



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

AD 113 20

①

BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
Report To The Secretary Of The Army

**The Army Needs To Modify
Its System For Measuring
Individual Soldier Proficiency**

The Army does not have an effective system for measuring individual training effectiveness and individual soldier proficiency in critical job tasks. Yet, more than \$25 million is spent annually to develop, print, distribute, and score hundreds of skill qualification tests. In addition, unknown costs are incurred each year to administer the tests.

GAO recommends several actions which can be taken to develop a less complex, less costly, and more effective system for measuring individual soldier proficiency and training needs. The Army agrees with the need to modify the program in a manner closely parallel to GAO's recommendations.



DTIC FILE COPY



DTIC
ELECTE
S APR 5 1982 D
A

This document has been approved for public release and sale; its distribution is unlimited.

FPCD-82-28
MARCH 30, 1982

02 0 05 018



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND
COMPENSATION DIVISION

B-206595

The Honorable John O. Marsh, Jr.
The Secretary of the Army

Attention: The Inspector General
DAIG-AI

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This report summarizes our review of whether the Army's Skill Qualification Testing Program measures soldier proficiency and identifies individual training needs.

As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions taken on our recommendations. This written statement must be submitted to the House Committee on Governmental Affairs not later than 60 days after the date of the report. A written statement must also be submitted to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with an agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report.

We are sending copies of this report to the Secretary of Defense; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; the Chairmen, House and Senate Committees on Appropriations and Armed Services; and the Chairmen, House Committee on Government Operations and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

We wish to acknowledge the courtesy and cooperation extended to us by your staff during our review.

Sincerely yours,


Clifford I. Gould
Director

Enclosure

A

EX

D I G E S T

Presently, the Skill Qualification Test program is the Army's only diagnostic tool for measuring individual training effectiveness and individual soldier proficiency in critical job tasks. Its ability to meet the Army's needs, however, is questionable.

Both the Army and the Congress have a vital need for accurate information on individual soldier skills. The importance of such information prompted the General Accounting Office (GAO) to do this study of the Army's Skill Qualification Test program. A March 31, 1981, report by GAO which found that soldiers were not being trained in all critical job tasks added impetus. GAO provides alternatives that meet the Army's proficiency information needs at a much lower cost.

NEEDS OF THE ARMY NOT MET BY SKILL
QUALIFICATION TEST PROGRAM

Unit commanders and trainers are not getting the necessary information to assess accurately either skill proficiency or individual training needs. Five major obstacles prevent this program from meeting the Army's needs:

- Test results do not accurately indicate a soldier's ability to perform critical job tasks because only a selected number of tasks is tested. (See p. 6.)
- Skill Qualification Testing is regarded as a once-a-year event, rather than as the culmination of a year-round training program. (See p. 8.)
- Promotion decisions based on Skill Qualification Test results create inequities among soldiers. (See p. 9.)

FPCD-82-28

--Test results are not routinely used to measure soldier proficiency or training needs at the unit level. (See p. 10.)

--The Skill Qualification Test program handicaps rather than improves professional skill development because training is provided primarily for those few tasks tested. (See p. 10.)

QUESTIONABLE COST EFFECTIVENESS OF
SKILL QUALIFICATION TEST

Considering the Army's information needs on soldier proficiency and individual training, the Skill Qualification Test concept appears logical--i.e., train a soldier to specified standards (Soldiers Manual) and then test against those standards to determine proficiency. However, in practice, the program has become a "paper nightmare." Each year, thousands of people are required to develop, print, distribute, and score the hundreds of tests at an annual cost of more than \$25 million. (See p. 12.)

The Army must have a system that measures soldier proficiency and identifies training needs, but that system should be less complex, more responsive to the needs of individual trainers, and less costly to develop and administer than the current testing program. Moreover, it should take into account any time and resource constraints. (See p. 15.)

Consequently, the GAO recommends that the Secretary of the Army develop and implement, beginning in fiscal year 1983, a more effective system for measuring individual soldier proficiency and training needs. This system should incorporate separate programs for (1) assessing individual training needs and (2) measuring individual proficiency for use in promotion decisions. More specifically:

--The program for assessing individual training needs should be tied directly to the Soldiers Manuals (which list critical job tasks) and used as a training tool.

- Soldiers Manuals where feasible should include tests which unit level trainers can use as often as necessary to evaluate individual proficiency in any number of tasks.
- Individual training assessments should remain at the unit level and serve as a diagnostic aid to improving training.
- Unit trainers should be held accountable for using tests contained in Soldiers Manuals.
- Tests of individual proficiency for use in promotion decisions should apply only to those soldiers eligible for or already within the noncommissioned-officer ranks. These tests should comprise both a written exam of randomly selected Soldiers Manual tasks and a hands-on test of common soldier tasks. These tests should be offered during a limited period each year, and only those soldiers eligible for promotion should be required to take them. Specific test questions should not be announced in advance.

AGENCY COMMENTS

At a February 1982, meeting the Army provided comments on the draft report. In its March 1982 written response (appendix I) the Army generally agreed with GAO's findings, stating that the growing administrative workloads associated with conducting the program in units has led the Army to the same solutions advocated in the draft report. The Army also agreed with the need to modify the Skill Qualification Test Program in a manner closely parallel to the recommendations in this report. GAO has made appropriate changes throughout the report to address the Army's comments. (See p. 20.)

C o n t e n t s

		<u>Page</u>
DIGEST		i
CHAPTER		
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	SQT is the Army's diagnostic tool for assessing individual soldier proficiency	1
	Objective, scope, and methodology	3
2	THE SQT PROGRAM DOES NOT MEET THE NEEDS OF THE ARMY	6
	SQT results do not accurately reflect ability of soldiers to perform critical job tasks	6
	SQT is regarded as a once-a-year event instead of the culmination of year-round training	8
	Inconsistent use of SQT results in promotion decisions creates inequities among soldiers	9
	SQT results are not routinely used to measure soldier proficiency or training needs at the unit level	10
	The SQT program handicaps, rather than improves, professional develop- ment	10
3	THE COST EFFECTIVENESS OF SQT DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION IS QUESTIONABLE	12
	SQT development is costly	12
	Despite the Army's involved and costly development process, valid tests are not always produced	14
	Test administration is labor intensive and costly	15
4	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	17
	Conclusions	17
	Recommendations	18
	Agency comments	19

		<u>Page</u>
APPENDIX		
I	Agency comments	20
II	Description of the Army's SQT development system	21
III	Explanation of GAO questionnaire administration and validation procedures	26
IV	Army skills selected for review	57
V	Army units visited by GAO where detail audit work was performed	58

ABBREVIATIONS

GAO	General Accounting Office
MILPERCEN	Army Military Personnel Center
MOS	military occupational specialty
NCO	noncommissioned officer
SQT	skill qualification test
TRADOC	Army Training and Doctrine Command
TSO	test standardization officer

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Army and the Congress have the necessary information on numbers of people, numbers of weapons, and weapon capabilities which allows an approximate comparison of U.S. military capability with that of other nations. Underpinning these comparisons, however, are less tangible factors--the ability of U.S. soldiers to use their weapons, perform their jobs, and survive in combat. Without accurate information on the abilities of its soldiers, the Army cannot insure that training resources have been directed where needed, determine whether training goals are being achieved, or provide the Congress an accurate assessment of its readiness posture. The system used by the Army to address these factors forms the subject of this report.

In the last 3 years, the Army has spent over \$45 million developing skill qualification tests (SQTs) and additional yearly sums to administer them. It does not know the exact cost for soldiers taking the tests, but that sum must be large, since more than 200,000 soldiers took the SQTs last year. The SQT program was implemented to assess, accurately and promptly, the ability of soldiers to perform military occupational specialty (MOS) tasks essential to proper job performance and survival in combat. Such information is especially important to the Army's unit commanders and trainers, who, under the Army's decentralized training concept, provide most of the soldiers' individual training.

This study of the Army's SQT program was prompted by two considerations:

--The importance of individual training to the Army's readiness posture, and therefore its significance to the Congress.

--Recent work by GAO, which showed that soldiers were not being trained in all critical job tasks. 1/

SQT IS THE ARMY'S DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL SOLDIER PROFICIENCY

The SQT program, now nearly 5 years old, was designed to replace the Army's MOS test--a 4-hour, written, multiple-choice

1/These findings were presented in GAO report "The Army Needs To Improve Individual Soldier Training in Its Units," FPCD-81-29, March 31, 1981.

examination of 125 questions. The results of the MOS tests had been used by the Army to make such personnel decisions as award of proficiency pay, retention, and promotion. The MOS test program, however, did not prove useful in diagnosing training needs, as it provided results only on the major test areas. Consequently, soldiers and trainers did not know what specific training each individual soldier needed.

The SQT program, on the other hand, was intended to provide task-specific data on individual soldier proficiency for both personnel and training decisions. With its inception in April 1977, SQT became the Army's diagnostic tool for assessing individual soldier proficiency.

Under the SQT program, the soldier trains to perform those critical tasks required by his particular MOS. These critical tasks, their performance conditions, and standards are listed in a Soldiers Manual for each MOS. The Soldiers Manuals thus form the criteria for the Army's SQT program. Test questions are designed to show whether soldiers can perform the selected tasks to Soldiers Manual standards.

A SQT for each occupational specialty generally consists of three parts:

- The skill component, a multiple-choice written test which evaluates a soldier's ability to apply the knowledge necessary to perform a task. The number of tasks tested by the skill component varies according to soldier skill level and type of MOS (combat arms, combat support, or combat service support), but no skill component can contain more than 161 questions or require more than 2 hours to complete.
- The hands-on component, in which the soldier actually performs selected Soldiers Manual tasks in a controlled, standardized setting. This component requires a formal test site, a trained scorer, and actual equipment or simulators. As with the skill component, the number of tasks tested varies by soldier skill level and type of MOS, but generally a typical unit should be able to test all its soldiers in an 8-hour period.
- The job-site component, a battery of 11 hands-on tests of the soldier in his job setting. The immediate supervisor administers this portion and scores the soldier's performance. Most job-site components contain more than 11 tasks for testing; the immediate supervisor selects which ones will be tested based on what the soldier does in his job at the unit.

Therefore, the annual SQT tests a subset (no more than 35) of the tasks a soldier must know to be fully proficient in his job. For example, an infantryman (MOS 11B) at skill level 1 (the lowest level) in an M60 machinegunner duty position is supposed to be proficient in 131 tasks in order to do his job properly and survive combat. Yet he will be tested on only 35 tasks at most.

Chapter 2 discusses how the SQT program fails to meet the needs of the Army in measuring individual skill proficiency and providing sufficient information to establish individual training needs. Chapter 3 addresses the extensive time and costs required to develop and administer SQTs, while chapter 4 sets forth our conclusions concerning the SQT program and our recommendations for using cheaper alternatives to measure proficiency.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

We made this review to determine whether the Army's SQT program effectively assesses individual soldier proficiency and identifies training needs. Our efforts were limited to the Active Army. This review was performed in accordance with our current "Standards for Audit of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities, and Functions."

At Department of the Army Headquarters and the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), we sought information on the SQT program philosophy. We also met with representatives from Department of the Army Inspector General's Office; the Army Training Board; the Army Training Support Center; the Army Audit Agency; and the Army Research Institute.

