

ENLISTED CAREER NOTES



HELP MANAGE ASSIGNMENTS

The Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate (EPMD) has two basic goals. The first of them is to meet the Army's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) and grade distribution requirements, while at the same time assigning the right soldier to the right job at the right time, with the least inconvenience possible to the soldier and his dependents.

The second goal is to ensure an equity of assignments for all soldiers in both the continental United States (CONUS) and overseas. This means considering such matters as the date a soldier returned from overseas (DROS); the diversity of his assignments (recruiter, drill sergeant, staff position, troop leading positions); the strengths of gaining and losing commands; and the soldier's availability, desires, and need for an assignment.

In trying to meet these goals, the EPMD uses a variety of tools in making assignments for you, the individual soldier. One of these tools is your Enlisted Master File (EMF), which is continually updated through SIDPERS entries made by your servicing Military Personnel Office (MILPO). These entries may include your DROS, changes in marital status, present duty position, and any stabilization that duty position requires.

EPMD also uses your Career Management Individual File (CMIF). Your career branch automatically develops this file when your MILPO registers you as being promotable to the rank of staff sergeant. (Files on soldiers in ranks below staff sergeant are not maintained at MILPERCEN.)

The CMIF contains the following items, among others:

- Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) microfiche (procured from

Fort Benjamin Harrison).

- Hard copies of Senior Enlisted Evaluation Reports that have already been posted to your OMPF.

- DA Forms 2 and 2-1.
- DA Form 2635 (Enlisted Preference Statement).
- Volunteer applications (DA Forms 4187).
- Reclassification actions.
- Letters written to the Branch.
- DA Form 10A (with MOS/Skill Qualification scores).

Of these, Forms 2 and 2-1 are especially useful. When you screen and update your DA Form 2, your servicing MILPO enters in the EMF any changes you have made in your assignment preferences. And upon completion of your annual records review (normally done during your birth month), your MILPO must prepare and forward to your career branch a complete copy of your DA Form 2-1 (as required by AR 640-2-1).

This latter form is invaluable to the managers considering your assignments, because the information in it is not normally found anywhere else in your file:

- Assignment history.
- Previous duty positions.
- Military and civilian schools completed.
- Overseas tours completed, and where.
- Aptitude test scores.
- Assignment limitations.
- Awards and decorations.
- Additional skill identifiers (ASIs).
- Skill Qualification Identifiers (SQIs).
- Location of dependents.

If these important facts and others in the file are outdated, this can have a major effect on your assignments.

You can directly influence the assignment process by ensuring that a

current DA Form 2635 is on file with your branch. Under AR 614-200, you must submit an Enlisted Preference Statement through your MILPO to your career branch at MILPERCEN within 30 days after your promotion to staff sergeant. But you may also voluntarily submit a new DA Form 2635 any time an item on the previous form changes.

Here is some of the information this valuable form provides your assignment manager and career advisor:

- Duty position preferences (troops, staff, instructor, ROTC, ARMR, First Sergeant).
- Service schools desired (Drill Sergeant, Recruiter, First Sergeant courses, for example).
- Dependents and their ages.
- Unique assignment considerations (joint domicile, sole parent, special dependent care requirements).
- Typing ability.
- Remarks concerning unique qualifications for specific assignments.

In short, your assignments are based, to a large extent, upon the information that is available to your career managers at the time assignment decisions must be made. For more information and help in seeing that this information gets to EPMD, see your Personnel Assistance Center NCO (PACNCO).

The chief goal of Infantry Branch is to make the best possible assignments, not only for the Army but also for you.

NCO LOGISTICS PROGRAM

The Noncommissioned Officer Logistics Program (NCOLP) is designed to fill the unit commander's critical need for highly trained NCOs to fill select positions that require

knowledge in two or more logistics functions. More than 2,000 such positions have been identified and entered into The Army Authorization Document System (TAADS). Most of these positions are now in the ranks of SFC/PSG and above.

