

ENLISTED CAREER NOTES



AIRBORNE SOLDIERS NEEDED

Infantry Branch, U.S. Total Army Personnel Agency (TAPA), is looking for soldiers who are airborne qualified and want to be assigned to the 82d Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

TAPA has identified soldiers who have updated their records to reflect their airborne qualifications and have given them airborne assignments. Others who are airborne qualified but whose records do not reflect this should contact the Infantry Assignment Branch at TAPA.

Any soldier who is not airborne qualified but who is interested in attending Airborne School at Fort Benning should contact his battalion personnel actions section and submit an application.

Further information is available from the assignment managers or career advisors at Infantry Assignment Branch—AUTOVON 221-8056; commercial (202) 325-8056.

OFFICIAL FILES

TAPA receives numerous letters and telephone calls requesting information and microfiche from Active Army soldiers. The Official Military Personnel Files (OMPFs) for all active duty enlisted Army personnel are maintained at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, however, not at the Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate in Alexandria, Virginia.

Information on OMPFs should be directed to Commander, USA Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center, ATTN: PCRE-FRS, Fort Benjamin Harrison, IN 46249. Each letter must include name, grade, social security number, and organization of assignment, and the request must be signed.

The Enlisted Career Management Individual Files (CMIFs), which are maintained within the branches of EPMD, TAPA, are used strictly for assignment and professional development purposes.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLDIERS

Recently it has come to the attention of Infantry/Armor Branch at TAPA that some soldiers think their assignments are made in the Pentagon, when, in fact, they are made in TAPA, Hoffman Building #1, 2461 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22331-0452.

Enlisted soldiers who want to visit TAPA and speak with their respective Professional Development NCOs should check in with the security guard in Hoffman #1 regarding appropriate parking spaces and then report to Room 212.

Sometimes, though, problems can be solved on the telephone without a soldier having to spend time and money traveling to TAPA. Collect calls cannot be accepted, but there is a toll-free line for soldiers stationed in the continental U.S. and outside the Virginia area. The number is 1-800-ALL-ARMY (1-800-255-2769).

When a call is received, it is referred to the branch that handles the soldier's MOS, and that branch replies directly to the soldier.

OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL

The next OCS selection board is scheduled for 10-14 October 1988. Cutoff date for applications to arrive at TAPA is 9 September 1988.

Applicants who are selected will attend either OCS Class 3-89, starting

12 February 1989 and graduating 22 May 1989, or OCS Class 4-89, starting 23 April 1989 and graduating 1 August 1989.

OCS applicants who want to be considered for Aviation branch must have approved flight physicals by the Aeromedical Center at Fort Rucker and a FAST test score sheet attached to their OCS applications.

All OCS applicants must have secret security clearances before applying, and they will not be considered by the selection board if this clearance is not indicated in their applications.

Soldiers who will have more than 10 years of active federal service by 21 May 1989 are ineligible to apply for OCS. Soldiers who will be 35 years of age before 21 May 1989 are also ineligible to apply. Neither of these requirements can be waived.

NEW NCO-ER FORMS

In using the new noncommissioned officer evaluation report (NCO-ER) form (DA Form 2166-7), some people are separating pages 1 and 2 by tearing the perforation at the bottom of page 1. This perforation was designed only to make it easier to fold the form. These two pages are NOT to be separated.

Since the form is designed for use on automatic data processing equipment, it is published in continuous feed format. Once separated, the report becomes invalid and remains invalid even if it is stapled or taped back together. Reconnected forms will not be accepted for processing.

When reports are submitted to the Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center for processing, they will be folded flat, with pages 1 and 2 back to back with marginal perforations (pin-fed) strips removed.

PREFERENCE STATEMENT

Enlisted Ranks Update 13 to AR 614-200 has eliminated the enlisted preference statement (DA Form 2635) and established the CONUS area preference code and the overseas area preference code, which are on the Enlisted Master File, as the TAPA assignment managers' primary source for soldier preference data.