Information regarding the development of SQTs was obtained from all 21 Army school commands involved in that process. At six of these commands--Armor School, the Infantry School, the Quartermaster School, the Transportation School, the Artillery School, and the Engineer School--we discussed SQT development effectiveness, and usefulness, and documented available costs of SQT development. This same information was solicited, via a questionnaire, from those Army schools we did not visit.

To determine whether the SQT program adequately assesses soldier proficiency and training weaknesses, we visited 28 active Army units (8 in Europe and 20 in the continental United States). All available personnel at each unit we visited completed a questionnaire on preparation for SQT and use of SQT results to evaluate past training, plan future training, and assess soldier and unit proficiency. In addition, we interviewed a 10-percent sample of unit personnel to discuss their answers on the questionnaire, gather opinions on the usefulness of SQT, and obtain information on the methods of individual skill training. In

total, we administered questionnaires to 1,503 soldiers E1-E4, 652 soldiers E5-E9, and 114 officers and interviewed 134 soldiers E1-E4, 80 soldiers E5-E9, and 44 officers.

To compare SQT with other programs for assessing individual proficiency and identifying training needs, we contacted Army officials from other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries and officials from private industry. These included the military attaches of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, West Germany, and Norway; officials from the Armies of Australia and New Zealand; and representatives from American Telephone and Telegraph Company, International Business Machines, and Xerox. While all of these sources had some system to measure proficiency and training needs, they generally rely upon immediate supervisors to provide the type of information the Army expects to get from the SQT program.

We also discussed general test theory and the Army's SQT program with representatives from the Educational Testing Service.

Appendix II provides details about the process used to develop and administer SQTs. Appendix III explains in detail the questionnaire methodology we used on our Army units, summarizes our administration and validation procedures, and includes examples of our questionnaires.

Appendix IV lists the 16 MOSs we evaluated. These were selected to provide (1) information on high density skills, (2) a balance of combat arms and combat support skills, (3) a balance of high and less technical skills, and (4) information on skills where an SQT had been administered for at least 2 years.

Appendix V shows the divisions, battalions, and company/battery units where questionnaires were administered and soldiers/supervisors interviewed. We selected these units according to certain criteria:

- Units designated as high priority by the Army (applies only to U.S. based units).
- Units with a concentration of personnel with one or more of the selected skills.
- Units which provided geographical coverage, both in terms of different Army installations and different divisions.

The 16 Army occupational specialties chosen and the schools visited were selected with the concurrence of officials from TRADOC,

who agreed that our selection of specialties was representative of Army skills. They also confirmed that the schools selected for visit would provide good coverage of SQT development throughout the Army.

As a part of our study, we reviewed relevant audit reports, discussed our work with internal auditors, and, where appropriate, reached agreement with them on any followup action required on their part in connection with our findings.

CHAPTER 2

THE SQT PROGRAM DOES NOT MEET

THE NEEDS OF THE ARMY

The Army needs to know how well its soldiers can perform their jobs as it trains to defend our Nation. Unit commanders--the individuals ultimately responsible for soldiers' initial and refresher training--must know, at any given time, the readiness of their personnel. Without this information, trainers cannot determine whether training goals are being met, whether soldiers are trained to prescribed Soldiers Manual standards, or where training resources should be committed. Consequently, the Army must have a program that effectively measures the skills of individual soldiers and determines their training needs.

Presently, the SQT program is the only Army-wide diagnostic tool for measuring the effectiveness of individual training and the proficiency of individual soldiers in critical job tasks. While the SQT program has stimulated training in some critical job tasks, the program does not fully meet the needs of the Army, unit commanders, and trainers in measuring individual soldier proficiency or determining individual training needs. The major obstacles preventing the SQT program from meeting Army needs can be traced to the following:

- SQT results do not accurately indicate a soldier's ability to perform critical job tasks.
- SQT is regarded as a discrete, once-a-year event, rather than as the culmination of a year-round training program.
- Promotion decisions based on inconsistent use of SQT results create inequities among soldiers.
- SQT results are not routinely used to measure soldier proficiency or training needs at the unit level.
- The SQT program handicaps, rather than improves, professional skill development.

SQT RESULTS DO NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT ABILITY OF SOLDIERS TO PERFORM CRITICAL JOB TASKS

SQT results cannot be used to indicate a soldier's overall proficiency in his specialty, because an SQT only tests a selected number of the tasks critical to an individual's job performance. For example, the Soldiers Manual for an M60 machine-gunner infantryman (MOS 11 B) contains 131 tasks which soldiers at the lowest skill level must know to do their job effectively

and survive combat. However, an SQT only tests a soldier on a maximum of 35 Soldiers Manual tasks which for most MOSS is a small number compared to the total number of tasks soldiers must know, and the tasks tested are not selected such that they are representative of all Soldiers Manual tasks.

We asked the Army's 21 schools that develop SQTs whether the existing SQTs measure each soldier's ability to perform all Soldiers Manual tasks within his specialty. More than half the respondents felt that existing SQTs at most provide only moderately accurate measurements of individual abilities.

At best, SQT results indicate how well a soldier at a given time can perform selected Soldiers Manual tasks--i.e., those tasks tested. In this regard, 61 percent of the NCOs and 66 percent of the officers who responded to our questionnaire said SQT results reflect soldier ability at least moderately well. However, caution must be exercised in using SQT results to reflect proficiency even in those tasks tested, because soldiers are extensively prepared for the tests. For instance, they are notified up to 60 days before the tests which Soldiers Manual tasks will be included on their SQTs. At all 28 units we visited, officials acknowledged that just prior to actual testing soldiers receive extensive training on the individual tasks to be tested.

Other factors also affect the use and utility of SQT results for measuring proficiency, making training decisions, or determining personnel actions:

- Not all soldiers receive the same amount of task-specific training before the test, due to duty assignments, special details, field exercises, leave, or lack of supervisory interest.
- Some soldiers do not take the SQTs seriously. For example, only about 8 percent of the E1-E4 soldiers and 6 percent of the noncommissioned officers (NCOs) we surveyed said they studied on their own to any great extent.
- Many soldiers are assigned to work outside their MOSSs, which handicaps their SQT performance. More than 38 percent of the E1-E4 soldiers and 33 percent of the NCOs surveyed said that, in the 6 months just before their last SQTs, they had spent over 50 percent of their time in tasks outside of the MOS for which they had been tested.
- The 60-percent passing score represents an arbitrary standard and does not mean a soldier is MOS-proficient.

--There is no system to insure that test difficulty within an MOS is constant from year to year. Consequently, improved SQT pass rates may not indicate increased proficiency. Fifteen SQT-developing schools said their tests vary in difficulty from year to year.

SQT IS REGARDED AS A ONCE-A-YEAR
EVENT INSTEAD OF THE CULMINATION
OF YEAR-ROUND TRAINING

Instead of the SQT being the natural culmination of a year-round training program, many commanders look at it merely as another event or, even worse, as an obstacle to collective training. A Fort Carson IG report of May 1981 regarding the 4th Infantry Division stated that many Division units train for the SQT as an event. This same report noted that, "Although some individual training is being conducted throughout the year, SQT Refresher Training has become SQT 'Preparation' Training."

At the units visited, we asked soldiers how often in the last year they had received individual training in Soldiers Manual tasks. Of the 781 E1-E4s responding to this question, more than 23 percent said that the only such training they had received occurred in the period between SQT notices and the actual tests. Another 43 percent reported some individual training throughout the year, but most of it was just before the SQT, and another 10 percent said they had received no training at all. In addition, 18 percent of the 389 NCOs who responded said that individual training had only been provided the soldiers they supervise between the SQT notice and the actual testing.

Many Army commanders and training officials regard this training practice as the primary benefit of the entire program--i.e., test notification prompts training in some Soldiers Manual tasks before testing. However, very few soldiers told us they had received remedial training after the test results were received. Of the 997 E1-E4 soldiers and NCOs who responded, 65 percent said they had received no training on any tasks they had failed in the SQTs. Another 4 percent had received their results too recently to get training, 14 percent had been trained in all tasks failed, and 17 percent had received training on some of the failed tasks.

The SQT program has, in fact, become a once-a-year event, with the result that, throughout much of the Army, individual training programs merely focus on only a subset of the tasks critical to proper job performance. Individuals practice or rehearse the limited number of tasks required to take a test and, once the test is over, go back to routine duties which may not develop skill in critical job tasks.

INCONSISTENT USE OF SQT RESULTS IN
PROMOTION DECISIONS CREATES
INEQUITIES AMONG SOLDIERS

SQT results no longer must be used as the primary basis for promotions up to the rank of E4. They are only one factor which commanders may consider in promoting lower enlisted personnel.

For promotions to and within the NCO ranks, however, SQT scores take on more importance. For promotions to grades E5 and E6, SQT scores are used and can account for up to 150 points on the 1,000 point promotion worksheet. However, soldiers who do not take an SQT are given "no-fault points" which could be greater than SQT points. This practice could encourage NCOs who are not proficient in Soldiers Manual tasks to avoid SQT exams. For promotions to grades E7-E9, the SQT score again is one factor considered by the promotion board.

SQTs can contribute to inequities among enlisted personnel even if they do take the test. For career fields in which several MOSs at one skill level merge into a single MOS at the next higher level, some SQTs can give soldiers an advantage in competing for promotions. For example, several specialties dealing with avionics equipment repair merge at skill-level 3 into one MOS (35P). Unless the skill-level 2 tests for all these merging MOSs are equally difficult, some soldiers will have an unfair advantage over others for promotion. MILPERCEN representatives agreed that the variable difficulty of SQTs was unfair to competing soldiers. Despite this inequity, however, no program exists to insure that different SQTs are equally difficult. (See chapter 3.)

Another inherent inequity in use of SQT scores is the practice of waiving results, with the effect that some--but not all--soldiers who fail SQTs are denied promotions. For example, an SQT for a particular year might be especially difficult. A soldier who took this test early in the test period might make a failing score which prevents his promotion. As the year progresses and the SQT continues, this soldier's score could turn out to be one of the highest scores for that test. If the accumulating test results indicate that this SQT is too difficult, those soldiers who have taken the test later in the SQT period can have their failing scores waived and be promoted. This is not a rare occurrence. MILPERCEN data show that 482 of the 4,789 soldiers promoted to E-6 or E-7 during the 9-month period ending June 30, 1981, had not passed their SQT.

SQT RESULTS ARE NOT ROUTINELY USED
TO MEASURE SOLDIER PROFICIENCY OR
TRAINING NEEDS AT THE UNIT LEVEL

Units and individual soldiers receive SQT results. While TRADOC's average turnaround time to score the tests and provide the results was about 60 days 2 years ago, the Army's goal of 30 days is now frequently being achieved. For example, 27 percent of the E1-E4 soldiers and 15 percent of the NCOs who took their last SQT before January 1, 1981, responded that they received their results in 1 to 4 weeks. Those who took their SQTs after January 1, 1981, received swifter service: 46 percent of the soldiers E1-E4 and 19 percent of the NCOs reported receiving their results in 1 to 4 weeks. However, though turnaround time for SQT results has improved, our respondents (primarily officers and NCOs) indicated that SQT results are not routinely used for either measuring soldier proficiency or developing unit training programs. For example, 21 percent of responding NCOs said that their units used SQT results to little or no extent in deciding which soldiers get promoted. Moreover, only 48 percent of the responding NCOs reported using SQT results to a great extent in determining what training their soldiers need. However, the NCOs also reported using other information to define training needs--Army Training and Evaluation Program results, personal observation, and simply asking soldiers--to an equal or greater extent than the tests. There is no evidence that, without SQT results, they would be unable to identify training needs just as well.

