

# COHORT

## COMPANY RECEPTION

LIEUTENANT MICHAEL C. CLOY

- DAY 1** OSUT ARRIVAL  
BATTALION/COMPANY INPROCESSING
  - DAY 2** DIVISION INPROCESSING  
CHAIN-OF COMMAND BRIEFING  
ON-POST TOUR
  - DAY 3** SHOWDOWN INSPECTION  
CIF ISSUE  
VACCINATIONS
  - DAY 4** ADDITIONAL BRIEFINGS  
VEHICLE & WEAPON REGISTRATION
  - DAY 5** OFF-POST TOUR  
ARRIVAL CEREMONY  
CLOTHING SALE REFITTINGS
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The Army's New Manning System has provided unique challenges for a company chain of command. For example, the organizational and rotational concepts outlined in Department of the Army Circular 600-82-2 have increased soldier-to-soldier and soldier-to-unit loyalty. But much of that loyalty and a unit's commitment to excellence depends upon how well the unit deals with one critical factor—"transfer turbulence." This factor includes the various complex environmental, personal, spiritual, and financial transformations that both an individual soldier and a COHORT unit must go through when changing from one duty station to another.

Unfortunately, transfer turbulence is only alluded to in the circular. And yet the manner in which a company chain of command confronts this turbulence will greatly affect the initial success of that unit in accomplishing its mission.

For many years now, the Army has recognized the need to ease the effects of this turbulence. The family sponsorship and Army Community Service programs are two examples of the Army's efforts. Most such programs, however, concentrate primarily on married personnel and hardly ever on the single soldier or the entire unit. This is a void that a COHORT company chain of command must fill.

The success of a unit's program depends upon how well it integrates the three critical stages of a COHORT company's reception—the preparation phase while the soldiers are still undergoing One-Station Unit Training (OSUT), the reception process itself at the home station, and the actions taken immediately after the reception process has been completed.

It is important to understand that these phases are interde-

pendent and that they will not necessarily follow strict schedules.

### Phase I. OSUT Overwatch

The moment an individual soldier raises his hand and takes his oath, the COHORT chain of command becomes inherently responsible for his reception into the service. At this time, the company leadership, with the First Sergeant's valuable experience, should begin to monitor the OSUT unit's progress from an "overwatch" position.

First, each soldier should receive a letter informing him of things he is most likely to be wondering about in regard to his new unit, his place in the unit, and his new station. This will give him a goal to reach for and will help prepare him to take his place in the unit.

Then the leaders should begin to monitor from a distance such information as the soldiers' performance, training, educational levels, GT scores, and medical, personnel, financial, and clothing records. This will enable the chain of command to forecast its own short- and long-range goals and to begin looking at potential leaders.

Coordination is an important aspect of this process. Close communication between the OSUT chain of command and the receiving unit chain of command is critical. An early professional rapport must be established between company commanders, First Sergeants, and executive officers. At least one command visit should be planned to the OSUT site to allow the unit's key leaders to check on the various issues. The visit will also allow the soldiers to take a look at their future com-

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pany commander and First Sergeant. (It should be well planned; otherwise, the unit's key leaders may discover, for example, that they have not been included on the OSUT training schedule.)

A personnel roster is probably the most valuable item the chain of command can obtain, because it often includes home of record, family and marital status, age, height and weight, educational level, and a variety of diagnostic and statistical data on each soldier. Any data not included on the roster should be requested. Leaders can use this data to prepare, well in advance, personnel readiness folders, assorted records, classes, weapon system assignments, and room assignments, as well as team, squad, and platoon membership.

While the new soldiers are still undergoing their training, the unit's leaders should also be training. Besides the obvious technical and tactical training and the SOPs that the commander must develop, he must also see that all of the unit's leaders will be ready to serve the soldiers and to ease the effects of transfer turbulence. This means arranging for instruction from both on-post and off-post soldier service agencies, and the instruction is best done by having a representative of each of the different agencies come to the unit and provide concise briefings (see Briefings and Appointments Checklist). This will give the leaders a fundamental working knowledge of these particular agencies. (Appointments must be made well in advance.)

