

Another problem involves communications and transportation. Both the HHC commandant and his first sergeant need communications equipment that works efficiently. The need for this in reconnaissance and movement is obvious, and it is also obvious that the HHC commandant needs a vehicle other than an M561. The M561 was designed to fulfill a cargo role — not a reconnaissance or control role. A faster, more maneuverable vehicle that is capable of mounting a radio — an M151, for example — would be more appropriate.

But even if all of these other problems could be solved for him, the headquarters company commandant would still have one major difficulty with his role as commandant — he rarely has an opportunity to train the TOC as a unit. The staff sections have their various duties to perform

within the battalion, and some elements, such as the fire support officer and the air liaison officer, are located in different units. When the TOC does train during a battalion exercise, it is sometimes difficult for its elements to practice such techniques as remoting antenna systems, improving fighting positions, or preparing range cards.

A plausible solution to this would be for the battalion to allocate one day a quarter for TOC training. For 24 hours the TOC elements would belong entirely to the HHC commandant for training purposes. One day a quarter would not be overly ambitious, and having the battalion staff “down” for one full day would be no more than an inconvenience at most — and it could make a real difference in the long run.

But because of the necessary coordination

both inside and outside the battalion, this solution can be achieved only if there is close cooperation between the battalion commander and the HHC commandant. If the battalion commander can be sold on the idea, though, he will soon realize that this exercise will further improve his entire unit’s combat readiness. And that is a worthwhile goal.



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Maintenance Flow Chart

CAPTAIN ROBERT R. LEONHARD

Company motor officers have their problems.

Their drivers complain about the volume of DA Forms 2404 they have to prepare every week, usually in triplicate — each describing the same old faults over and over again. The vehicles may have enough new seat cushions to supply the entire battalion but never get the new track shoes they need. The old 2404s can be found piled up in “in” boxes, stuffed under seats, crammed in logbooks, and scattered over desk-tops.

Many motor officers confront these problems daily but can find no “textbook” solutions to them. While many different sources and schools

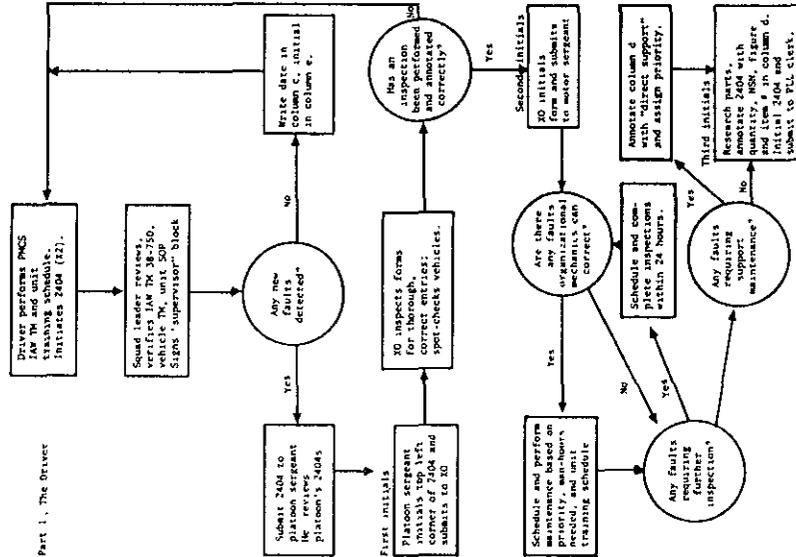
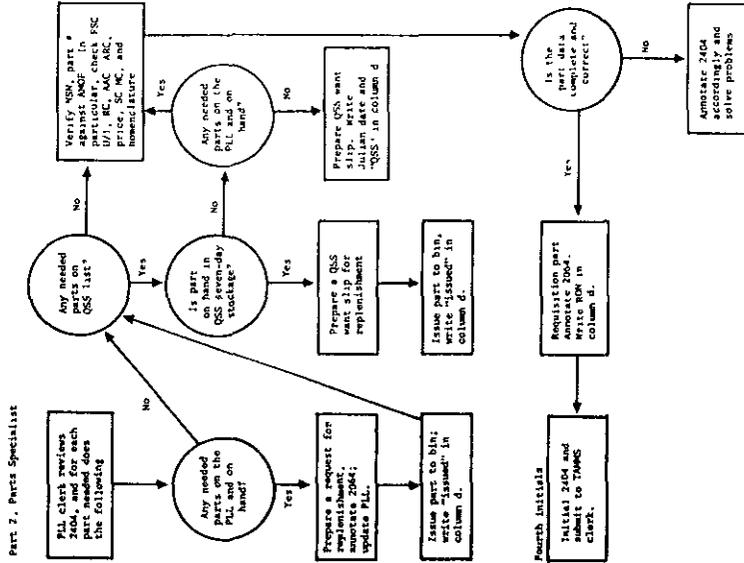
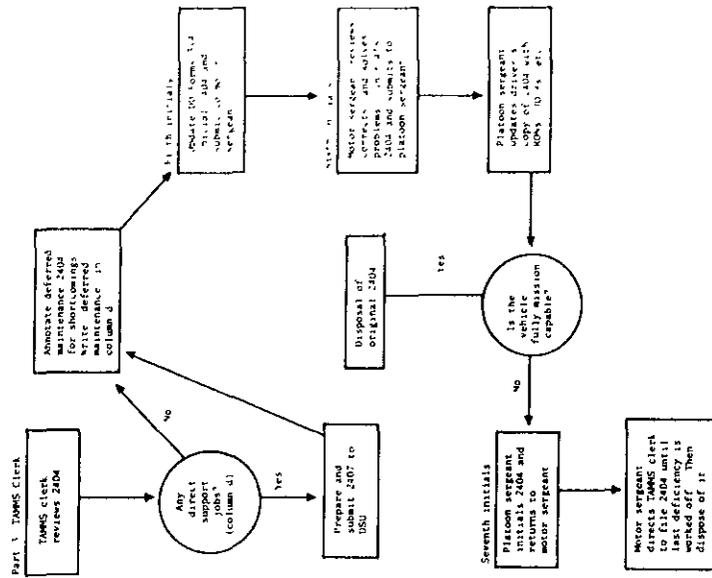
explain the uses and purposes of the various maintenance forms and records, few, if any, explain how to tie them all together in a daily set of procedures.