THE SQT PROGRAM HANDICAPS,
RATHER THAN IMPROVES,
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Since its beginning, the SQT program has been struggling with its two conflicting objectives--to measure proficiency and to provide a basis for personnel decisions. Because commanders and NCOs are interested in the careers of the soldiers they supervise, they do everything possible to maximize their soldiers' SQT scores, since these are used in personnel decisions. In doing so, however, training programs have developed which emphasize only those tasks to be tested by the SQTs.

As mentioned earlier, 18 percent of our NCO respondents reported that their soldiers got training in Soldiers Manual tasks only during the time between SQT notices and the actual tests. Another 60 percent said that, although their soldiers got some training in Soldiers Manual tasks throughout the year, most of it occurred just before the SQT.

We asked all enlisted personnel who had taken an SQT this same question. Of the 1,297 who responded, 22 percent said they

got training on Soldiers Manual tasks only after receiving the SQT notice. Another 45 percent said that most of their training occurred just before the SQT, and 10 percent reported receiving no training during the year. It seems, from these responses, that most individual training programs within Army units emphasize only about 30 critical individual tasks per year at the sacrifice of as many as 150 other tasks which are just as critical. High-level Army personnel have acknowledged this situation, and, according to an Army Audit Agency representative, some Army units are contracting with outside instructors to teach their soldiers just the tasks in SQT notices.

There is little doubt that the SQT program has helped to improve the skills of Army trainers. The program has improved understanding of how to use the Soldiers Manual, and it has spawned extensive training on some Soldiers Manual tasks. However, the SQT program has indirectly caused the Army to exclude training in many critical tasks, thus thwarting efforts to improve personnel proficiency.

In short, the training prompted by the personnel ramifications of SQT results (i.e., training for only those few tasks which will be tested) is counterproductive to the professional development of the Army.

CHAPTER 3

THE COST EFFECTIVENESS OF SQT

DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

IS QUESTIONABLE

The SQT program in concept appears to be a logical solution to the Army's need for information on soldier proficiency and individual training requirements. However, in practice the program has become, in the words of one Army official, "a paper nightmare." Thousands of people are needed to develop the hundreds of different tests and supporting documents at an annual cost of more than \$15 million (including military labor). Moreover, it costs an additional \$8 million annually to fund the Army Training Support Center's management of the program. The significant problems discussed in chapter 2 surrounding the usefulness of SQT results call into question these considerable expenditures for test development. Indeed, it seems likely that the very magnitude of the annual development effort should eventually cause the program to falter. (See appendix II for a description of SQT development procedures.)

The cost effectiveness of test administration at the installation level also demands attention. It takes nearly 1 year to administer SQTs to all eligible soldiers, during which units must dedicate their equipment and trainer resources to the tests.

SQT DEVELOPMENT IS COSTLY

SQT development requires extensive resources; it takes 15 months to write, review, validate, print, and distribute a test. This labor-intensive process involves many higher-level enlisted soldiers, officers, and civilians. These long test-development cycles and their employment of senior personnel make SQT development very costly. However, exact cost figures are difficult to compute.

No one in the Army has any complete record of actual costs to develop SQTs. Accounting systems at Army schools do not readily show separate costs for various school products, so, to estimate their SQT development costs for fiscal years 1979-1981, the schools estimated the portion of training development funds used for SQTs. The schools' estimates, although just that, are the best cost data available.

Cost to Develop SQTs

<u>Expense elements</u>	<u>Fiscal year costs (\$000)</u>		
	<u>1979</u> <u>(note a)</u>	<u>1980</u> <u>(note b)</u>	<u>1981</u> <u>(note b)</u>
Labor (note c)	5,973	8,345	9,354
Overhead	1,993	2,149	2,528
Travel	291	392	576
Transportation	13	15	18
Supplies	119	195	238
Equipment	102	147	159
Production of drafts	470	1,510	1,756
Other (note d)	<u>484</u>	<u>542</u>	<u>630</u>
Total	<u>9,445</u>	<u>13,295</u>	<u>15,259</u>

a/Data for only 17 of the 21 schools was available.

b/Data for only 19 of the 21 schools was available. We estimate the other 2 schools' costs at about \$2 million.

c/Includes overtime and military labor.

d/Soldiers' time to validate tests.

In addition to these costs, the Army Training Support Center must print all SQT documents. In fiscal year 1980 the Center spent \$2.8 million to print SQT materials and an estimated \$5.1 million to manage the program. At the time of our review, total expenditures for fiscal year 1981 were not available. However, during the first three quarters, the Training Support Center spent \$2.7 million for printing, plus \$4.2 million for program administration--estimates similar to those for fiscal year 1980.

These costs can only increase since, as of fiscal year 1981 only about 200 of the 351 military occupational specialties have tests in existence. SQTs will not be developed for 20 MOSs because there are too few soldiers in the specialties, and no tests are planned for any skill-level 5 (E8 and E9) soldiers since their skills are largely related to administration and personnel management and therefore difficult to test. In addition, about 25 other MOSs have been exempted. However, the Army plans to implement a common-task test for soldiers in MOSs and skill levels without SQTs. This test will include basic survival and

defensive tasks that all soldiers must know; some of these are in every SQT. A written alternative to the hands-on component has also been developed for those local situations where circumstances (such as lack of equipment) prevent formal performance testing. This component covers the same tasks as the hands-on component.

DESPITE THE ARMY'S INVOLVED AND
COSTLY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, VALID
TESTS ARE NOT ALWAYS PRODUCED

Considering the large number of SQTs developed each year, the Army's schools have generally developed quality tests (tests where questions were based on approved doctrine, and tests without confusing language or question discrepancies). Nevertheless, many SQTs eventually prove to be invalid, in part or totally.

Since the program started in 1977, 115 entire tests or about 6 percent of all SQTs have been declared invalid. Invalid tests arise from a number of problems within the development process:

- Occasionally, doctrine which has been the basis for some tests has changed just before the test is to be given. Consequently, all a school's efforts are wasted because its test reflects different doctrine than the soldiers are supposed to be using. For example, in 5 consecutive years (1977-1981) the SQTs developed by the Quartermaster School for supply specialists have been declared invalid because they were based on obsolete doctrine. In addition, some tests contain questions which, due to simple error, do not agree with the guidance in the Soldiers Manual or with the doctrine the test should be based on.
- Some SQTs do not reasonably test whether a soldier can perform the tasks in his specialty. For example, last year the test for parachute riggers (MOS 43E) was a completely written test, yet everything a rigger does requires manual dexterity. Not surprisingly, the scores from the written test were low. The next year, the test had no written component but was completely performance-oriented.
- SQT developers do not know the previous year's SQT results when developing new versions of those tests. The 15-month development cycle and 9-month test window (period during which a test can be administered) create a situation in which schools have developed next year's SQTs and started on the subsequent year's tests before receiving last year's. Partial results are provided during test development, but SQT developers do not find these useful.

--Personnel turnovers at schools result in ongoing SQT programs being run by part-time people. Since the NCOs assigned to schools for SQT development are on special detail, most are transferred to a new location before the test they helped to develop is administered. There is very little institutional memory carried over from cycle to cycle.

--New development problems continue to surface as the SQT program expands. For example, a representative of the Artillery School made a correlation analysis of the results of the hands-on and written alternative components for last year's 13E and 13F SQTs. The alternative component, to be used when equipment is not available, is supposed to be equivalent to the actual performance test. He found that the results did not correlate--i.e., the written alternative was not equivalent to the hands-on component.

TEST ADMINISTRATION IS LABOR
INTENSIVE AND COSTLY

Setting up and administering the various SQTs are two of the most time-consuming, resource-intensive, and costly tasks required of an Army post.

Preparing to give tests
involves extensive
resources and time

Since there are currently over 600 SQTs in existence, each post conceivably could have to set up and administer that many SQTs each year. Eventually there will be more than 880 SQTs. Each SQT has its own test window--a specific period during the year when it can be administered--which can last up to 9 months.

Each post must determine the time(s) within an SQT window during which it will administer that particular test. It then must notify each eligible soldier when and where both components (hands-on and written) will be given. It must distribute notices informing the eligibles what will be on each test. Also, units must insure that their soldiers have the Soldiers Manuals and other information they need to prepare for the SQT. Test standardization officers (TSOs) at each post must provide all units job-site component documents so that they can administer that part of the SQT.

According to the TSOs at several of the posts we visited, getting the units to administer the job-site component and turn in the results is a major problem. Each installation must designate test site managers to collect equipment, recruit scorers and

test administrators, and set up the test stations where each of the tasks (there can be as many as 17) per SQT must be tested hands-on. Although each SQT will test the same "common-soldier" tasks hands-on, usually no other tasks are common to more than a few SQTs.

Giving the tests is
a major effort

The actual administration of each SQT can take several days or even weeks at a post. For example, we were told that, at Fort Knox in 1980, 26 tanks had to be set aside for 4 weeks to test about 3,000 soldiers in armor specialties. During that time, 100 NCOs and other personnel were involved in setting up and administering this hands-on testing. Because of the large number of soldiers in that specialty at Fort Knox, make-up hands-on tests ran for one additional week. We could not estimate the total cost for conducting this testing, nor could we separate training and testing expenses. However, its expense was obviously great and its administration clearly burdensome.

Fort Sill provided us data on the resources required to administer the hands-on components of 29 SQTs to 938 soldiers during fiscal year 1981. Over 230 military personnel E2 through O2, mainly E5 and above, spent 3,885 manhours to plan test administration and train scorers and graders. Another 5,758 manhours were needed to administer the tests and over \$50,000 expended for equipment repair, fuel, and supplies during testing. These expenses probably include training for the SQT before actual testing, but such costs cannot be broken out.

When Ft. Sill's experience is extrapolated to encompass the entire Army, the administration of the SQT program looms as truly enormous. The Army has soldiers assigned to hundreds of locations worldwide, each of which must set up testing sites, and in fiscal year 1981 more than 200,000 soldiers were eligible to take an SQT.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The Army's need for a program that measures individual proficiency in order to identify training needs and help determine promotions is real and urgent. However, the SQT program in design and implementation does not meet that need. It neither effectively assesses individual ability nor fully identifies training that would improve that ability. The program as presently implemented

- is too complex, resource intensive, and costly;
- requires excessive time for development and administration;
- generates test results which are not routinely used because they lack credibility and/or validity; and
- provides very little data that can be used to assess past or plan future training.

During its 5 years of use, the SQT program has become a costly paper nightmare that lacks user confidence and fails to meet its designed purpose. As a result, the Army still lacks the information it badly needs to eliminate its critical individual-soldier training weaknesses.

As we reported in March 1981, individual skill training has been and continues to be a significant problem of Army units, in part because the Army has not accurately measured soldier proficiency or training effectiveness. One of the primary purposes of the SQT program is to provide a means of measuring soldier proficiency that will allow trainers to rectify training weaknesses in their training programs. However, the program's success has been blocked by several obstacles:

- Test results do not accurately reflect the ability of soldiers to perform all critical job tasks.
- SQT is regarded as an annual event instead of as the culmination of a continuous training program.
- Inconsistent use of SQT results in promotion decisions results in unequal treatment of peers.
- SQT results are not routinely used to measure soldier proficiency or training needs at the unit level.

