we will monitor progress closely.

Source: DOEHRs-HC Data Repository



Recordable Hearing Injuries (CIV)

DA PAM 40-501 9-6 charges the HPM with evaluation of the hearing conservation component by using the DOEHRS–HC DR reporting tools to monitor and report program compliance and effectiveness. Internal hearing conservation evaluations provide commanders and key leaders with relevant information regarding employees hearing health. 29 CFR 1904.5 and DODI 6055.12 require recording of occupational hearing loss. In September 2021, no Civilian occupational hearing loss was confirmed within USAEUR-AF. Because AHP-E follow-up rates have been at 50% or below historically for the civilian population, it is suspected number of Recordable Hearing Injuries maybe higher due to lack of follow-up.



Hearing Protection Compliance

DA PAM 40-501 9-6b(3) requires reporting of the compliance of hearing protector use in noise hazardous environments. Hearing protection use is monitored by safety and Industrial Hygiene, and no deficiencies have been reported to AHP-E.