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January 25, 2012

A new tool for protecting the military community



Written by Holly Petraeus and Kent Markus

Today, we proudly announced a joint effort with state Attorneys General and the Department of Defense to combat scams directed at servicemembers, veterans, and their families.

Recognizing that this population is often targeted by financial scams, we created the Repeat Offenders Against Military Database (ROAM) to track companies and individuals who repeatedly target the military community.

One of the missions of the Bureau – and specifically, of the Office of Servicemember Affairs – is to coordinate with other Federal and state agencies to improve consumer protection for the military community. ROAM will allow us to do just that. With agencies across the country reporting scams in their neighborhoods, we will be better equipped to investigate and stop frauds that cross state lines.

Far-reaching frauds illustrate the clear need for this database. New York’s Attorney General, Eric Schneiderman, discovered a company outside the Army post at Fort Drum, NY that was selling electronics to soldiers at wildly inflated prices and locking them into high-interest contracts. He later found that various related companies operated storefronts near other military installations in California, Tennessee, Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, and overseas. If ROAM had been available, it might have prevented that scam from spreading and saved servicemembers thousands of dollars.

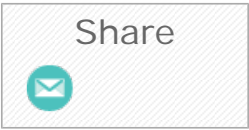
ROAM is the first database of its kind. Until now, there has been no central mechanism for officials to run a quick search for actions taken by various federal, state and local law enforcers against those who target the military. The Federal Trade Commission operates Military Sentinel, which is an invaluable database of consumer complaints from the military community, but it does not report on completed enforcement actions. ROAM will have information on formal actions against perpetrators of financial schemes targeting the military. Law enforcement officials across the country, including state Attorneys General, United States Attorneys, local officials, and Judge Advocates (JAGs), will be able to contribute to and search the database.

Anyone can send information about formal actions to ROAMDatabase@cfpb.gov. Law enforcement officials can send us an email to request access to the database, and we will send instructions on registering when the database goes live in early February.

Earlier today, Attorneys General Jack Conway (KY) and Derek Schmidt (KS), co-chairmen of the Consumer Protection Committee of the National Association of Attorneys General, sent a [letter](#) to all of their fellow Attorneys General calling on them to contribute information to the ROAM Database. We hope that all those involved in law enforcement will help contribute information to make ROAM as robust and useful as possible.



*(L-R) Kent Markus, Col.
Paul Kantwill, Holly
Petraeus, CFPB Director
Richard Cordray, NY
Attorney General
Eric Schneiderman, and
FTC Commissioner Julie Brill.*



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Great thought. Will check back later for more other articles. Regard.

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http://pulse.yahoo.com/_NHZO25JZG6AONOHE65YWZ62I3I HeXt
Definitely like this idea.

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