--SQT handicaps rather than improves professional skill development.

To these obstacles must be added the extensive cost, time, and manpower required to develop and administer SQTs annually.

On the positive side, SQTs do promote some individual training at the unit level, because just before the actual test many soldiers receive extensive training on those tasks an SQT will cover. Indeed, some Army training officials consider this the main benefit of the SQT program. While this training reinforces the perception that SQT is a once-a-year event, many training officials believe that, without the SQT program, very little individual skill training in Soldiers Manual tasks would occur. In short, a program which the Army initiated to evaluate individual soldier proficiency and provide information on training needs has evolved into a costly program which is justified largely in terms of its ability to force some individual training to occur. The Army needs a system to measure soldier proficiency and identify training needs that is less complex, less costly, more flexible, and adaptable to the time and resource constraints at the unit level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army develop and implement, beginning in fiscal year 1983, a more effective system for measuring individual soldier proficiency and training needs. This system should incorporate separate programs for (1) assessing individual training needs and (2) measuring individual proficiency for promotion decisions. More specifically,

- the program for assessing individual training needs should be tied directly to the Soldiers Manuals and used as a training tool;
- Soldiers Manuals where feasible should include tests which unit-level trainers can use as often as they wish to evaluate individual proficiency in as many tasks as necessary;
- the assessments of individual training needs should remain at the unit level, to serve as a diagnostic aid;
- unit trainers should be held accountable for using tests contained in Soldiers Manuals; and
- any program that measures individual proficiency for use in promotion decisions should apply only to those soldiers eligible for or within NCO ranks. These exams should consist of a written test on randomly selected Soldiers Manual tasks and a hands-on common-task test. These tests should be offered for a limited period each year,

and only those soldiers eligible for promotions should be required to take the test. The specific test questions should not be announced in advance.

AGENCY COMMENTS

On February 17, 1982, the Army provided comments which generally agreed with the findings and recommendations in this report. In our draft report we proposed that skill components of existing SQTs be used in conjunction with common-task tests for personnel actions while the Army transitions to a different system rather than developing new or revised SQTs. The Army commented that some skill components are too short to serve as worthwhile indicators of proficiency for use in personnel management. They also stated that the current testing program should continue while transition policies and test products are developed and implemented, which should begin in fiscal year 1983. Accordingly, we added the fiscal year 1983 time frame to our recommendation to develop and implement a more effective system for measuring individual soldier proficiency and training needs and deleted our proposed interim recommendation.

On March 3, 1982, the Army provided a written response to the draft report which stated that the growing administrative workloads associated with conducting the program in units has led the Army to the same solutions advocated in the draft report. Further, the Army agreed with the need to modify the Skill Qualification Test program in a manner closely parallel to the report's recommendations.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

4 March 1982

Mr. Clifford I. Gould
Director
Federal Personnel and Compensation Division
United States General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Gould:

This is in reply to your letter to the Secretary of the Army, dated 26 January 1982, concerning your draft report, "The Army Needs to Improve its System for Measuring Individual Soldier Proficiency," OSD Case #5881, FPCD-82-28.

The Army agrees with the need to modify the Skill Qualification Test (SQT) program in a manner closely parallel to the report's recommendations. The growing administrative work loads associated with conducting the program in units have led the Army to the same solutions advocated in the draft report.

SQT is a fairly young program, still evolving to meet the Army's need for a training diagnostic system. The design of the current program may be viewed in hindsight as too structured to meet Army needs. However, in its early stages SQT helped improve an individual training program that was handicapped by the lack of experienced Noncommissioned Officers and by higher priority programs. The model introduced in 1977 was the right one for the early years of the program and did the job the Army wanted. However, as both your report and the Army's own internal review indicate, it is time to make adjustments which suit the current needs and environment and take advantage of the progress units are making in individual training.

In a meeting on 17 February 1982, oral and written comments were provided your representatives which we believe improve the objectivity of the report. It is our understanding that your representatives agreed with many of our suggestions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of William D. Clark in cursive script.

William D. Clark
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

DESCRIPTION OF THE ARMY'S
SQT DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The Army's SQT development process requires each of its 21 schools to produce annual tests for almost every military occupational specialty. In addition, separate tests are developed for each skill level within the MOSSs. For fiscal year 1981, the Army's schools developed over 600 separate SQTs for about 200 of its 350 occupational specialties.

SELECTING THE TASKS
TO BE TESTED

All tasks tested by an SQT are selected from the applicable Soldiers Manual, which describes the critical tasks for that MOS and skill level. Certain task-selection criteria (such as total number of tasks on the test, minimum number of tasks to be changed from last year's test, and specific common soldier tasks) are set by TRADOC. Other selection criteria, however, vary among the schools, as the following chart shows.

Criteria Used by Schools to Select Tasks to be in an SQT

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Extent to which the schools consider the criteria in selecting SQT tasks</u>					
	<u>Very great</u>	<u>Great</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little or no</u>	<u>No responses</u>
	<small>(number of schools)</small>					
Exclude tasks that take too long to test	5	3	4	4	4	1
Exclude tasks that require complex equipment	4	2	4	5	5	1
Include tasks new to the MOS	6	7	3	2	2	1
Include tasks in which soldiers need training	10	3	4	3	1	0
Include tasks to reflect ability of individual soldiers to perform their Soldiers Manual tasks	18	1	0	0	1	1

THE TASKS SELECTED FOR TESTING
ARE NEXT REVIEWED TO DETERMINE
THE TESTING MODE

Once the Soldiers Manual tasks to be included on the SQT have been selected, school personnel must decide how to test for each task.

The performance (hands-on) component of each SQT requires extensive equipment, manpower, and time to administer, factors which must be considered in selecting tasks for this component.

The written part of each SQT is easier to administer, but question development and validation require the most time and effort of any SQT component. At least 3 questions must be developed for each task on the test.

The job-site component is administered by a soldier's own unit supervisor. It is an on-the-job evaluation of whether a soldier can perform the specified tasks. The soldier can be tested after practicing, or his supervisor can evaluate him as he performs his day-to-day job, if he performs those tasks as part of his everyday job.

School personnel consider the following criteria in deciding under which component a task will be tested.

Criteria Used by Schools to Decide How to Test Selected Tasks

<u>Criteria</u>	Extent each criteria is used in deciding how to test SQT tas				
	<u>Very great</u>	<u>Great</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Little or no</u>
		(number of schools)			
Certain range of number of tasks per component directed by ATSC	10	7	4	0	0
Length of time to test task	7	10	3	0	1
Availability of equipment	14	5	2	0	0
Cost to test under a certain component	6	7	4	3	1
Some tasks can only be tested in a certain way	11	7	2	0	1
Other	4	1	1	0	1

TEST QUESTIONS ARE WRITTEN
AND REVIEWED TO INSURE
ADEQUATE TESTING

After deciding the tasks and methods of testing, subject matter experts at the schools develop the actual test.

Developing written components is the most difficult and time-consuming part of SQT development. Written test questions must cover enough steps in a task to insure that a soldier can answer the questions only if he knows how to do the entire task. Wording must be clear, and open to only one interpretation. Plausible but incorrect answers to each question must be developed. Illustrations and charts must be clear, accurate, and unambiguous.

For the hands-on and job-site components, the subject matter expert must select a certain set of steps (called performance measures) for each task whose correct performance will reasonably demonstrate proficiency in all the steps for that task. Experts must also decide whether the steps must be performed in a certain sequence. Clear and accurate illustrations and charts are also important to this component.

Many school personnel review the selection of tasks and testing mode and the actual writing of test questions, performance measures, and illustrations. According to officials at the Army's schools, each test is reviewed several times at various stages of its development. The officials told us:

- School-employed educational specialists review draft SQTs for such things as correct format, grammar, technical adherence to Soldiers Manual criteria, and reading level.
- Test psychologists assigned to each school by the Army Training Support Center (the TRADOC element responsible for the SQT program) review for the same things as the school test specialist. In addition, they check adherence to SQT regulations and guidance, such as the number of tasks in each component, whether the prescribed common tasks are there, and whether the tasks included are for the appropriate skill level.
- Panels of soldier experts in the MOS review the tests for technical accuracy and clarity.
- Editors look at reading level, clarity, and grammar.
- Army units in the field are asked to comment on the tasks and components selected (but not on the test questions or performance measures themselves).

--School managers (such as the Chief of the SQT development group, if there is a separate organization) and the Director of Training Developments may also get involved in test review.

QUESTIONS ARE TESTED

After an SQT is developed, it must be pre-tested to insure it (1) is doctrinally accurate, (2) is fair, (3) has standards which separate task performers from nonperformers, (4) can be administered, (5) can be understood by soldiers, scorers, and supervisors, (6) can be reliably scored, and (7) can provide sound training feedback to trainers and training managers. The Army has prescribed procedures for this validation process.

Prescribed validation procedures require that school personnel go to Army posts to give soldiers their draft test. Using one of several methods, soldiers to take the draft test are identified as performers or nonperformers in the military occupational specialty and skill level for which the SQT was developed. Some schools identify soldiers as performers or nonperformers for the specific tasks to be tested rather than for the specialty in general. The soldiers, their supervisors, and/or a panel of experts may decide into which group a soldier fits. The validation procedures prescribe how many soldiers must be in each group in order to conduct a pre-test.

Each soldier selected for the pre-test is given the written part of the draft test. An agreement index based on pre-test results is calculated which shows how many SQT questions for a task the soldier must answer correctly for the Army to be reasonably sure he knows how to do the entire task.

The hands-on performance component is pre-tested differently. Selected soldiers are watched by four experts in the military occupational specialty as they perform the task steps that are on the test. A calculation of scores from the four experts is made. There must be 80-percent agreement among the scorers that the observed soldier did perform the task successfully.

MANY OTHER SQT PRODUCTS MUST BE DEVELOPED

In addition to the tests for each component, many supporting products must be developed:

- An SQT notice for each soldier, which lists the tasks to be tested and sample questions.
- Detailed instructions for unit personnel, explaining how to administer the job-site component.

- Detailed instructions for installation personnel, explaining how to prepare for and administer the hands-on component.
- An alert notice, which informs installation personnel of the equipment and personnel which will be needed.
- Scoring booklets, which can be used to record soldier performance on the SQT.

EXPLANATION OF GAO QUESTIONNAIREADMINISTRATION AND VALIDATION PROCEDURES

Our assignment involved administering a questionnaire to all enlisted personnel and officers at 28 units. The criteria used to select these units are explained in the report scope section (pp. 3 to 5). The purpose of our questionnaire was to develop a data base of information concerning preparation for and experiences with taking SQTs and receipt and use of results.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWED BY GAO
AT UNITS ACTUALLY VISITED

The procedures used by GAO to administer and validate questionnaires at the 28 units visited were standardized--i.e., the same procedures were used at each unit.

Company/battery commanders were asked to assemble as many personnel as possible in one location. Seated by grade, soldiers in grades E1-E4 received one questionnaire (see pp. 30 to 35), soldiers in grades E5-E9 received a different questionnaire (see pp. 36 to 46), and officers (including warrant officers) received another questionnaire (see pp. 47 to 56).

