



U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral & Social Sciences

FACT SHEET



U.S. Army Occupational Analysis Program

The U.S. Army's Occupational Data Analysis, Requirements, and Structure (ODARS) Program links Manpower, Personnel and Training (MPT) information at the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) job level with individual task information critical to job design, analysis and training development.

Introduction

The ODARS program performs occupational analyses and job design throughout the Army to provide MPT communities with important information that ensures the availability of soldiers with appropriate skills to meet Army-wide requirements. The Occupational Analysis (OA) program supports Army Staff and various organizations throughout the Army, but in particular, it helps MPT communities provide field commanders with the best possible match of soldiers to jobs.

Background

The OA program was established in the late 1960s to help resolve MPT issues associated with the Army's role in Vietnam. During the Vietnam War the number of MOS peaked, and then began declining once the war ended. However, as new weapon systems were developed, soldier tasks and jobs changed. MOS for numerous jobs were altered or merged, and new MOS were formulated to meet dynamic changes in the Army.

Occupational Analysis and the Customer

OA projects are determined through a yearly solicitation of potential customers, primarily the specialty schools of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). Proponent schools determine MPT requirements at the MOS/job level, and then work closely with the OA staff to do MOS analysis and job redesign. Results of the process include: a) adjusting the MOS structure and tasks in response to procure-



ment of new weapon systems, equipment, or complex materiel systems; b) merging two or more MOS to create new MOS or additional skill qualifiers; and/or c) substantive changes in Army operations and procedures as a result of new materiel systems entering the inventory. The OA program is currently involved with helping determine the MOS structure that will best support the Interim Brigade Combat Teams (IBCT).

Enlisted Common Soldier Tasks Example

Based on perceived deficiencies in the training and performance of Enlisted Common Soldier Tasks (ECST), the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy requested assistance in defining the ECST domain and developing recommended changes to the existing training for privates through sergeants first class. From a base of 153 documented ECST tasks, ARI isolated a total of 553 potentially common critical tasks through interviews of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), focus groups, and the review of related literature. An automated survey of approximately 6700 soldiers in the Active and Reserve Components provided the data necessary to quantify the probability that a task was performed at a given enlisted skill level as well as an estimate of the frequency with which that task was done each year. A critical task

selection board reviewed the task lists and supporting data. Over 300 tasks were identified as critical ECST tasks. As a result, these tasks are being incorporated into Army common core training from Basic Combat Training through Advanced NCO courses to better prepare soldiers for the needs of field units. This effort is a concrete example of how the OA program works to improve individual soldier performance and readiness.

Task Knowledges Commonality Analysis Method (TKCAM):

In FY99, the OA program adapted a new MOS design process using an ARI developed methodology called the TKCAM. TKCAM is an analytical method to determine the commonality between two or more MOS in terms of the knowledge soldiers need to perform their jobs. Using TKCAM's commonality analysis methodology, a personnel analyst can identify whether the knowledge requirements for job performance of two or more MOS are similar or different.

In 1999, the U.S. Army Infantry School and Center used TKCAM to assess the feasibility of merging 30,000 Infantrymen assigned to two different MOS.

Computer Assisted Survey Development & Administration

Computer automation makes it easier to obtain, manipulate, interpret, and present occupational information to customers. The time required to estimate the knowledge and skills of soldiers, produce a survey, and collect, analyze, and report the data can be cut in half by using computerized systems. This amounts to substantial savings in time and cost. Currently, the OA staff uses electronic surveys that are developed and delivered on Windows-based PCs, making it easier to re-use survey items through repeated use of standardized questions for follow-on projects with the same customers. The OA program uses a variety of descriptive statistical tools, methods, and analyses and provides graphics in succinct formats that convey immediate meaning to customers.

Internet Surveys

The OA program is evaluating commercial off-the-shelf software for Web-based occupational data collection. In fact, the OA program is currently testing Internet surveys for OA collection with studies for the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy and several TRADOC schools.

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