These codes will be updated in accordance with Procedure 2-12, CONUS/OVERSEAS Area of Preference transaction, DA Pamphlet 600-8-2.

The deletion of DA Form 2635 does eliminate the requirement for its use with any personnel action, and this form will be removed from the career management individual file (CMIF) maintained at TAPA in the near future.

Soldiers are encouraged to communicate with their career branches by telephone, letter, or personnel action request (DA Form 4187) to express their individual needs, problems, or concerns.

DRILL SERGEANT ASSIGNMENTS

The drill sergeant team at TAPA is trying to select for drill sergeant school and duty more soldiers who are stationed overseas and due to return to the continental United States (CONUS) in the next eight to 12 months. The intent is to save money by cutting the number of permanent change of station moves within CONUS.

Soldiers who are already stationed at drill sergeant installations remain the top priority for drill sergeant replacements, with overseas returnees second. Soldiers stationed in the U.S. at non-drill sergeant installations are now the lowest priority for these assignments.

Overseas soldiers who are interested in the drill sergeant program should contact their personnel staff NCOs for details. Applications must be submitted so that they arrive at TAPA eight

to 12 months before the soldier's date of estimated return from overseas.

TAPA will not curtail a soldier's overseas tour to assign him to drill sergeant school or duty. Those who are approved for drill sergeant school are usually scheduled for a class that begins 45 to 90 days after their dates of estimated return.

Soldiers stationed at CONUS non-drill sergeant installations may still apply for the drill sergeant program. Applications will be approved, however, only for soldiers who have been stationed at their current installations for at least 48 months, and only when a drill sergeant requirement cannot be met with a qualified overseas returnee.

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

There appears to be some confusion in the Infantry community concerning official photographs.

In reviewing official photos, members of the Infantry Branch at TAPA have found that a number of NCOs are wearing Infantry blue cords, blue background disks, leadership tabs, and foreign awards not permanently authorized for wear in official photos.

AR 640-30, Photographs for Military Personnel Files, states that soldiers will report to the photo facility dressed in the Army green uniform with basic branch insignia and all *permanently* authorized ribbons, badges, and tabs correctly displayed. The shoulder sleeve insignia (patch) and distinctive unit insignia (crest) are the only authorized deviations from this rule.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR RANGER TRAINING

TAPA is seeking volunteers for Ranger training and assignment.

Not just any soldier can complete Ranger training and join a Ranger battalion. To become a Ranger, a soldier must go through tough, realistic training in all kinds of weather and all environments. The Ranger Course is

58 days long and is conducted in four phases at Fort Benning; Dahlgren, Georgia; Dugway Proving Ground, Utah; and Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

Soldiers who complete the training and qualify as Rangers will be assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment.

Letters went out several months ago to soldiers in critical specialties asking them to consider volunteering for Ranger training. But others are also encouraged to apply, even those not in the combat arms.

Anyone who is interested should check with his personnel NCO about eligibility criteria and application procedures, or call the Ranger career advisor at TAPA: AUTOVON 221-5493/5494, commercial (202) 325-5493/5494.

LINGUISTS NEEDED

The Army needs good linguists in some specific military occupational specialties. The MOSSs involved are mostly within Career Management Fields 96 (Military Intelligence) and 98 (Electronic Warfare/Cryptologic Operations). Most of the languages needed are difficult ones, such as Korean, Arabic, Russian, and Persian.

Soldiers in the linguist field can earn as many as 25 semester hours of college credit, depending on the language and MOS they learn. In addition, selective reenlistment bonuses apply to almost all soldiers in this field.

To qualify for classification into one of these MOSSs, a soldier must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Be a high school graduate.
- Have a Skill Technical (ST) score of 95 or higher.
- Qualify for a top secret security clearance with sensitive compartmented information access.

Interested soldiers who meet these qualifications should contact their installation career counselors or personnel service centers for assistance.