At the 28 units, questionnaires were completed by 1503 soldiers in grades E1-E4, 652 soldiers in grades E5-E9, and 114 officers. The responses by specific rank and MOS are shown in the following tables.

Responses by Rank

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Number of responses</u>	<u>Percent of group</u>
E1	84	5.6
E2	230	15.3
E3	490	32.6
E4	676	45.0
Unknown (note a)	<u>23</u>	<u>1.6</u>
Total	<u>1503</u>	<u>d/100.1</u>
E5	395	60.6
E6	179	27.5
E7	53	8.1
E8	15	2.3
E9	0	0
Unknown (note b)	<u>10</u>	<u>1.6</u>
Total	<u>652</u>	<u>d/100.1</u>
O1	34	29.8
O2	40	35.1
O3	24	21.1
O4	2	1.8
WO	12	10.5
Unknown (note c)	<u>2</u>	<u>1.8</u>
Total	<u>114</u>	<u>d/100.1</u>

a/These soldiers completed a questionnaire designed for the E1-E4 population but did not answer the question which requested their current rank.

b/These soldiers completed a questionnaire designed for the E5-E9 population but did not answer the question which requested their current rank.

c/These officers completed a questionnaire designed for the officer population but did not answer the question which requested their current rank.

d/Totals do not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Responses by MOSs Selected for Review

MOS (note a)	E1-E4 responses			E5-E9 responses		
	Number	Percent of group	Number who had taken an SQT	Number	Percent of group	Number who had taken an SQT
11B	298	19.8	153	94	14.4	86
11C	39	2.6	21	17	2.6	16
11H	7	.5	1	2	.3	2
12B	101	6.7	62	42	6.4	39
13B	169	11.2	103	71	10.9	68
13E	15	1.0	7	4	.6	3
19E	44	2.9	30	41	6.3	39
19F	23	1.5	14	6	.9	6
31M	36	2.4	17	18	2.8	12
36C	67	4.5	50	26	4.0	19
36K	21	1.4	17	4	.6	3
57E	24	1.6	13	5	.8	3
64C	144	9.6	94	43	6.6	37
67N	33	2.2	20	30	4.6	28
68G	5	.3	2	4	.6	4
76W	67	4.5	27	32	4.9	23
Other						
MOSSs	354	23.6	134	208	31.9	139
Unknown	56	3.7	31	5	.8	3

a/See appendix IV for a description of MOSs selected for review.

The GAO auditor in charge of the questionnaire administration explained the purpose of the questionnaire and assured the soldiers of the questionnaire's confidentiality. He was also present while questionnaires were completed in order to answer any specific questions from the soldiers.

While the questionnaires were being completed, GAO personnel chose separate random samples of the E1-E4, the E5-E9, and the officer populations present. Using a roster of personnel present furnished by the company, we selected a 10-percent random sample of each group. To validate questionnaire results, we interviewed selected soldiers from this group. The interview was designed to determine whether the soldiers fully understood the questions asked, the validity of responses provided on the questionnaire, and to obtain information on how individual skill training is accomplished. In total, we interviewed 134 E1-E4s, 80 E5-E9s, and 44 officers. In the enlisted categories, only soldiers who had taken an SQT were interviewed.

During the interview process, which lasted about 30 minutes per individual, the GAO interviewer completed a separate questionnaire based on each individual's oral response. The interview

format not only validated the original responses, but also solicited additional information. GAO developed a computer program to compare the original questionnaire responses with the interview responses. The results showed a high degree of correlation between the original questionnaire responses and the interview responses, which means that the personnel understood the questions and answered them honestly.

14. Why do you think you will not re-enlist? (Check all that apply.) (34-42)

1. Medical reasons
 2. Can get a better job outside the Army
 3. Army has not trained me well
 4. Don't like my MOS
 5. Not working in my MOS
 6. Don't like Army life
 7. Don't like the Army post(s) to which I have been assigned
 8. Too many special details (e.g., policing trash, raking leaves)
 9. Other (specify) _____
-
-

15. During the last 6 months, about what percent of your total work time would you say you spent doing tasks outside of your MOS? (Check one.) (43)

1. None of the time outside MOS (0%)
2. More than 0% but less than 10%
3. At least 10% but less than 25%
4. At least 25% but less than 50%
5. At least 50% but less than 75%
6. At least 75% but less than 100%
7. All of the time outside MOS (100%)

GO ON TO PART II →

____/____/____ - ____/____ - ____/____/____

(1-7)

PART II: SQTs YOU HAVE TAKEN

* New Card (8)

1. Have you taken an SQT (Check one) (9)
 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 2)
 2. No (STOP, TURN IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE)
2. How many SQTs have you taken? (Check one.) (10)
 1. One
 2. Two
 3. Three
 4. Four or more
3. When did you take your last SQT? (11-14)

(month) (year)
4. Did you take your last SQT in the unit you are now in? (Check one) (15)
 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 6)
 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 5)
5. When you took your last SQT, in which unit were you and where was that unit located?

Unit: _____

Location: Fort _____
6. What grade were you when you took your last SQT? (16)

E- _____
7. Which SQT did you take the last time you took an SQT? (17-19)

SQT for MOS _____
8. When you took your last SQT, was any part of the SQT waived because you held certification or a license related to your MOS? (Check one) (20)
 1. Yes
 2. No
9. When you took your last SQT, were you classified by the Army as working in the same MOS as you were tested in? (Check one.) (21)
 1. Yes
 2. No
10. During the last 6 months before you took your last SQT, about what percent of your total work time would you say you spent doing tasks outside of the MOS you were tested in? (Check one.) (22)
 1. None of the time outside MOS (0%)
 2. More than 0% but less than 10%
 3. At least 10% but less than 25%
 4. At least 25% but less than 50%
 5. At least 50% but less than 75%
 6. At least 75% but less than 100%
 7. All of the time outside MOS (100%)
11. Did you receive a test notice which listed the tasks you would be tested on at least 60 days before your last SQT? (Check one.) (23)
 1. Yes
 2. No, got a notice less than 60 days before the SQT
 3. Never got a test notice
 4. Don't recall

12. Where did you find out what tasks would be tested on your last SQT? (Check all that apply) (24-27)

1. From SQT notice
2. From NCOs in unit
3. Other (specify) _____
4. Never found out until the test was given.

STUDYING FOR THE SQT

In the next few questions we would like to find out how much studying or training you got for your last SQT in the 6 weeks before the SQT.

Think about the training you got during regular work hours for the 6 weeks before your last SQT. Consider that there are about 240 work hours in 6 weeks. (8 hours a day x 5 days a week x 6 weeks = 240 hours.)

13. Of the 240 work hours about how many were spent in training for the SQT where you were given classroom training (include classroom use of TEC tapes) on SQT tasks? (If none, enter 0) (28-30)

_____ hours of classroom training.

14. Of the 240 work hours about how many were spent in training for the SQT where you were given hands-on training (OJT, field exercises, special sessions) on SQT tasks? (If none, enter 0) (31-33)

_____ hours of hands-on training.

Think about the studying you did on your own during the 6 weeks before your last SQT.

15. About how many hours did you spend studying by using TEC tapes on your own time during the 6 weeks before your last SQT? (If none, enter 0) (34-36)

_____ hours using TEC tapes.

16. Did you use a Soldier's Manual to study for the SQT during the 6 weeks before your last SQT? (Check one) (37)

1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 17)
2. No (GO TO QUESTION 19)

17. Where did you get the Soldier's Manual? (Check one.) (38)

1. Had my own copy before the SQT notice came out.
2. Was given a copy for my own after the SQT notice came out.
3. Borrowed a copy to use after the SQT notice came out.
4. Other (specify) _____

18. About how many hours did you spend studying the Soldier's Manual on your own time during the 6 weeks before your last SQT? (If none, enter 0). (39-41)

_____ hours studying Soldier's Manual on my own.

19. During the year before you took your last SQT, how often did you get any training in the tasks listed in your Soldier's Manual? (Consider all training combined - classroom training, OJT, field exercises, TEC tapes and studying by yourself.) (Check one) (42)

1. Only during the time between getting the SQT notice and taking the test.
2. Training throughout the year but most of it just before the SQT.
3. About the same amount of training just before the SQT as during the rest of the year.
4. Training throughout the year but less of it just before the SQT.
5. No training at all during the year.

20. During the year before you took your last SQT, which people gave you training in the tasks listed in your Soldier's Manual? (Check all that apply.) (43-48)

1. Squad leader
2. Platoon sergeant
3. Platoon leader
4. Training NCO
5. Section leader/supervisor
6. Other (specify) _____

21. During the year before you took your last SQT, who gave you the most training in the tasks listed in your Soldier's Manual? (Check one) (49)
1. Squad leader
 2. Platoon sergeant
 3. Platoon leader
 4. Training NCO
 5. Section leader/supervisor
 6. Other (specify) _____
-
22. To what extent did the training you did with your unit help you with your last SQT? (Check one.) (50)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
23. To what extent did the studying you did on your own help you with your last SQT? (Check one) (51)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
24. How important is it for you to pass your SQT? (Check one) (52)
1. Very great importance
 2. Great importance
 3. Moderate importance
 4. Some importance
 5. Little or no importance
25. Why are your SQT results important to you? (Check all that apply.) (53-59)
1. SQT is used for promotion
 2. SQT is used for re-enlistment
 3. Shows whether I can do my job
 4. Shows where I need more training
 5. It's a matter of pride to be able to pass the SQT.
 6. Other (specify) _____
-
7. Not important for anything
26. How fair was your last SQT in showing how well you could do your Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (60)
1. Very fair (GO TO QUESTION 28)
 2. Somewhat fair (GO TO QUESTION 28)
 3. Not fair or unfair (GO TO QUESTION 28)
 4. Somewhat unfair (GO TO QUESTION 27)
 5. Very unfair (GO TO QUESTION 27)
27. Why do you feel the SQT was unfair? (Check all they apply) (61 - 66)
1. I don't work in my primary MOS-the skills tested were not part of my regular duties.
 2. I work in my primary MOS-but the skills tested are not ones I have to perform in my current duty position.
 3. I don't do things exactly as the test says they should be done.
 4. I was not given the right training.
 5. Some of the tasks on the SQT were not those listed on the SQT notice
 6. Other (specify) _____
-

PARTS OF THE SQT

The SQT has 3 parts.

