



# Perception of Stress Levels and Stress Management as a Reservist

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## Objective

The purpose of this study is to collect data from an Air Force Reserve cohort via surveys in order to analyze the extent of knowledge about existing resources as well as the perceived usage and effectiveness of these resources on base. Data collected can be used to assess intervention strategies for better promotion or designs of existing stress management resources if needed.

## Background

- Evidence indicates that individuals in military reserves report cases of mental health issues including high stress levels at similar rates when compared to active-duty military personnel.
- In the past, research has analyzed trends with stress among the military reserves to aid in the development of available resources. Unfortunately, many programs are not accompanied by a program evaluation study and would benefit more from systematic monitoring and evaluation of program outcomes.

## Methodology

This study focused on Air Force Reserve members at Travis AFB (Air Force Base). Specifically, the 349 Aerospace Medicine Squadron, which has a total of 122 members.

The data collection methods were conducted as follows:

Surveys were passed out and collected during a mandatory Commander's Call meeting in which all members are present and accounted for.

Surveys were filled out and completed anonymously by 75 voluntary participants.

Surveys were collected at the end of the meeting.

## Conclusion

- Conclusions drawn from the data suggest that reservists may have perceptions of high stress levels across their unit.
- Further analysis suggests that reserve members, especially enlisted individuals, have generally lower perceptions of awareness of available resources.
- Overall consensus among reservists demonstrated support for increasing awareness of available resources on base.

**MILITARY FAMILIES**  
**IMPACT OF DEPLOYMENTS:**  
**RESERVE COMPONENT SPOUSES**  
<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/web/mos/reports-and-surveys>

There are 367,706 spouses of Reserve component members. The 2017 Survey of Reserve Component Spouses provides insights into how member deployments impact their spouses.

In the past 2 years...