Arrangements also need to be made to have some of these agencies brief the COHORT soldiers after their arrival. Question-and-answer sessions on such matters as finance, housing, and legal assistance will be valuable. Furthermore, they will enable leaders to identify any individual problems a soldier may have, and in turn will enable that soldier's first-line supervisor to demonstrate his ability to help solve the problems. Thus, the soldier will begin establishing confidence, loyalty, and trust in his leader.

At the same time, the unit's leaders need to develop their skills in counseling, listening, and leading. This is where many intrinsic COHORT problems can be avoided. The First Sergeant needs to develop a counseling SOP, and for the good of the unit, leaders with prior experience and skill in certain areas should be given the additional duties most closely related to those areas.

Finally, a massive repair and upkeep program should be started to prepare the soldiers' new home for their arrival. The program should concentrate on standard-of-living deficiencies in the barracks. The Directorate of Engineering and Housing should be contacted well in advance of the unit's arrival so that they can conduct structural, electrical, and plumbing inspections. (Hopefully, the previous unit will have initiated this action before closing out.)

### Phase II. Reception

Although Phase I is probably the most important, in that first impressions form a lasting foundation, Phase II is the most exciting, because this is when the unit "family" comes together for the first time.

The success of this phase may lie with one person—the squad leader. He is the one who should monitor the soldier's in-

## BRIEFINGS AND APPOINTMENTS CHECKLIST

### BRIEFINGS

Safety  
 Crime Prevention  
 Sure Pay/Finance  
 Housing  
 Family Support Group  
 JAG/Legal Assistance  
 Recreation Services  
 Army Emergency Relief  
 Army Community Services  
 Hospital  
 Defensive Drivers Course  
 Chapel  
 Military Courtesy  
 Legal Assistance  
 Alcohol and Drugs  
 Fire Prevention  
 Clothing Sales  
 Maintenance  
 SAEDA  
 Awards/Promotions  
 Key Control  
 Unit Leave and Pass  
 Reenlistment  
 Open Door Policy  
 Equal Opportunity  
 Hometown News Release  
 Commodity Areas  
 Chain of Command

### APPOINTMENTS

CIF  
 Central Enlisted Processing  
 Housing  
 Finance  
 Banks  
 Vehicle Registration  
 Defensive Drivers Course

processing checklist, and, as first-line supervisor, he is responsible for helping the soldiers make the transition from training to real soldiering (see Squad Leader's Checklist).

The reception and inprocessing should be allotted five working days on the training schedule. For example, the first day might be devoted to OSUT arrival and battalion/company inprocessing; the second day to division inprocessing (finance, housing, banks, enlisted records), chain-of-command briefing, and an on-post tour; the third to a showdown inspection (civilian and initial issue), CIF issue, and vaccinations; the fourth to soldier service agency briefings, chaplain briefing, JAG briefing, fire and crime prevention briefing, and registration of privately owned vehicles and weapons and high-value items; and the fifth to an off-post tour, an arrival ceremony, and clothing sale refittings.

Again, administrative and logistical support must be arranged well in advance. The records of the individual soldiers

## SQUAD LEADER'S CHECKLIST

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CO \_\_\_\_\_ PLT \_\_\_\_\_ SQD \_\_\_\_\_

Squad Leader's Initials \_\_\_\_\_

1. Sign in at battalion on DA Form 647-1 (if granted leave enroute).
2. Meet team and squad leader.
3. Secure government checks and excess cash in unit safe.
4. Issue individual barracks items.
5. Inventory: ID card, ID tags, personal issue items.
6. Secure personally-owned weapons in arms room.
7. Register POV.
8. Chapel briefing.
9. Class A turn-in to cleaners (optional).
10. Issue meal card.
11. Company chain-of-command briefing.
12. Mark high-value items.
13. Squad leader counseling.
14. Orientation of company/battalion area to include:
 

a. Bn Hqs building	f. Barber shop/PX annex
b. Dining facility	g. Formation site
c. Supply room	h. PAC
d. Orderly room	i. S-4
e. Phone booths	j. Company dayrooms
15. Safety briefing.
16. Register personally-owned weapon (if applicable).
17. Battalion aid station (shots and weigh-in).
18. Central inprocessing.
19. TA-50 issue (CIF).
20. Property accountability briefing.
21. DDC (if applicable).
22. On-post/off-post tours.
23. Sure-Pay/finance/travel processing.
24. JAG briefing.
25. Arms room (weapon card).
26. Crime prevention briefing.
27. Family support group/housing briefing (married soldiers only).
28. Re-up card filled out.
29. NBC mask fitting and issue.
30. Showdown inspection (DA Form 3078). Uniform fitting inspection.
31. Personal readiness folder prepared.
32. Extra ID tags made.