- (1) Job site part - This is where a supervisor in your unit watches you doing some tasks while you are on the job and scores them for the SQT.
- (2) Hands-on part - This is where you are asked to perform tasks during the SQT and are scored by an official SQT scorer.
- (3) Written part - This is where you are given written questions to answer about tasks in your MOS.
28. Which part of your last SQT was the hardest? (Check one.) (67)
1. Job site part
2. Hands-on part
3. Written part
29. Which part of your last SQT was the easiest? (Check one.) (68)
1. Job site part
2. Hands-on part
3. Written part
30. Did you get the results of your last SQT? (Check one) (69)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 31)
2. No (GO TO QUESTION 38)
31. How many weeks after you took the SQT did it take to get your SQT results? (70-71)
- _____ weeks
32. What was your score on your last SQT? (72-74)
- _____
33. When you got your last SQT results, were you in the same unit as you were when you took the SQT? (Check one) *New card (9)
1. Yes
2. No
34. Did you get information telling you what tasks you got wrong on your last SQT? (Check one) (10)
1. Yes
2. No
35. Who in your unit talked to you about tasks you got wrong on your last SQT? (Check all that apply) (11-18)
1. No one
2. Squad leader
3. Platoon sergeant
4. Platoon leader
5. Training NCO
6. Company commander
7. Section leader/supervisor
8. Other (please specify) _____
- _____
- _____
36. After your score for your last SQT came in, were you given training in the tasks you missed? (Check one) (19)
1. Yes, on all the tasks I missed
2. Yes, on some of the tasks I missed.
3. No training has yet been given to me.
4. I just got the results a short time ago-there has not been enough time to get training.
37. After your score for your last SQT came in, did you study the tasks you missed on your own? (Check one) (20)
1. Yes, I studied all of them on my own.
2. Yes, I studied some of them on my own.
3. No, I have not yet studied on my own.
4. I just got the results a short time ago-there has not been enough time to study yet.
38. If you think the SQT could be improved, please use the space below to tell us how. (21)

13. When was the last SQT given in your unit where soldiers that you supervise took the test? (34-37)

____ (month) _____ (year)

Think about the training that the soldiers you supervise got during the 6 weeks before the last SQT. (consider that there are about 240 work hours in 6 weeks. 8 hours a day x 5 days a week x 6 weeks = 240 hours.)

14. Of the 240 work hours, about how many were spent in your soldiers being given classroom training (include classroom use of TEC tapes) on SQT tasks? (If none, enter 0) (38-40)
- _____ hours of classroom training
15. Of the 240 work hours, about how many were spent in your soldiers being given hands-on training (OJT, field exercises) on SQT tasks? (If none, enter 0) (41-43)
- _____ hours of hands-on training
16. During the year before this last SQT, how often did the soldiers that you supervise get any training in the tasks listed in their Soldier's Manual? (Consider all training combined - classroom training, OJT, field exercises and TEC tapes) (Check one) (44)
1. Only during the time between getting the SQT notice and taking the test
 2. Training throughout the year but most of it just before the SQT
 3. About the same amount of training just before the SQT as during the rest of the year
 4. Training throughout the year but less of it just before the SQT
 5. No training at all during the year
 6. Don't know-came to this unit recently
17. Throughout the year, is there a regular training schedule for soldiers in your unit to train them in Soldier's Manual tasks? (By a regular schedule we mean a specific period of time each week set aside for training) (Check one) (45)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 18)
 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 19)
18. About how many hours per week throughout the year are set aside for regularly scheduled training in Soldier's Manual tasks? (DO NOT COUNT ANY EXTRA HOURS JUST BEFORE AN SQT) (46-47)
- _____ hours per week
19. During the year before the last SQT, to what extent did you use classroom training to train the soldiers that you supervise in the tasks listed in their Soldier's Manual? (Check one) (48)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
20. During the year before the last SQT, to what extent did you use OJT (on-the-job-training) to train the soldiers that you supervise in the tasks listed in their Soldier's Manual? (Check one) (49)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
21. During the year before the last SQT, to what extent did you use field exercises to train the soldiers that you supervise in the tasks listed in their Soldier's Manual? (Check one.) (50)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent

22. During the year before the last SQT, to what extent did you use TEC tapes to train the soldiers that you supervise in the tasks listed in their Soldier's Manual? (Check one) (51)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
23. During the 6 weeks before the last SQT, for which tasks were the soldiers you supervised trained? (Check all that apply) (52-54)
1. Only the tasks which were to be tested on the SQT
 2. Any tasks for which they needed training regardless of whether they were to appear on the SQT
 3. Other (specify) _____

24. In total, how well do you feel the soldiers you supervise were prepared for the last SQT? (Check one.) (55)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
25. Of what benefit was the training which was received by the soldiers you supervise before the last SQT? (Check one) (56)
1. Helped them learn the tasks on the SQT
 2. Helped them learn their Soldier's Manual tasks in general
 3. Helped them with both the SQT tasks and Soldier's Manual tasks in general
 4. Of no benefit
26. In answering the following questions, consider SQT results you have received in the last year. Results include scores and tasks failed for individual soldiers or unit summary data.
- Do you have or have you seen SQT results for soldiers you supervise? (Check one) (57)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 27)
 2. No, I have not seen nor do I have SQT results for soldiers that I supervise. (GO TO QUESTION 36)
27. To what extent do you use SQT results to decide in which tasks the soldiers you supervise need training? (Check one) (58)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
28. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to help decide which soldiers you supervise get promoted? (Check one) (59)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know
29. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to decide which soldiers you supervise should and should not reenlist? (Check one) (60)
1. Very great extent (GO TO QUESTION 30)
 2. Great extent (GO TO QUESTION 30)
 3. Moderate extent (GO TO QUESTION 30)
 4. Some extent (GO TO QUESTION 30)
 5. Little or no extent (GO TO QUESTION 31)
 6. Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 31)

30. Are SQT results used in the unit to decide about reenlistment for certain grades more than for others? (Check one) (61)

- 1. Yes - Enter those grades
E- _____
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

31. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to decide to send soldiers that you supervise to special schools? (Check one) (62)

- 1. Very great extent
- 2. Great extent
- 3. Moderate extent
- 4. Some extent
- 5. Little or no extent
- 6. Don't know

32. To what extent are SQT results used to decide whether to change the MOS of soldiers that you supervise? (Check one) (63)

- 1. Very great extent
- 2. Great extent
- 3. Moderate extent
- 4. Some extent
- 5. Little or no extent
- 6. Don't know

33. How well do you feel the soldiers you supervise remember the tasks they learned for the SQT about 3 months after the SQT? (Check one) (64)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

34. How well do you feel the SQT reflects the ability of the soldiers you supervise to perform their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (65)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

35. As a supervisor, how would you rate the usefulness of SQT results in the following areas? (Check one box for each item)

	1	2	3	4	5	
						Very useful Somewhat useful Neither useful not useful Somewhat useless Very useless
1. As a means of promoting training in Soldier's Manual tasks.						(66)
2. As a means of identifying training weaknesses						(67)
3. As a means of identifying which of the soldiers you supervise are most proficient in their Soldier's Manual tasks.						(68)
4. As a means of deciding which soldiers should be promoted						(69)

36. Do you make or provide input to personnel decisions (promotions, changes of MOS, reenlistment, going to special schools) about the soldiers that you supervise? (Check one.) (70)

- 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 37)
- 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 38)

37. To what extent do you use each of the following to make or provide input to personnel decisions (promotions, change of MOS, reenlistment, going to special schools) about the soldiers that you supervise? (Check one for each item)

	Very Great extent Great extent Moderate extent Some extent Little or no extent					
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. By observing them at work						(71)
2. By observing them during ARTEP						(72)
3. SQT results						(73)
4. Awards, commendations etc.						(74)
5. Soldier's time in current grade						(75)
6. Other (please specify)						(76)

38. In order for SQT results to be of use to you, how many weeks after the SQT do you need the results? (77-78)

_____ weeks

39. Overall, to what extent do you feel that SQT results are useful to your unit commander in learning about the unit as a whole? (Check one) *2 (9)

- 1. Very great extent
- 2. Great extent
- 3. Moderate extent
- 4. Some extent
- 5. Little or no extent
- 6. Don't know

40. How important do you feel it is to the officers who command your unit that the soldiers you supervise pass their SQTs? (Check one) (10)

- 1. Very great importance
- 2. Great importance
- 3. Moderate importance
- 4. Some importance
- 5. Little or no importance
- 6. Don't know

41. To what extent do you use each of the following to decide what tasks the soldiers you supervise need training in? (Check one box for each item)

	Very Great extent Great extent Moderate extent Some extent Little or no extent					
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. By observing them at work						(11)
2. ARTEP observation/results						(12)
3. SQT results						(13)
4. Asking NCOs for recommendations						(14)
5. Asking the soldiers where they need training						(15)
6. Someone higher in command decides						(16)
7. Certain tasks from Soldier's Manual selected without observation of soldiers or test results						(17)
8. Emphasize skills related to each soldier's current duty position						(18)
9. Emphasize skills not encountered on daily basis						(19)
10. Other (specify) _____						(20)

42. To what extent do you feel there is a need for SQTs (as they are currently designed) for enlisted personnel from grades E1 through E4? (Check one) (21)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
43. How well can supervisors tell how their soldiers are doing their Soldier's Manual tasks by observing them during OJT? (Check one) (22)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
44. How well can supervisors tell how their soldiers are doing their Soldier's Manual tasks by observing them during field exercises with other units? (Check one) (23)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
45. If you as a supervisor made up your own tests, to replace SQTs, how well would you be able to tell how your soldiers were doing their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (24)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
46. Currently the Army sends an SQT notice out 60 days before a scheduled SQT. This notice informs the soldier of the tasks to be tested along with sample questions.
- If you had your way would you continue informing the soldier of what tasks will be tested on the SQT? (Check one) (25)
1. Yes, I would continue it (GO TO QUESTION 47)
 2. No, I would discontinue it (GO TO QUESTION 48)
 3. I am undecided (GO TO QUESTION 48)
47. Why should soldiers be notified of the tasks to be tested on the SQT? (Check all that apply) (26-30)
1. To encourage training in tasks which are not part of normal duty.
 2. To encourage the unit to train the soldiers
 3. To reduce anxiety over the test
 4. To give the soldier the chance to practice the precise way to do each task
 5. Other (specify) _____
48. How well do you think SQT notices reflect what is actually on SQTs? (Check one) (31)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. some extent
 5. Little or no extent

49. If SQTs were given without notice of what tasks would be on the test, how well would supervisors be able to tell how their soldiers were doing in their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (32)

1. Very well
2. Somewhat well
3. Neither well nor poorly
4. Somewhat poorly
5. Very poorly

50. How well can supervisors tell how their soldiers are doing in their Soldier's Manual tasks by keeping each soldier's job book up to date? (Check one) (33)

1. Very well
2. Somewhat well
3. Neither well nor poorly
4. Somewhat poorly
5. Very poorly

51. To what extent should the soldier be responsible at all times for knowing how to do the tasks listed in the Soldier's Manual at his/her skill level? (Check one) (34)

1. Very great extent
2. Great extent
3. Moderate extent
4. Some extent
5. Little or no extent

GO TO PART II 

____/____/ - ____/____ - ____/____/

(1-7)

* New Card (8)

PART II: SQTs YOU HAVE TAKEN

1. Have you taken an SQT (Check one) (9)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 2)
2. No (STOP, TURN IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE)
2. How many SQTs have you taken? (Check one.) (10)
1. One
2. Two
3. Three
4. Four or more
3. When did you take your last SQT? (11-14)
- ____ (month) ____ (year)
4. Did you take your last SQT in the unit you are now in? (Check one) (15)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 6)
2. No (GO TO QUESTION 5)
5. When you took your last SQT, in which unit were you and where was that unit located?
- Unit: _____
- Location: Fort _____
6. What grade were you when you took your last SQT? (16)
- E- _____
7. Which SQT did you take the last time you took an SQT? (17-19)
- SQT for MOS _____
8. When you took your last SQT, was any part of the SQT waived because you held certification or a license related to your MOS? (Check one) (20)
1. Yes
2. No
9. When you took your last SQT, were you classified by the Army as working in the same MOS as you were tested in? (Check one.) (21)
1. Yes
2. No
10. During the last 6 months before you took your last SQT, about what percent of your total work time would you say you spent doing tasks outside of the MOS you were tested in? (Check one) (22)
1. None of the time outside MOS (0%)
2. More than 0% but less than 10%
3. At least 10% but less than 25%
4. At least 25% but less than 50%
5. At least 50% but less than 75%
6. At least 75% but less than 100%
7. All of the time outside MOS (100%)
11. Did you receive a test notice which listed the tasks you would be tested on at least 60 days before your last SQT? (Check one.) (23)
1. Yes
2. No, got a notice less than 60 days before the SQT
3. Never got a test notice
4. Don't recall

12. Where did you find out what tasks would be tested on your last SQT? (Check all that apply) (24-27)

- 1. From SQT notice
- 2. From NCOs in unit
- 3. Other (specify) _____
- 4. Never found out until the test was given.

