

in both of those formations. In the current generation of our Army where outsourcing validation through virtual technology appears to be an efficient option, I caution that it will likely create iterative deviation, and we must be hesitant and vigilant before we attempt to change a process that has never failed to deliver excellence. The EIB measures consistent expertise across the entire Infantry Branch regardless of location because it is validated with one unified standard with no deviations.

Finally, the EIB is a five-day testing event that requires minimal resources, if followed in accordance with USAIS Pamphlet 350-6. It is best executed at the brigade level for maximum training throughput that measures expertise of Skill Level 1 infantry tasks by applying both physical and mental hardship in a controlled environment. I also find it to be a perfect example of This is My Squad (TiMS) and the most genuine level of measurable leadership in our Army. It encapsulates the essence of an Infantry squad by sharing in the hardship of the event; teaching, coaching, and mentoring; and producing results in a measurable example of effective leadership. Leaders who attempt to earn their EIB are true examples of humble leaders who inspire others to never stop learning, developing, and becoming better versions of themselves. When old Soldiers stop and ask, "What will this generation of Soldiers and leaders need to carry on the legacy that made us successful?" I think we all have an example of our days trying to stay true-blue on an EIB site with leaders who inspired us to succeed. It is my opinion, as we look for ways to decrease Combat Training Center (CTC) rotation safety violations, it is leader involvement and Infantry Soldier expertise that will inspire our next generation of Infantry leaders. We do not have to look for more classroom instruction or social media communications; it is right in front of us, the EIB... the mark of the Infantry Soldier.

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# EIB: Striving to Become an Expert

## OFFICE CHIEF OF INFANTRY

On 29 March 1944, LTG Lesley J. McNair pinned the first EIB onto Technical Sergeant Walter Bull's chest. Since then the EIB has been the gold standard of Infantry task proficiency, and thousands of Infantry Soldiers have earned and displayed it with pride. The EIB's guiding document is USAIS Pamphlet 350-6 which lays out the tasks and standards required for Infantry Soldiers to obtain the coveted EIB. Offering a unique blend of arduous physical fitness events coupled with individual tasks, USAIS PAM 350-6 aims to test Soldiers' physical and mental toughness, technical proficiency, and perseverance.

A Soldier who has earned the EIB gains credibility amongst seniors, peers, and subordinates. The skills and attributes required to successfully earn the badge represent dedication and proficiency to our craft. Proficiency often leads to increased performance, and solid performance instills confidence amongst our leaders of our future potential for increased responsibility.

Evaluation Board statistics show a clear indication that board members also display confidence of future potential for Infantry Soldiers who have earned the EIB. The table below, broken down by rank, displays the Fiscal Year 2021 Evaluation Board statistics of Soldiers who had earned the EIB.

Soldiers Who Earned the EIB			
	Total Evaluated	Most Qualified	Top 20%
<b>SSG</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>SFC</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>MSG</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>99%</b>

The EIB is not a criterion for promotion; however, the statistics above show that those Infantry Soldiers who have earned the badge are evaluated at a significantly higher rate than their peers who have not. As Infantry Soldiers progress through their career, the percentage of Soldiers who have earned the badge increases substantially with each rank.

The EIB should be the primary goal for all Soldiers who have earned the Blue Cord. It shows dedication to the profession and significantly increases your potential for promotion. Although the EIB is unique to the Infantry Branch, it is not intended to detract from the vital role of other branches within our Army, but rather to serve as a symbol of tradition for Infantrymen who played a vital role in the defense of our nation's past, present, and future.