

# OFFICERS CAREER NOTES



## BRANCH CHIEF'S NOTES

As we travel around the world visiting Infantrymen, and as you visit us at Infantry Branch, we always seem to be working on ORBs, forms, and records. That will never change, because we will always be responsive to your needs, and you must be vitally concerned also.

The key people in this process are you, your commander, and your servicing Military Personnel Office. You should always review your Officer Record Brief (ORB) for accuracy. Don't wait for the annual audit to know what is printed on it. The other important record is your P-fiche (performance fiche). Your ORB and your "fiche" are the two documents that appear before promotion and selection boards. Do not wait until a week before your board convenes to tell your MILPO that there is some erroneous data in your records. It will be too late. Remember also that your "fiche" contains your official photograph, and you should make sure it is accurate and up to date.

The series of articles that follows may be helpful. First, there is a schedule of branch advanced courses. Commanders can help us identify outstanding Infantrymen to represent the Infantry community at the other branch schools by making an entry on their OERs, or by calling or writing Branch with a recommendation.

A second article discusses the preference statement, which many refer to as the "dream sheet." I can assure you, though, that each statement is reviewed upon receipt by your assignment officer, and your preferences are entered on the left-hand side of your paper CMIF. It is also used by your assignment/professional development officer in making

your Infantry assignments.

Those of you who have been selected for promotion by recent boards will be managed in your promotable grade, and it is time for you to let us know your goals and objectives, both short and long term, so we can work with you. You should keep abreast of such personnel developments as the regimental system, combat arms detail, promotion by specialty, and promotion by floors. In fact, these would make excellent topics for officer classes or commander's calls.

If you are involved in a PCS move to or from overseas assignments or to schools this summer, take the opportunity to stop by Branch and discuss with your assignment officer the major things you want us to consider as we begin the assignment process. We can also discuss what you should try to accomplish during your upcoming three-year tour. Finally, you should read our 1982 Infantry Branch Newsletter for professional development considerations.

COL JAMES A. SULLIVAN

## KEEPING RECORDS

Each year as the promotion and selection boards prepare to convene, concerned officers rush to get their records in order. Invariably there is a great deal of confusion regarding what should be in these records and how it should get there. It is important, therefore, for each officer to understand his personnel records and what he needs to do to keep them up to date.

These records include:

- Field 201 File — Military Personnel Records Jacket (MPRJ). Maintained by the local MILPO and

used by the unit personnel office.

- Career Management Information File (CMIF). Maintained for personnel actions by Infantry Branch and used for assignment and professional development.

- Official Military Personnel File (OMPF). Maintained in MILPERCEN by the Records Services Branch, PERSINSD, and used by promotion and selection boards.

Two items found in both the CMIF and the OMPF — the officer record brief (ORB) and the microfiche — are critical to both assignment and promotion functions.

An officer's ORB includes several items that he should check periodically to be sure they are up to date: Civilian and military education levels, assignments, and physicals (height and weight).

An officer should go to his MILPO to review his ORB yearly during his birth month, and he should correct any discrepancies through the MILPO.

The other important item in the files, the microfiche, has two parts, a performance fiche and a service fiche, and sometimes a third one as well, called the restricted fiche, with the following contents and uses.

- The performance fiche contains an official photograph, evaluation reports, awards, decorations, letters of commendation, Article 15s, courts martial, letters of reprimand, course completion certificates, and college transcripts. It is used by selection boards, career managers, and the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR), and for other personnel actions.

- The service fiche contains the accession package, promotion orders, extension of service agreements, RA appointments, and other data required for service computation. It is

used by career managers, by the ABCMR, and for service computation. It is not normally seen by selection boards.

• The restricted fiche contains denied OER appeals, courts martial with no finding of guilty, wholly-set-aside courts martial or Article 15s, and ABCMR case documents. It is seen only by the individual concerned and the ABCMR. It is not released to selection boards or other agencies without special permission or a written request from the individual concerned.

The photograph in the performance fiche is especially important. A photograph is required within 60 days of promotion to first lieutenant and every four years thereafter (every three years for colonels). It should be noted that boots are not authorized for wear when the official photo is made (see AR 640-30 for details).

The OMPF also needs to be checked, and an officer need not make a special trip to MILPERCEN to do so. He can obtain a free copy of his microfiche and his most current ORB by writing: DA, MILPERCEN, ATTN: DAPC-POR-RS, 200 Stovall Street, Alexandria, VA 22332.

Officers are encouraged to visit their MILPOs and to submit changes through their personnel officers. Anyone who encounters difficulty in getting items on his record corrected should forward his request along with substantiation to Infantry Branch, and we will assist him.

Any officer who wants to visit MILPERCEN instead to review his records should call the Records Service Branch (AUTOVON 221-9618, Commercial 202/325-9618) 72 hours before his visit so that his official file will be available. No appointment is necessary for the visit itself.

## TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

An internal reorganization of telephone lines occurred recently in Infantry Branch. To ensure that you reach the appropriate assignment section and to avoid unnecessary delays,

please use the following numbers when calling your assignment officer.

Branch Chief	AV221-0207/0208/7823
LTC SC11/Command	0209/0317/7823
LTC Other Specialty/ROTC	7823/0209
LTC SC 54	0317/0318/0207
CPT & MAJ SC 54	0317/0318
MAJ SC 11	0318/7823
MAJ Other Specialty	0317/7823
CPT O/S Advance Course	0207/0209
CPT Other Specialty	0207/0208
CPT CONUS Nominative	0207/0208/0209
LT SC11	0207/0209
LTs Accessions	0208/0209
Branch Representative Ft Benning	AV 835-3611/4381

Each assignment cell's telephone lines are on a rotary system. Therefore, if you get a busy signal, wait a few minutes and try again, because all lines to that cell are being used at that time.

## OFFICER ADVANCED COURSES

The schedule for the combat arms officer advanced courses for Fiscal Year 1983 are listed here along with an address and point of contact for each course. Fifteen Infantry officers will attend each of the Armor Officer Advanced Course classes, six will attend each of the Field Artillery classes, and one will attend each of the Engineer classes. In addition to these, two Infantry officers normally attend the Marine Corps' Amphibious Warfare Course at Quantico, Virginia, which begins each year in August.

The selection of an officer to attend any of these courses is made on the basis of his potential for promotion and of the date he will be available for reassignment. An officer is eligible to attend an advanced course any time between his third and eighth years of active duty. He usually attends after his initial assignment and before he is assigned to command, but it is not unusual for an officer to have commanded before he attends the course.

Each officer should receive his request for orders (RFO) four to six months before his class begins. Enclosed with the RFO will be an advanced assignment packet, which is

vital in making the officer's next assignment. Each officer is notified of his next assignment by letter about two months before his advanced course begins.

Officers of branches other than Field Artillery must report for the Artillery course three weeks before the start dates shown so that they can attend an intensive course in gunnery techniques. The report date for each of the other courses is about four days before the class begins.

Class No.	IOAC	
	Start Date	Completion Date
83-1	31 Oct 82	24 May 83
83-2	23 Jan 83	28 Jul 83
83-3	10 Apr 83	13 Oct 83
83-4	5 Jun 83	12 Dec 83
83-5	7 Aug 83	28 Feb 84

U.S. Army Infantry School  
Fort Benning, GA 31905  
AV: 835-3611/7359 (CPT Mick Bednarek)

Class Number	AOAC	
	Start Date	Completion Date
83-1	7 Oct 82	3 May 83
83-2	11 Jan 83	15 Jul 83
83-3	12 Apr 83	14 Oct 83
83-4	26 Jul 83	17 Feb 84

U.S. Army Armor School  
Fort Knox, KY 40121  
AV: 464-6329/5045 (CPT Joe Tombrello)

Class Number	FAOAC	
	Start Date	Completion Date
83-1	11 Oct 82	5 May 83
83-2	24 Jan 83	28 Jul 83
83-3	17 Apr 83	20 Oct 83
83-4	14 Jul 83	9 Feb 84

U.S. Army Field Artillery School  
Fort Sill, OK 73503  
AV: 639-2951 (CPT Danny Walling)

Class Number	EOAC	
	Start Date	Completion Date
83-1	18 Oct 82	10 May 83
83-2	22 Nov 82	14 Jun 83
83-3	24 Jan 83	28 Jul 83
83-4	14 Mar 83	15 Sep 83
83-5	23 May 83	30 Nov 83
83-6	27 Jun 83	19 Jan 84
83-7	8 Aug 83	1 Mar 84

U.S. Army Engineer School  
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060  
AV: 354-2184/1048 (LT Christine Lee)

**OFFICER PREFERENCE STATEMENT**

An officer's preference statement is his most important link with his assignment officer, and he reduces his chances of going where he wants to go if he fails to get a current preference statement in his file.

A current and detailed preference statement tells the assignment officer immediately what the officer wants to do (professional and personal considerations), what position he now holds, how to get in touch with him (home and duty telephone), and something about his family (personal data). It is hard to believe that any officer would want his assignment officer to make a decision without this information.

The reverse side of the preference statement explains how to fill out the form, but here are a few additional tips:

Under the section entitled "Macom/Activity/Location," an officer should list as many locations as he prefers. He should not limit his selection to three locations just because three spaces are provided on the form. This is particularly important if his first three choices are Forts Carson, Lewis, and Ord. This is not to say he shouldn't request these locations, but he should understand that most infantry majors also request them and that he needs to give the assignment officer more flexibility in making his assignment.