STUDYING FOR THE SQT

In the next few questions we would like to find out how much studying or training you got for your last SQT in the 6 weeks before the SQT.

Think about the training you got during regular work hours for the 6 weeks before your last SQT. Consider that there are about 240 work hours in 6 weeks. (8 hours a day x 5 days a week x 6 weeks = 240 hours.)

13. Of the 240 work hours about how many were spent in training for the SQT where you were given classroom training (include classroom use of TEC tapes) on SQT tasks? (If none, enter 0) (28-30)

_____ hours of classroom training.

14. Of the 240 work hours about how many were spent in training for the SQT where you were given hands-on training (OJT, field exercises, special sessions) on SQT tasks? (If none, enter 0) (31-33)

_____ hours of hands-on training.

Think about the studying you did on your own during the 6 weeks before your last SQT.

15. About how many hours did you spend studying by using TEC tapes on your own time during the 6 weeks before your last SQT? (If none, enter 0) (34-36)

_____ hours using TEC tapes.

16. Did you use a Soldier's Manual to study for the SQT during the 6 weeks before your last SQT? (Check one) (37)

- 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 17)
- 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 19)

17. Where did you get the Soldier's Manual? (Check one.) (38)

- 1. Had my own copy before the SQT notice came out.
- 2. Was given a copy for my own after the SQT notice came out.
- 3. Borrowed a copy to use after the SQT notice came out.
- 4. Other (specify) _____

18. About how many hours did you spend studying the Soldier's Manual on your own time during the 6 weeks before your last SQT? (If none, enter 0). (39-41)

_____ hours studying Soldier's Manual on my own.

19. During the year before you took your last SQT, how often did you get any training in the tasks listed in your Soldier's Manual? (Consider all training combined - classroom training, OJT, field exercises, TEC tapes and studying by yourself.) (Check one) (42)

- 1. Only during the time between getting the SQT notice and taking the test.
- 2. Training throughout the year but most of it just before the SQT.
- 3. About the same amount of training just before the SQT as during the rest of the year.
- 4. Training throughout the year but less of it just before the SQT.
- 5. No training at all during the year.

20. During the year before you took your last SQT, which people gave you training in the tasks listed in your Soldier's Manual? (Check all that apply.) (43-48)

- 1. Squad leader
- 2. Platoon sergeant
- 3. Platoon leader
- 4. Training NCO
- 5. Section leader/supervisor
- 6. Other (specify) _____

21. During the year before you took your last SQT, who gave you the most training in the tasks listed in your Soldier's Manual? (Check one) (49)
1. Squad leader
 2. Platoon sergeant
 3. Platoon leader
 4. Training NCO
 5. Section leader/supervisor
 6. Other (specify) _____
22. To what extent did the training you did with your unit help you with your last SQT? (Check one.) (50)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
23. To what extent did the studying you did on your own help you with your last SQT? (Check one) (51)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
24. How important is it for you to pass your SQT? (Check one) (52)
1. Very great importance
 2. Great importance
 3. Moderate importance
 4. Some importance
 5. Little or no importance
25. Why are your SQT results important to you? (Check all that apply.) (53-59)
1. SQT is used for promotion
 2. SQT is used for re-enlistment
 3. Shows whether I can do my job
 4. Shows where I need more training
 5. It's a matter of pride to be able to pass the SQT.
 6. Other (specify) _____
 7. Not important for anything
26. How fair was your last SQT in showing how well you could do your Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (60)
1. Very fair (GO TO QUESTION 28)
 2. Somewhat fair (GO TO QUESTION 28)
 3. Not fair or unfair (GO TO QUESTION 28)
 4. Somewhat unfair (GO TO QUESTION 27)
 5. Very unfair (GO TO QUESTION 27)
27. Why do you feel the SQT was unfair? (Check all that apply) (61 - 66)
1. I don't work in my primary MOS-the skills tested were not part of my regular duties.
 2. I work in my primary MOS-but the skills tested are not ones I have to perform in my current duty position.
 3. I don't do things exactly as the test says they should be done.
 4. I was not given the right training.
 5. Some of the tasks on the SQT were not those listed on the SQT notice
 6. Other (specify) _____

PARTS OF THE SQT

The SQT has 3 parts.

- (1) Job site part - This is where a supervisor in your unit watches you doing some tasks while you are on the job and scores them for the SQT.
- (2) Hands-on part - This is where you are asked to perform tasks during the SQT and are scored by an official SQT scorer.
- (3) Written part - This is where you are given written questions to answer about tasks in your MOS.
28. Which part of your last SQT was the hardest? (Check one.) (67)
1. Job site part
 2. Hands-on part
 3. Written part
29. Which part of your last SQT was the easiest? (Check one.) (68)
1. Job site part
 2. Hands-on part
 3. Written part
30. Did you get the results of your last SQT? (Check one) (69)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 31)
 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 38)
31. How many weeks after you took the SQT did it take to get your SQT results? (70-71)
- _____ weeks
32. What was your score on your last SQT? (72-74)
- _____
33. When you got your last SQT results, were you in the same unit as you were when you took the SQT? (Check one) *New card (9)
1. Yes
 2. No
34. Did you get information telling you what tasks you got wrong on your last SQT? (Check one) (10)
1. Yes
 2. No
35. Who in your unit talked to you about tasks you got wrong on your last SQT? (Check all that apply) (11-18)
1. No one
 2. Squad leader
 3. Platoon sergeant
 4. Platoon leader
 5. Training NCO
 6. Company commander
 7. Section leader/supervisor
 8. Other (please specify) _____
-
36. After your score for your last SQT came in, were you given training in the tasks you missed? (Check one) (19)
1. Yes, on all the tasks I missed
 2. Yes, on some of the tasks I missed.
 3. No training has yet been given to me.
 4. I just got the results a short time ago-there has not been enough time to get training.
37. After your score for your last SQT came in, did you study the tasks you missed on your own? (Check one) (20)
1. Yes, I studied all of them on my own.
 2. Yes, I studied some of them on my own.
 3. No, I have not yet studied on my own.
 4. I just got the results a short time ago-there has not been enough time to study yet.
38. If you think the SQT could be improved, please use the space below to tell us how. (21)

____/____/____ - 13 - ____/____/____
 (1-7) 1/8

U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
SURVEY OF OFFICERS
CONCERNING SQT PROGRAM

This questionnaire was developed by the U.S. General Accounting Office, an agency which performs studies and reports the results to the U.S. Congress. This questionnaire was written to get information from you about SQTs.

Your help is very important. Please read all of the questions carefully and give us honest answers.

You will see that we have not asked for your name on the questionnaire. Your answers will not be made known to anyone in the Army. Our report to Congress will only say how officers answered in total.

Thank you for your help.

1. Location: Fort
2. Unit: _____
3. Rank: O- _____ (9)
4. Branch: _____ (10-12)
5. Current position in unit (Check all that apply): (13-17)
 1. Company Commander
 2. Platoon Leader
 3. Training Officer
 4. Other supervisory position (please specify) _____
 5. Non-supervisory position (please specify) _____
6. How many months have you been in your current position? (18-19)
 _____ months
7. How many months have you been in this unit? (20-21)
 _____ months

8. How long have you been in the Army? (22-25)

_____ (years) _____ (months)

9. How many soldiers do you currently command/supervise? (26-28)

_____ soldiers.

10. Do you decide what tasks the soldiers you command/supervise will be trained in? (Check one) (29)

1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 11)
2. No (GO TO QUESTION 13)

APPENDIX III

APPENDIX III

11. To what extent do you use each of the following to decide what tasks the E1-E4s you command/supervise need training in? (Check one box for each item)

	1	2	3	4	5	
						Very Great extent
						Great extent
						Moderate extent
						Some extent
						Little or no extent
1. By observing them at work						(30)
2. ARTEP observation/results						(31)
3. SQT results						(32)
4. Asking NCOs for recommendations						(33)
5. Asking the E1 - E4s where they need training						(34)
6. Someone higher in command decides						(35)
7. Certain tasks from Soldier's Manual selected without observation of soldiers or test results						(36)
8. Emphasize skills related to each soldier's current duty position						(37)
9. Emphasize skills not encountered on daily basis						(38)
10. Other (specify)						(39)

12. To what extent do you use each of the following to decide what tasks the E5-E9s you command/supervise need training in? (Check one box for each item)

	1	2	3	4	5	
						Very Great extent
						Great extent
						Moderate extent
						Some extent
						Little or no extent
1. By observing them at work						(40)
2. ARTEP observation/results						(41)
3. SQT results						(42)
4. Asking their supervisory NCOs for recommendations						(43)
5. Asking the E5 - E9s where they need training						(44)
6. Someone higher in command decides						(45)
7. Certain tasks from Soldier's Manual selected without observation of soldiers or test results						(46)
8. Emphasize skills related to each soldier's current duty position						(47)
9. Emphasize skills not encountered on daily basis						(48)
10. Other (specify)						(49)

13. Have the E1-E4s you command/supervise taken an SQT since you have been in this unit? (Check one) (50)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 14)
 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 17)
14. Think of the last SQT given in your unit where E1-E4s you command/supervise took the test.
- (1) When was this SQT given? (51-54)
- _____ (month) _____ (year)
- (2) What MOS/skill level(s) were tested? (55-61)
- _____ (MOS) _____ (skill level(s))
15. In total, how well do you feel the E1-E4s you command/supervise were prepared for the last SQT? (Check one) (62)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
16. Of what benefit was the training which was received by the E1-E4s you command/supervise before the last SQT? (Check one) (63)
1. Helped them learn the tasks on the SQT
 2. Helped them learn their Soldier's Manual tasks in general
 3. Helped them with both the SQT tasks and Soldier's Manual tasks in general
 4. Of no benefit
17. In answering the following questions, consider SQT results you have received in the last year. Results include scores and tasks failed for individual soldiers or unit summary data.
- Do you have or have you seen SQT results for E1 - E4s you command/supervise? (Check one) (64)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 18)
 2. No, I have not seen nor do I have SQT results for E1 - E4s that I command/supervise. (GO TO QUESTION 26)
18. To what extent do you use SQT results to decide in which tasks the E1-E4s you command/supervise need training? (Check one) (65)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
19. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to help decide which E1-E4s you command/supervise get promoted? (Check one) (66)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know
20. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to decide which E1-E4s you command/supervise should and should not reenlist? (Check one) (67)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know
21. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to decide to send E1-E4s that you command/supervise to special schools? (Check one) (68)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know