**35%** have had their Reserve component member be activated

**17%** have had their Reserve component member be deployed for 30 days or more

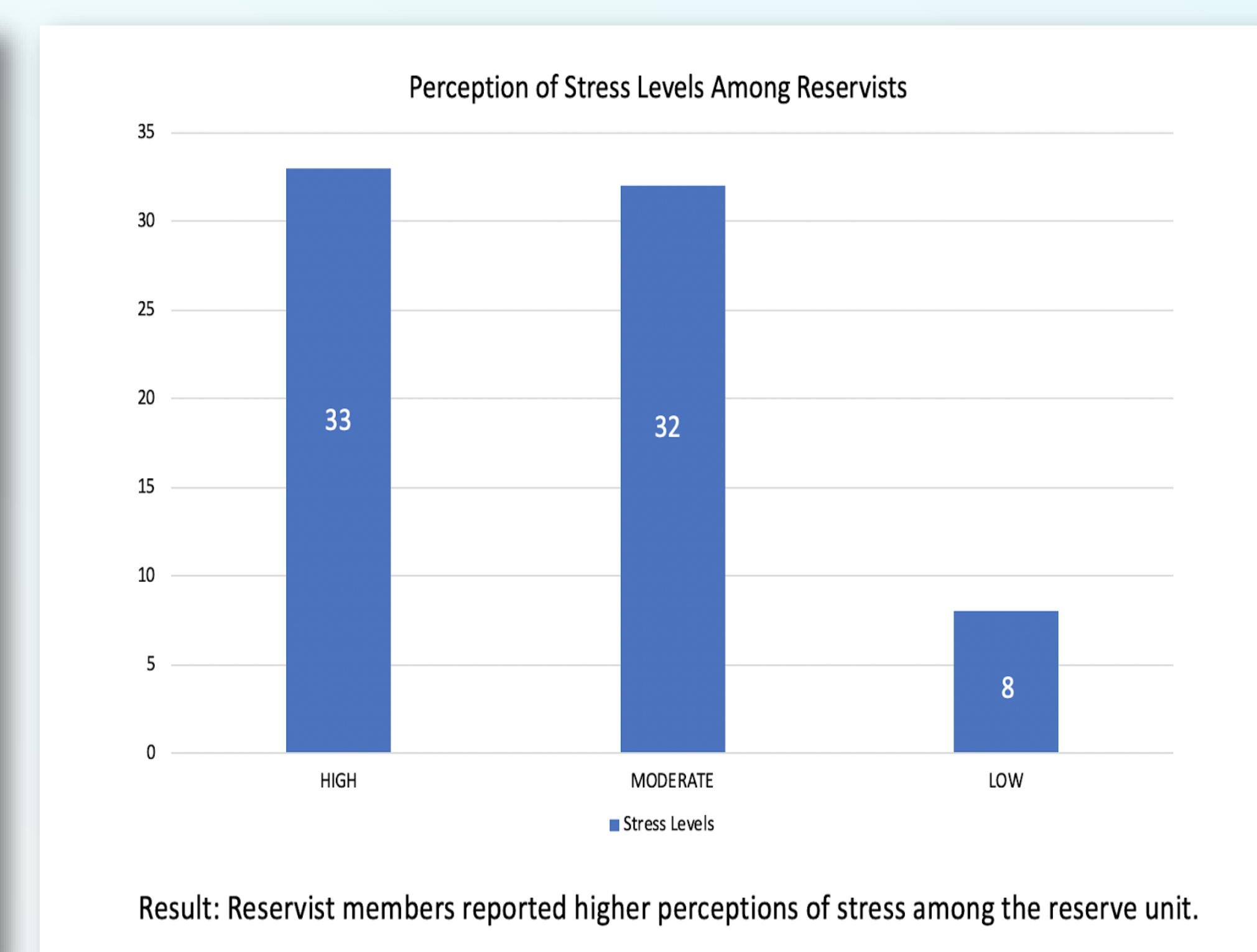
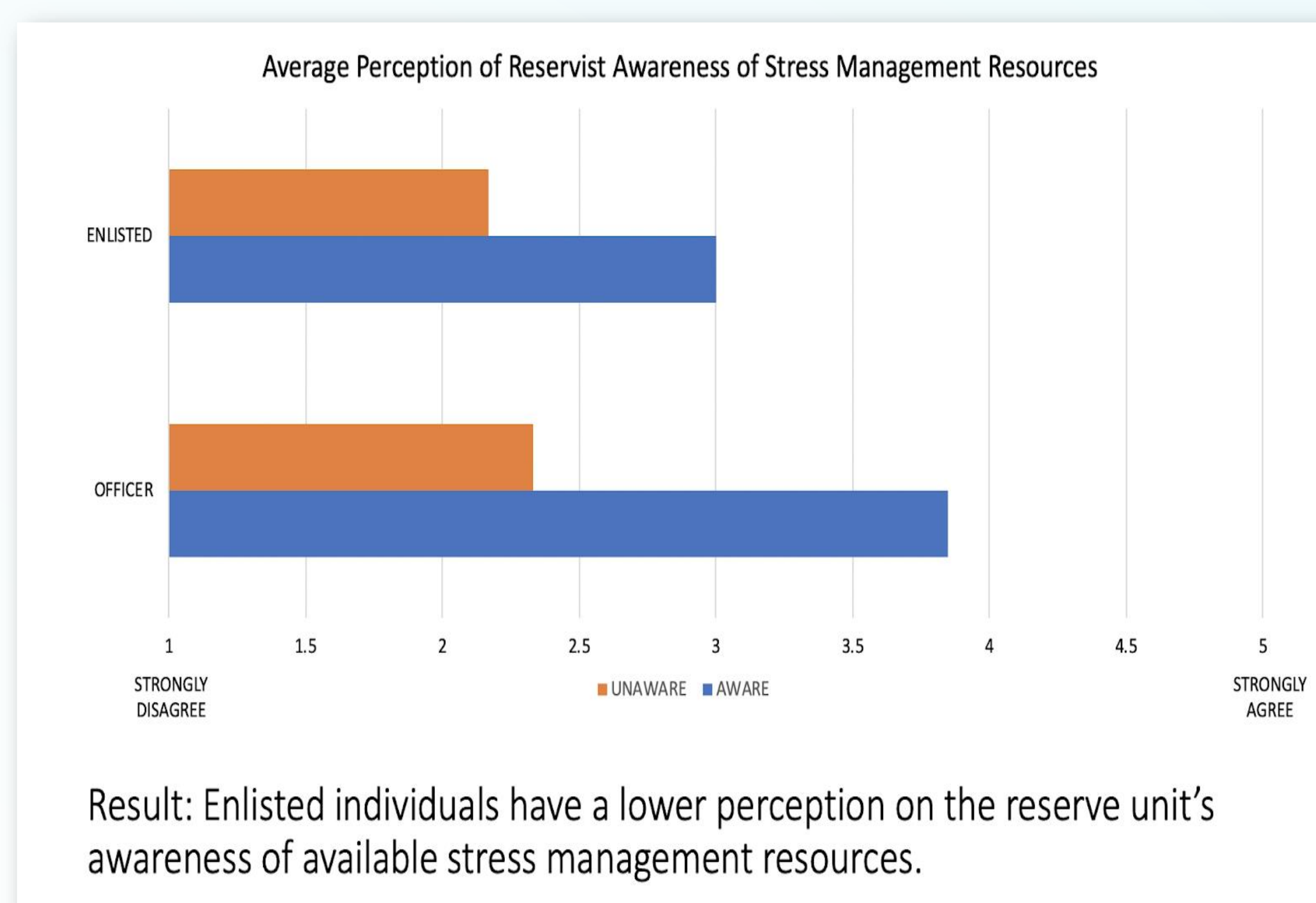
**Top-Cited Issues During Member's Deployments**

- 92%** Increase in stress levels
- 88%** Loneliness
- 85%** Feelings of anxiety or depression
- 84%** Home/car repairs/maintenance and/or yard work

## Results

Of the 75 responses, 73 were used and 2 responses were not collated into data analysis due to lack of complete response in the survey form.

- Collected data provided 33 counts of high stress, 32 counts of moderate stress, and 8 counts of low stress as perceived by the reserve unit.
- Enlisted individuals demonstrated lower perceptions of awareness of available resources as compared to officers.



## Policy Implications

- Implicate a list of detailed description of resources, as well as a tour of the unit and common base locations, into the existing Newcomers in-processing checklist.
- Designate an individual position or a committee, to develop a column within the bulletin with stress management resources, announce wellness events, positive reinforcements, coping mechanisms, etc.
- A new sensitivity training for officers that will educate them on how to detect vulnerable reservists, how to discuss sensitive topics with airman, and learn mechanisms and resources to effectively manage stress.

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