Under the section entitled "Duty Assignment," Army priority assignment choices (ARR, ROTC, USMA, and DA Staff) should be included. By not indicating any preference with respect to these assignments an officer may be avoiding reality. If it is his turn for an Army priority assignment and he has failed to state a preference, he may be assigned to one without regard to his desires.

Career aspirations should be listed under the section called "Professional Development Comments." For example, if a major is interested in battalion command, he should request assignments that will improve his

chances and include any comments that he feels are pertinent to managing his career.

Under "Personal Considerations," any personal problems he may have should be listed; for example, if an officer has a legitimate personal hardship, he should request a compassionate assignment in accordance with AR 614-100, or apply for assignment consideration under the Handicapped Dependents Program.

As a general rule, an officer who wants an overseas tour should see that his preference statement reaches MILPERCEN nine months before the desired report date and, for a CONUS assignment, six months before the report date.

Otherwise, the suggested times for submitting the statement are:

- When the Personnel Qualification Record (DA Form 2-1) is initially prepared.

- About 9 to 12 months before completion of an overseas tour or a stabilized tour within CONUS.

- About one year after reporting to a CONUS station on a non-stabilized tour.

- Within 60 days before beginning a course of instruction at a CONUS PCS service school, a civilian institution, or training with industry.

- Nine months before completion of an initial utilization tour and at any time thereafter when preferences change for a commissioned officer who has received his graduate degree through a full-time Army program that requires a utilization tour.

Officers who have obtained their degrees from other sources (on their own or before commissioning) are also invited to indicate such preferences. After studying DA Pamphlet 600-3 (Officer Professional Development and Utilization), the officer should specify in Item 12 of the Officers Assignment Preference Statement where re-utilization tours are desired. This statement will include the type of assignment he prefers (for example, laboratory assistant, procurement, R and D staff officer) and, if he knows them, the agencies or headquarters to which he wants to be

assigned periodically throughout his remaining years of service.

Each officer should keep a copy of his most recent preference statement to make sure he can recall what the last preferences he forwarded to MILPERCEN were.

Infantry officers should forward their preference statements to HQDA, DAPC-OPE-I, Alexandria, VA 22332.

**LAW SCHOOL CANDIDATES**

The Office of the Judge Advocate General (OTJAG) is now accepting applications for the funded legal education program. Under the program the Army may send up to 25 Active Duty commissioned officers to law school at Government expense. The officers selected will remain on active duty while attending law school.

Officers who are interested should review AR 351-22 (The Judge Advocate General Funded Legal Education Program) to determine their eligibility. The program is open to officers in the ranks of second lieutenant to captain with at least two but not more than six years of service at the time the legal training is scheduled to begin.

Anyone who is interested and eligible should immediately register for the June or October offering of the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and follow the application procedures in the governing regulations. Completed applications must be sent through command channels to arrive at OTJAG not later than 1 November.

**CAPTAINS TO EUROPE AND PANAMA**

The Army National Guard (ARNG) Captains to Europe Program, which offers extended active duty tours in Europe to ARNG captains, was recently expanded to include tours in Panama as well.

The program gives ARNG captains

valuable training experience with the Active Army and also an opportunity to support the Active Army with their knowledge and expertise. In addition, the Guard will benefit from the experience these captains bring back to their states.

Qualified applicants are selected on a "first come, first served" basis. There are now 122 ARNG captains from 36 different states on tour in Europe, but there are still positions to be filled. European tours vary from 20 to 30 months in length and will not be extended. This policy gives more personnel the opportunity to participate.

To be eligible for a tour in Europe, a captain must have less than four years in grade, at least one year of ARNG unit experience before applying, and qualification in one of the following specialties: 11-15, 25, 48,

49, 52, 53, 71-74, 91, 95, or 97. If possible, he also should have completed the advanced course and have a baccalaureate degree.

The selected captains will be assigned to brigades, battalions, or companies and will perform duties commensurate with their grade and specialties.

There are now seven available tours in Panama, four in Special Forces and three for foreign area officers (Latin American), varying from 24 to 30 months in length.

Those who are selected for tours in Panama must be qualified in one of these two specialty areas and must have less than four years in the grade of captain. They must also have had at least two years of ARNG unit experience immediately preceding the submission of the application.

First lieutenants who are eligible

for promotion to captain before their entry on active duty may also apply for tours in either location.

Since none of these tours will be extended, the National Guard Bureau will continue to accept applications even after the positions now vacant are filled. The program is a continuing one and will be offered to as many Guard personnel as possible

#### CLARIFICATION ON CGSC

The item in INFANTRY's March-April 1982 issue on a change of policy concerning CAS' and CGSC equivalency for Reserve officers was premature. Action on the announced change to AR 135-155 has been postponed and may not be implemented before 1984.