22. To what extent are SQT results used to decide whether to change the MOS of E1-E4s that you command/supervise? (Check one) (69)

- 1. Very great extent
- 2. Great extent
- 3. Moderate extent
- 4. Some extent
- 5. Little or no extent
- 6. Don't know

23. How well do you feel the E1-E4s you command/supervise remember the tasks they learned for the SQT about 3 months after the SQT? (Check one) (70)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

24. How well do you feel the SQT reflects the ability of the E1-E4s you supervise to perform their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (71)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

25. As someone who commands/supervises E1-E4s, how would you rate the usefulness of SQT results in the following areas as they apply to E1-E4s? (Check one box for each item)

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Neither useful nor useless	Somewhat useless	Very useless	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. As a means of promoting training in Soldier's Manual tasks.						(72)
2. As a means of identifying training weaknesses						(73)
3. As a means of identifying which of the soldiers you supervise are most proficient in their Soldier's Manual tasks.						(74)
4. As a means of deciding which soldiers should be promoted						(75)

26. Do you make or provide input to personnel decisions (promotions, changes of MOS, reenlistment, going to special schools) about the E1-E4s that you command/supervise? (Check one.) (76)

- 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 27)
- 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 29)

27. To what extent do you use each of the following to make or provide input to personnel decisions (promotions, change of MOS, reenlistment, going to special schools) about the E1-E4s that you command/supervise? (Check one for each item)

	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Some extent	Little or no extent	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. By observing them at work						* 2 (9)
2. By observing them during ARTEP						(10)
3. SQT results						(11)
4. Awards, commendations etc.						(12)
5. Soldier's time in current grade						(13)
6. Other (please specify)						(14)

28. To what extent did you use the SQT results received during the last year to make the following personnel decisions for E1-E4s? (Check one for each numbered item below.)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Promotion								(15)
2. Re-enlistment								(16)
3. Special schools								(17)
4. Change MOS								(18)
5. Other (specify) _____								(19)

29. How important to you is it that the E1-E4s you command/supervise pass their SQTs? (Check one) (20)

- 1. Very great importance
- 2. Great importance
- 3. Moderate importance
- 4. Some importance
- 5. Of little or no importance

30. Have the E5-E9s you command/supervise taken an SQT since you have been in this unit? (Check one) (21)

- 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 31)
- 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 34)

31. Think of the last SQT given in your unit where E5-E9s you command/supervise took the test.

(1) When was the SQT given? (22-25)

____ (month) _____ (year)

(2) What MOS/skill level(s) were tested? (26-32)

____ (MOS) _____ (skill level(s))

32. In total, how well do you feel the E5-E9s you command/supervise were prepared for the last SQT? (Check one) (33)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

33. Of what benefit was the training which was received by the E5 - E9s you command/supervise in preparation for the last SQT? (Check one) (34)

- 1. Helped them learn the tasks on the SQT
- 2. Helped them learn their Soldier's Manual tasks in general
- 3. Helped them with both the SQT tasks and Soldier's Manual tasks in general
- 4. Of no benefit

34. In answering the following questions, consider SQT results you have received in the last year. Results include scores and tasks failed for individual soldiers or unit summary data.
- Do you have or have you seen SQT results for the E5-E9s you command/supervise? (Check one) (35)
1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 35)
 2. No, I have not seen nor do I have SQT results for soldiers that I supervise. (GO TO QUESTION 43)
35. To what extent do you use SQT results to decide in which tasks the E5-E9s you command/supervise need training? (Check one) (36)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
36. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to help decide which E5-E9s you command/supervise get promoted? (Check one) (37)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know
37. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to decide which E5-E9s you command/supervise should and should not reenlist? (Check one) (38)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know
38. To what extent are SQT results used in this unit to decide to send E5-E9s you command/supervise to special schools? (Check one) (39)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know
39. To what extent are SQT results used to decide whether to change the MOS of E5-E9s you command/supervise? (Check one) (40)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
 6. Don't know

40. How well do you feel the E5-E9s you command/supervise remember the tasks they learned for the SQT about 3 months after the SQT? (Check one) (41)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

41. How well do you feel the SQT reflects the ability of the E5-E9s you command/supervise to perform their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (42)

- 1. Very well
- 2. Somewhat well
- 3. Neither well nor poorly
- 4. Somewhat poorly
- 5. Very poorly

42. As someone who commands/supervises E5-E9s, how would you rate the usefulness of SQT results in the following areas as they apply to E5-E9s? (Check one box for each item)

	1	2	3	4	5	
						Very useful Somewhat useful Neither useful not useful Somewhat useless Very useless
1. As a means of promoting training in Soldier's Manual tasks.						(43)
2. As a means of identifying training weaknesses						(44)
3. As a means of identifying which of the soldiers you supervise are most proficient in their Soldier's Manual tasks.						(45)
4. As a means of deciding which soldiers should be promoted						(46)

43. Do you make or provide input to personnel decisions (promotions, changes of MOS, reenlistment, going to special schools) about the E5-E9s that you command/supervise? (Check one.) (47)

- 1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 44)
- 2. No (GO TO QUESTION 46)

44. To what extent do you use each of the following to make or provide input to personnel decisions (promotions, change of MOS, reenlistment, going to special schools) about the E5-E9s that you command/supervise? (Check one for each item)

	1	2	3	4	5	
						Very Great extent Great extent Moderate extent Some extent Little or no extent
1. By observing them at work						(48)
2. By observing them during ARTEP						(49)
3. SQT results						(50)
4. Awards, commendations etc.						(51)
5. Soldier's time in current grade						(52)
6. Other (please specify)						(53)

45. To what extent did you use the SQT results received during the last year to make the following personnel decisions for E5-E9s? (Check one for each numbered item below).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Some extent	Little or no extent	Do not make this decision	No SQT results in last year	
1. Promotion								(54)
2. Re-enlistment								(55)
3. Special schools								(56)
4. Change MOS								(57)
5. Other (specify) _____								(58)

46. How important to you is it that the E5-E9s you command/supervise pass their SQTs? (Check one) (59)

- 1. Very great importance
- 2. Great importance
- 3. Moderate importance
- 4. Some importance
- 5. Of little or no importance

47. In order for SQT results to be of use to you, how many weeks after the SQT do you need the results? (60-61)

_____ weeks

48. Are SQT results used in the unit to decide about reenlistment for certain grades more than for others? (Check one) (62)

- 1. Yes - Enter those grades E1 _____
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

49. Overall, to what extent do you feel the SQT results are useful to your company/battery commander in learning about the unit as a whole? (Check one) (63)

- 1. Very great extent
- 2. Great extent
- 3. Moderate extent
- 4. Some extent
- 5. Little or no extent
- 6. Don't know

50. To what extent do you feel there is a need for SQTs (as they are currently designed) for enlisted personnel from grades E1 through E4? (Check one) (64)

- 1. Very great extent
- 2. Great extent
- 3. Moderate extent
- 4. Some extent
- 5. Little or no extent

51. How well can supervisors tell how their soldiers are doing their Soldier's Manual tasks by observing them during OJT? (Check one) (65)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
52. How well can supervisors tell how their soldiers are doing their Soldier's Manual tasks by observing them during field exercises? (Check one) (66)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
53. IF NCOs made up their own tests, to replace SQTs, how well would they be able to tell how their soldiers were doing their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (67)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
54. Currently the Army sends an SQT notice out 60 days before a scheduled SQT. This notice informs the soldier of the tasks to be tested along with sample questions.
- If you had your way would you continue informing the soldier of what tasks will be tested on the SQT? (Check one) (68)
1. Yes, I would continue it (GO TO QUESTION 55)
 2. No, I would discontinue it (GO TO QUESTION 56)
 3. I am undecided (GO TO QUESTION 56)
55. Why should soldiers be notified of the tasks to be tested on the SQT? (Check all that apply) (69-73)
1. To encourage training in tasks which are not part of normal duty.
 2. To encourage the unit to train the soldiers
 3. To reduce anxiety over the test
 4. To give the soldier the chance to practice the precise way to do each task
 5. Other (specify) _____
56. How well do you think SQT notices reflect what is actually on SQTs? (Check one) (74)
1. Very great extent
 2. Great extent
 3. Moderate extent
 4. Some extent
 5. Little or no extent
57. If SQTs were given without notice of what tasks would be on the test, how well would supervisors be able to tell how their soldiers were doing in their Soldier's Manual tasks? (Check one) (75)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly
58. How well can supervisors tell how their soldiers are doing in their Soldier's Manual tasks by keeping each soldier's job book up to date? (Check one) (76)
1. Very well
 2. Somewhat well
 3. Neither well nor poorly
 4. Somewhat poorly
 5. Very poorly

59. To what extent should the soldier be responsible at all times for knowing how to do the tasks listed in the Soldier's Manual at his/her skill level? (Check one.) (77)

1. Very great extent
2. Great extent
3. Moderate extent
4. Some extent
5. Little or no extent

60. Do you have any suggestions for alternatives to SQI for identifying training needed for soldiers or for assessing their individual proficiency? (Check one) (78)

1. Yes - (please tell us in the space below)
2. No

ARMY SKILLS SELECTED FOR REVIEW

<u>Army career field</u>	<u>Military occupational specialties reviewed</u>
Infantry	11B - Infantryman 11C - Indirect fire infantryman 11H - Heavy antiarmor weapons crewman
Engineer	12B - Combat engineer
Artillery	13B - Cannon crewman 13E - Cannon fire direction specialist
Armor	19E - Tank crewman 19F - Tank driver
Signal	31M - Multichannel communications equipment operator 36C - Wire system installer/operator 36K - Tactical wire operations specialist
Transportation	64C - Motor transport operator 67N - Utility helicopter repairman 68G - Aircraft structural repairman
Quartermaster	76W - Petroleum supply specialist 57E - Laundry and bath specialist

ARMY UNITS VISITED BY GAOWHERE DETAIL AUDIT WORK WAS PERFORMED

<u>Unit Designation</u>	<u>Location</u>
16th Field Service Company, 240th Quartermaster Battalion, Quarter- master Brigade	Fort Lee, Virginia
267th Quartermaster Company (petroleum operations), 240th Quartermaster Battalion, Quarter- master Brigade	Fort Lee, Virginia
549th Quartermaster Company (petroleum operations), 11th Battalion, 7th Transportation Group	Fort Story, Virginia (Fort Eustis unit)
100th Transportation Company, 6th Battalion, 7th Transportation Group	Fort Eustis, Virginia
B Company, 24th Signal Battalion, 24th Infantry Division	Fort Stewart, Georgia
C Company, 2nd/19th Infantry Battalion, 24th Infantry Division	Fort Stewart, Georgia
B Company, 24th Supply and Transportation Battalion, 24th Infantry Division	Fort Stewart, Georgia
A Battery, 1st Battalion, 17th Field Artillery	Fort Sill, Oklahoma
C Battery, 3rd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery	Fort Sill, Oklahoma
A Battery, 1st Battalion, 19th Field Artillery, Division Artillery, 4th Infantry Division	Fort Carson, Colorado
C Company, 4th Battalion, 40th Armor, 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division	Fort Carson, Colorado
D Company, 4th Aviation Battalion (CBT), 4th Infantry Division	Fort Carson, Colorado
A Company, 1st Battalion, 10th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division	Fort Carson, Colorado