The first thing a motor officer needs to do to solve this problem is to get a detail of men together and send them through the motor pool to collect and burn all those old 2404s. Then he should sit down and establish a definite system for handling the 2404s and then a flow chart to make the system work. (Once he announces his system, it becomes his primary duty to enforce it, even if it tends to slow down operations at first, as it surely will. But as his system catches

on, the drivers will spend less time writing and will soon have vehicles that operate better.)

The flow chart that I recommend is one I have used in my company shop operations. The crucial part of this system is the series of initials that are written by various individuals across the top of a 2404 as it flows from the driver, through the chain of command, through the shop office, and back to the driver. Each person in the chain should look for the proper initials as the form is passed to him, and he should not accept it if those initials are not there. This serves to see that each man does his job, and it quickly identifies problems.

FLOW CHART



The flow chart shown here defines the procedures to be followed as the drivers find new faults. It concentrates on the corrective actions needed, and it is in compliance with TM 38-750. It does not, however, deal with procedures to be followed when due-in parts are received, for example, or when vehicles return from direct support. Each of these areas in turn will have to be developed, but this is a good starting point.

The first part of the flow chart deals with the driver, his chain of command, the motor officer, and the motor sergeant. The technique of scheduling, mentioned twice, is one that will make the operation active rather than reactive. (I use a modified DA Form 2405 to schedule jobs and assign a company job order number to each.)

Part 2 of the flow chart, which

deals exclusively with the repair parts specialist, is an abbreviated version of his normal routine. A good clerk should know the more detailed aspects of requisitioning, but if he does not, the flow chart will have to be modified accordingly.

The third part of the flow chart completes the routing through the TAMMS clerk, the motor sergeant, and the platoon sergeant, and it details the final disposition of the 2404.

Two techniques will help a unit make this flow chart work. First, the motor officer should insist on making the complete system turn around in three days. This will keep any corrective actions current. Secondly, the unit's leaders should check periodically to see that the annotated 2404s are in the vehicles' pamphlet bags. Their emphasis will help ensure a

strong effort for efficiency throughout the unit, and it will certainly help the motor officer manage better.

Under this system, a 2404 for any given fault will be prepared only once; enough, but not too many, parts will be ordered; and all of the 2404s will be where they belong instead of being scattered over the company area.



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Professional Development

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR ROY C. OWENS

One of the most important things a battalion can do is to develop and maintain genuine, dedicated, professional noncommissioned officers who thoroughly understand their roles and responsibilities. NCOs of this description are better able to provide for the care, training, and motivation of the individual soldiers they are responsible for. With this idea in mind, the senior noncommissioned officers of the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry, have come up with their own Individual Training and Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Program.

The program is really four programs in one. It includes an NCO

professional development program (NCOPDP), a skill qualification test (SQT) program, a Training Proficiency Test (TPT) program, and an individual training program. The overall program is managed by the battalion's command sergeant major, who meets every month with his first sergeants to discuss the specific details of the program and to plan future activities. (These meetings serve several other purposes as well. They help bring a new first sergeant on board more quickly, and they keep all the first sergeants informed of the battalion commander's standards for particular areas.)

THE NCOPDP portion includes

several specific professional development efforts at both company and battalion level.

First, a diagnostic examination, which is given to all newly assigned NCOs and to soldiers who are newly promoted into the NCO ranks, helps the first sergeants decide who needs additional training. Those who fail to achieve a score of 70 percent (and anyone else who, in the opinion of the first sergeant, needs extra help) are placed in the battalion's Train To Lead Program. It lasts five days, with each day beginning at 0530 and ending at 2030.

These NCOs receive instruction in such subjects as map reading, per-