OFFICERS CAREER NOTES



BRANCH CHIEF'S NOTES

The Officer Evaluation System is a subject that evokes as many opinions and emotions as there are officers in our Army. And that comes as no surprise to anyone, because officer evaluation reports (OERs) have a direct effect on our careers. They affect an officer across a spectrum of both intangible and tangible outcomes--from an individual's perspective of self-worth to his selection for promotion and schooling. It is therefore only reasonable to ask, "How well does the system work?" as Captain Thomas M. Jordan did in a recent INFANTRY article (March-April 1988, pages 16-17).

As Chief of Infantry Branch, I am convinced that the system does work, but it is not perfect--few systems are. It is only as good as its users. This means that we in the officer corps must ensure that we use the system correctly.

DA Pamphlet 623-105 provides us with specific guidance in our roles as rated officer, rater, and senior rater. Command climate and leadership style may influence the interaction of these three key players but do not relieve them of their responsibilities. And within the Infantry community it appears that most officers are living up to these responsibilities.

We at Infantry Branch review 500 to 1,000 OERs each month, talk with officers and their commanders about OERs, and make frequent briefing trips to the field to discuss OER trends. This dialogue is important because it is in the interest of all of us to make the system work.

Infantry assignment officers discuss specifics with individuals, but the following general points are made in formal briefings:

- All officers should adhere to DA

Pamphlet 623-105.

- If a rated officer is due a report and doesn't know how he stands with his rater and senior rater, it is in his best interest to arrange an office call with each before the OER is written. (This advice is offered in recognition of the unfortunate reality that some commanders fail to counsel.)

- Raters and senior raters should not hesitate to call Infantry Branch assignment officers to discuss any matter concerning OERs--trends, senior rater profile philosophy, and the like.

It is also important for Infantry officers to understand clearly the role that OERs play in our careers. It is fine to say, "Do every job well," because this is accurate advice. But more precisely, there is no substitute for doing well with troops, especially when in command. As Infantrymen, we must focus on the troops. Our soldiers deserve the best leaders we can give them. Consequently, officers who do well with troops will have subsequent troop assignments and, as long as their manner of performance remains high, they will be competitive for selection for schooling and promotion. Officers who do poorly with troops most likely will not remain competitive and, with Congressionally mandated officer reductions, may in some instances be faced with leaving active duty.

This is stark reality. But it is recognized that we have an outstanding and talented group of Infantry officers in today's Army, and competition is fierce.

Briefly stated, Infantry officers must seek the tough jobs, in particular those with troops, and do well in order to remain competitive with their contemporaries. All of us are responsible for ensuring that manner of performance is accurately portrayed in the OERs of the officers we rate and senior rate,

because it is through OERs, ORBs, and photographs that selection board members develop a picture of each officer and evaluate him with his peers. If we have done what's right, our Army benefits; if not, we have failed and let our soldiers down in the process.

LTC Franklin L. Hagenbeck

VOLUNTARY EARLY RELEASE/ RETIREMENT PROGRAM

Selected officers may volunteer for separation or retirement under the provisions of the Voluntary Early Release/Retirement Program. Early release from active duty must occur 29 September 1988 or earlier. Retirement must occur on or before 1 September 1988.

Requests for resignation, release from active duty, or retirement must be forwarded through channels to Headquarters, Department of the Army. Details of the program were outlined in TAPA message, 231800Z February 1988, subject: FY 88 Officer Voluntary "Early Release/Retirement" Program.

Officers who are interested in the program should coordinate with their servicing personnel service centers at the earliest possible date to determine eligibility and required application procedures.

INSTRUCTOR DUTY AT THE INFANTRY SCHOOL

There has been a tremendous upgrade in the quality of instructors at the Infantry School over the past three years. With the inception of small group instruction in all of the School's leader courses, however, the need to have the best and brightest officers and

noncommissioned officers in the School has been magnified.

In short, the School needs the very best warriors to serve as instructors in the future. Their task will be to prepare our young leaders for worldwide infantry assignments. They will contribute immeasurably to the infantry force while also being personally groomed for future command and staff positions.