These positions are recommended for NCOLP designation by commanders. Once a recommendation is reviewed and approved, all changes to it must be forwarded to the Office of the Chief of Staff for Logistics. This system is not designed to interfere with the commander's prerogative of identifying specific MOS requirements; it is intended to centralize the control of these designated NCOLP positions.

Membership in the NCOLP is purely voluntary. AR 614-200 prescribes the program's objectives and responsibilities, the prerequisites for entry, the utilization of members, and other management aspects. But the people who do the recruiting — current members, sergeants major, and logistics unit commanders — must make sure the NCO meets the prerequisites. Once the NCO has been recruited, an application is forwarded to MILPERCEN, where a board meets to select the best qualified NCO for the position.

Members of the NCOLP are sent initially to the resident NCOLP course, where they gain a broad and comprehensive knowledge of logistics, specifically at unit, division, corps, TAACOM, and wholesale levels. The course covers the logistical spectrum from unit movement to distribution management of major items at wholesale level.

After satisfactorily completing the resident NCOLP course, the member is awarded the "K" SQI. The careers of these members are then developed through assignments to increasingly challenging NCOLP positions, such as unit, brigade, division, corps, field army, and wholesale levels, or to a combination of these.

AR 614-200 contains additional courses the NCOLP member can take to see that he gets broad training in logistical functions with equal emphasis on supply, maintenance,

transportation, and management, and on the way these disciplines fit together.

A trained NCO logistician can be the backbone of a logistics system and the means of adequate logistical support early in any military contingency. He can also be the source of training for less experienced junior officers.

TEST OF STRENGTH

The Army now has a test that measures each prospective enlistee's physical strength — the Military Entrance Physical Strength Capacity Test (MEPSCAT). Its measurements were established by the ability of soldiers to lift varying weights, much as they do regularly on the job.

Military guidance counselors use these measurements, along with mental, moral, and medical evaluations, to advise all applicants for Army service in selecting their military jobs.

For example, 80 pounds is the standard used to evaluate a person's potential for success in jobs that require "heavy" or "very heavy" lifting. This does not mean that a person who cannot lift 80 pounds will not be allowed to enlist for a job in the heavy or very heavy category, if other classification criteria permit it; it is a guideline only.

MEPSCAT is not designed to scare off people who want to become soldiers but to improve Army readiness by matching new soldiers better with Army jobs. In addition, it will increase a soldier's chances of succeeding at the occupation he chooses.

MOS CUTOFF SCORES

All soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and commanders, too, often find it difficult to understand how the promotion system works and why the promotion point cutoff score for a given MOS is so high.

But there is a reason for MOS cutoff scores getting higher or lower, and there is also a way a soldier can help himself get faster promotions.

The total number of promotions for each grade, regardless of MOS, is decided by comparing the number of soldiers authorized for that grade with the number the Army's budget allows. The number authorized includes losses, reductions, and promotions, both in and out of grade. In addition, new equipment or training developments influence the need for cutoff scores in certain MOSs to go up or down.

Promotions are given first to the MOSs with the greatest need. When an MOS is overstrength, the cutoff scores for promotion points are raised, and fewer soldiers in that MOS are promoted. And this creates a chain reaction down the line: When the higher ranks are not being promoted, there are no vacancies for the lower ranks to be promoted into.

Understrength MOSs, on the other hand, have lower promotion point cutoffs. And this is where a soldier can help himself get promoted — he can reclassify into one of these shortage MOSs.

DA Circular 611-83 shows which MOSs are understrength and which offer selective reenlistment bonuses (SRBs). Unit reenlistment NCOs can also offer information about reclassifying or changing to a different MOS, and can tell a soldier about the SRBs, which change monthly.

Any soldier who really wants to improve his chances for promotion should call his local military personnel office for more information about the promotion system.

SPECIAL FORCES

A change in Army regulations now permits soldiers with any MOS to apply for Special Forces training, although applications had originally been limited to soldiers in six feeder MOSs. All other former selection criteria still apply.

Soldiers must not have received Article 15s or higher punishment for a drug-related offense.

Local Military Personnel Offices have detailed guidance for applying.