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TO: Executive Addressed
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RE: Preparing for War Part I: When Your Employees Are Called to Service

President Bush has declared war on terrorists. Thousands of reserve troops are being called to active duty. This means it's time for your company to sort out its policies and procedures involving employees called for military service. Here are some of the most urgent organizational elements to put in place now:

1. The Corporate Military Action Response Team (C-MART): This special group of individuals should work as an incident response organization when employees are activated for military service. This group has three basic duties:
 - Identify those called up for military service and make arrangements to contact and stay in contact with their families.
 - Monitor the call-up situation and keep senior management informed with respect to the impact on the organization.
 - Be prepared to respond, react, and mobilize appropriate corporate resources in the event a response/explanation is required or unexpected visibility occurs.
2. Security, Human Resources, and Public Affairs (The Military Council): These staff functions must coordinate with each other in planning for and responding to visibility caused by employee military activity, which could occur as a result of this very unusual "war."
 - Security monitors where employees are serving. The names of those employees and some basic data about each need to be shared with Human Resources and Public Affairs (national security issues may intrude in certain aspects of this process).
 - Human Resources is involved because it manages the people aspects of these situations benefits, personnel policies, etc. An Employee Assistance Program may be part of your Human Resources function and current policies on trauma response should be reviewed in light of the impact on co-workers and the community should an employee be killed, wounded, disabled, captured by opposition forces, involved in an accident or incident, or become missing in action (MIA).
 - Public Affairs/Media Relations is involved because visibility means media calls, and often calls from family and friends. In most companies such calls are forwarded initially to the Public Affairs department. The Public Affairs function should probably drive the entire process since it is on the front line for external interests.

3. The Chairman: Standby statements need to be in place for the Chairman in the event that your company's employees are among the first hurt or killed in combat or military accidents. The media won't be satisfied with talking to just any spokesperson; they're going to want to hear from the boss, especially when the first casualties occur.
4. Internal Briefing Operations: For the duration of the military action and any subsequent follow-up activity that involves your employee-reservists, a reasonably frequent schedule of internal briefing sessions should be held by the C-MART to:
 - Help management stay abreast of personnel changes and policies.
 - Offer assistance to families and arrange for constant contact.
 - Monitor how other companies are responding to visibility caused by injury, disablement, or death due to military action or military accidents.
 - Learn from and watch how the news media are covering military stories, and include media interests and patterns of behavior in your preparation process.
 - Manage information, especially in the terrorist/hostage/prisoner of war situation so as not to put other employees or their families at risk of painful or dangerous exposure.

*Additional parts of this "Preparing for War" series will be available shortly by E-mailing us at tlg@e911.com. Other Executive Action newsletters and monographs on terrorism, war, and military action are available now by searching our Web site, www.e911.com. Search with the key words "Terrorist," "War," and/or "Military."

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