INFANTRY OFFICER ADVANCED COURSE

The Infantry Officer Advanced Course (IOAC) has evolved over the years. Before 1975, it was a 36-week course designed to prepare officers for command and staff positions at battalion and brigade level, with emphasis on the exercise of command at battalion level. Then the course was revised to become a 26-week course designed to prepare captains to command companies and to serve as battalion and brigade staff officers.

In 1985, the course was shortened to 20 weeks, but its scope remained unchanged. The small group instructor concept was implemented in 1986 and is in use today.

Prospective students should be aware of the demanding requirements and be prepared to devote themselves to 20 weeks of rigorous, rewarding, career-developing training.

SEPARATE INFANTRY BRIGADE REFRESHER COURSE

The Infantry School conducts a one-week course each fiscal year to provide unit refresher training to Army National Guard and Army Reserve separate infantry brigade commanders and staffs in the application of current doctrine and staff procedures.

The course for Fiscal Year 1988 is scheduled for 31 July to 5 August 1988; the one for Fiscal Year 1989 is scheduled for 4-9 December 1988.

The course provides an update on the changes in infantry doctrine and organization over the past three years,

with the emphasis on the Army's operational concept and subsequent changes in the doctrinal base. It also includes threat force, infantry weapons, and other related infantry subjects. The focus of all instruction, however, is on doctrinally correct operations as a part of the AirLand Battle team.

Those who attend should be commissioned officers or senior primary staff noncommissioned officers assigned to National Guard or Army Reserve separate infantry brigades.

Additional information is available from Commandant, U.S. Army Infantry School, ATTN: ATSH-I-V-C-O; AUTOVON 835-2783/4052, or commercial (404) 545-2783/4052.

RC ADVISORS TO SCHOOL

The Chief, National Guard Bureau, and the Chief, Army Reserve maintain permanent officer representatives at the Infantry School. These officers serve as liaison between the School, the National Guard Bureau, the Army Reserve Personnel Center, the states, and the major commands in the management of assignments, military schooling, and career planning for the students in the Infantry Officer Candidate School, the Officer Basic Course, and the Officer Advanced Course.

Each advisor is the single point of contact for all units for information pertaining to the status of officers or officer candidates attending Infantry School classes, follow-on courses for officers attending the basic and advanced officer courses, and delays of officers caused by course failures, slippages, or medical problems.

The current Army National Guard Advisor is LTC Richard Wright, AUTOVON 835-1159, or commercial (404) 545-1159. The current U.S. Army Reserve Advisor is COL Allan W. Keener, AUTOVON 835-7113, or commercial (404) 545-7113. The address for both is Commandant, U.S. Army Infantry School, ATTN: ATSH-IP (name), Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5401.

AGR OFFICERS MUST UPDATE ORBs

Army Reserve officers on Active Guard Reserve duty who want to be considered for reassignment and professional development must keep their officer record briefs (ORBs) up to date.

This key document is used by personnel management officers at the Army Reserve Personnel Center in St. Louis. It is also used by commanders who are considering officers who have been nominated for assignments.

An officer should update his ORB each year on his birthday and any time there is a significant change in his status, such as completing mandatory education or changing positions.

To complete the form, an officer must use AR 640-2-1, the governing regulation, and can also use DA Pamphlet 640-1 as a guide.

Copies of updated ORBs should be sent to an officer's servicing personnel service center and to his personnel management officer at ARPERCEN at this address: Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center, ATTN: DARP-ARO, 9700 Page Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63132-5200.

LIAISON PROGRAM FOR IRR OFFICERS

Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) officers may earn participation points and pay at their home stations by serving as recruiters for the United States Military Academy and for ROTC scholarships.

Applicants must not be in a troop program unit, must never have been passed over for promotion, and must have four years before mandatory removal.

Details are available from Superintendent, United States Military Academy, ATTN: MAAR-L, West Point, New York 10996-5000.