should be picked up on OSUT graduation day and handcarried by a senior NCO to the unit. These records must be immediately sorted for unit inprocessing, while APFT scores, rifle marksmanship, specialty training (11C, 11H), orders, and the like should be filed for the unit's training records. Financial, medical, dental, clothing, and personnel records should be delivered to their respective battalion, brigade, and division agencies. This will allow these agencies to screen and pre-



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pare for the day the soldiers of a COHORT unit will arrive on their doorsteps for inprocessing.

Uniforms and personal belongings should be inspected for accountability so that the unit supply sergeant can compare and validate the OSUT initial issue and spot potential shortcomings according to DA regulations. Uniform fittings can also be free of charge if the need for them is identified early.

Family support groups both in the company and outside it are a great help. Married soldiers and those considering marriage should be encouraged to participate in these groups and to promote them. Whether the wife is able to arrive with her husband or not, a spouse military orientation program is crucial to military family orientation. This program can also help with on- and off-post tours. Army Community Services packets, with personalized letters explaining predeployment and deployment issues, can reinforce the reality and the challenges of being Army wives.

### Phase III. Action and Reaction

The third phase of COHORT reception is the hardest, because it is dependent upon the success of the first two phases and also because it never ends. It is at this point that the unit

develops its character, its charter, and its course. During this period, the COHORT soldiers are trained to be loyal to their fellow soldiers and their unit, and to believe that unity in combat will make the unit more effective.

This concept of unity can also work in reverse, however. Certainly COHORT soldiers often do good things in groups, but they can also do *bad* things in groups. In garrison, this seems to be partly because of peer pressure and partly because of an inability on the part of certain soldiers to adapt to the turbulence of the transfer from OSUT to COHORT.

The primary purpose of this phase, then, is to continue to provide a structure for *good* performance. The atmosphere should be hard but fair. The differences between the "real" Army and the basic training one should be continually explained at team and squad levels. Gradually, advanced privileges should be allowed, such as days off if the unit has no AWOLs, no drunk driving charges, or no drug offenses. Good behavior and performance should be openly encouraged and supported. Incentives should be created for soldiers, elements, and the unit as a whole when responsibility is accepted, and someone should be sure to follow up on the incentive program.

At the same time, the soldiers must be forced to take immediate responsibility for bad checks, physical security violations, and the like. Military Police canine teams should be asked to search the barracks, with the soldiers watching. A company-wide urinalysis program, including the chain of command, should be conducted. Although the company's leaders should leave some room for failure on the part of the soldiers, they should not allow habitual irresponsibility.

It helps if a controlled means of expressing problems and complaints is developed. "Soldier sensing" sessions should be scheduled to give the chain of command an immediate and controlled way of getting feedback on unit morale. A company letter should be prepared for parents and spouses, explaining the unit and their sons' or spouses' jobs in it. In general, the soldier and his family should be given gentle but firm guidance on how to act and react, on and off duty, to the military life.

In addition, soldiers should be insulated from the effects of other more experienced sister units, and they should be prepared for the intensive, sequential train-up cycle they are getting ready to undergo.

These are the challenges of being in the chain of command of a COHORT unit from the beginning of the soldiers' enlistment. Teaching, training, leading, caring, setting the example, and controlling the environment are all part of one integrated task. If the unit chain of command exercises forethought and takes the initiative, then the turbulence of going from OSUT to a COHORT unit can be lessened, and the unit will be on its way toward becoming combat effective.



Lieutenant Michael C. Cloy was executive officer of Company A, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, 7th Infantry Division (Light), during the company's reception process and is now support platoon leader in the same battalion. He is an ROTC graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi.