

**United States Military Academy  
West Point, New York 10996**

**Program Initiative  
Benefits and Savings at the  
US Army Enlisted Records and  
Evaluation Center**

**TECHNICAL REPORT 0309-01**

Lead Analyst  
**COL Joseph D. Myers**  
Department of Mathematical Sciences

**September 2003**

**Distribution A: Approved for public release; distribution is  
unlimited.**

**20030929 000**

# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE – SF298

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

<b>1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)</b> 17-09-2003		<b>2. REPORT TYPE</b> Final		<b>3. DATES COVERED (From - To)</b> May 2003 - Sep 2003	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> Program Initiative Benefits and Savings at the US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center				<b>5a. CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5b. GRANT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> COL Joseph D. Myers				<b>5d. PROJECT NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5e. TASK NUMBER</b>	
				<b>5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER</b>	
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> AND ADDRESS(ES) Department of Mathematical Sciences US Military Academy West Point, NY 10996				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b> 0309-01	
<b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center 8899 East 56 <sup>th</sup> Street Indianapolis, IN 46249-5301				<b>10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)</b> EREC	
				<b>11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)</b>	
<b>12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Distribution A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.					
<b>13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b>					
<b>14. ABSTRACT</b>  The US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC) has engaged in several modernization programs in recent years, mostly leveraging information technology. These programs go beyond mere automation of manual tasks; they involve changing the way that personnel organizations interact with and care for the needs of soldiers. These programs are very conspicuous in the way they were proactively developed to service soldier needs, with no mission statement or tasking from outside agencies or headquarters. First we describe how these programs have changed the way organizations care for soldier personnel needs. Then we present some of the savings and benefits to the Army attributable to these programs in terms of money, time, and soldier trust.					
<b>15. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Modernization, Program Savings, Information Technology					
<b>16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:</b>			<b>17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b>  None	<b>18. NUMBER OF PAGES</b>  23	<b>19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON</b> COL Joseph D. Myers
<b>a. REPORT</b> Unclassified	<b>b. ABSTRACT</b> Unclassified	<b>c. THIS PAGE</b> Unclassified			<b>19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)</b> (845) 938-5611

# **Program Initiative Benefits and Savings at the US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center**

Lead Analyst

**COL Joseph D. Myers**

Department of Mathematical Sciences

## **TECHNICAL REPORT 0309-01**

**September 2003**

This research was sponsored by the US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center, 8899 East 56<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, IN, 46249-5301.

Distribution A: Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

## Abstract

The US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC) has engaged in several modernization programs in recent years, mostly leveraging information technology. These programs go beyond mere automation of manual tasks; they involve changing the way that personnel organizations interact with and care for the needs of soldiers. These programs are very conspicuous in the way they were proactively developed to service soldier needs, with no mission statement or tasking from outside agencies or headquarters until the organization had already conceived and begun developing the programs. First we describe how these programs have changed the way organizations care for soldier personnel needs. Then we present some of the savings and benefits to the Army attributable to these programs in terms of money, time, and soldier trust.

## **About the Author**

COL Joseph Myers is an Academy Professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at USMA. He holds four Masters degrees in administrative and technical disciplines, and a PhD in Applied Mathematics.

## **Acknowledgements**

This study was sponsored by the US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center, Indianapolis IN. COL Reuben Jones initiated the study and made available all elements of the command to ensure its completeness. Mr. Fred Ziegler coordinated the visit and the briefings and interviews with all division chiefs. Ms. Lynn Maldonado, Chief of the Program Management Office, collaborated as the resident analyst and provided most of the data, helped put division chiefs' information into context, and provided many valuable ideas and historical context to frame the study. The following division chiefs and personnel took time from their demanding duties to provide valuable information and data and to provide first hand views of their operations:

Ms. Sylvia Davis and SFC John Solie, Records Services Division  
Mr. Tony Ecalavea and Mr. Calvin Barker, Enlisted Records Division  
MAJ(P) Bobby Jarvis and Mr. Randy Chapman, Information Support Activity  
Ms. Rose Lewis, Resource Management Office  
Mr. Bob Wagner and CPT Kerry Wood, DA Secretariat

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>About the Author</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction and Scope</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Effects of Program Initiative</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Savings and Benefits From Program Initiatives</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix A: List of Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Distribution List</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Report Documentation Page – SF298</b> .....	<b>17</b>

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: In the Past: Soldier (Non)Interaction with Records System Before Grade of Senior E6

Figure 2: In the Past: Soldier Interaction with Records System After Grade of Senior E6

Figure 3: Hypothetical Soldier Interaction with Records System if EREC was  
“Modernization as Usual”

Figure 4: Actual Soldier Interaction with Records System Due to EREC Initiatives

Figure 5: Core Permanent Position Reductions

Figure 6: FY Funding Levels

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Locality-Dependent Lines of the FY03 EREC Budget

## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Scope**

The US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC) has engaged in several modernization programs in recent years, mostly leveraging information technology. These programs go beyond mere automation of manual tasks; they involve changing the way that personnel organizations interact with and care for the needs of soldiers. These program initiatives, already fielded or partially fielded by EREC, include OMPF Online, Enlisted Record Brief/Soldier Career Snapshot, Field to File and the closely related Fax to File and Email to File, NCOER Stats Online, NCOER Online, Promotion Point Worksheet Online, Army Selection Board System, Assignment Satisfaction Key, and DIEMS Verification.

These programs are very conspicuous in the way they were proactively developed to service soldier needs, with no mission statement or tasking from outside agencies or headquarters. First we describe how these programs have changed the way organizations care for soldier personnel needs. We focus on the interactions between the major players: the soldier, the PSB and other intermediaries, and EREC. We outline the interactions of the recent past before EREC initiatives, then we look at the hypothetical situation of the near future if EREC were to have done modernization through the usual contracting process, and finally we describe what these interactions actually are today due to EREC initiatives.

Next we analyze some of the savings and benefits to the Army attributable to these programs in terms of cost savings, time savings, and soldier trust.

This report is based on information, data, and observations collected during a TDY visit to EREC on 5-8 Aug 2003. We attempted to benchmark the methodology and results with other similar studies, but those studies are still in progress (e.g., by contractors EDS and Appian for AKO).

## Chapter 2: Effects of Program Initiatives

The US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center (EREC) has engaged in several modernization programs in recent years, mostly leveraging information technology. These programs go beyond mere automation of manual tasks; they involve changing the way that personnel organizations interact with and care for the needs of soldiers. These programs are very conspicuous in the way they were proactively developed to service soldier needs, with no mission statement or tasking from outside agencies or headquarters. In this chapter we describe how these programs have changed the way organizations care for soldier personnel needs. We focus on the interactions between the major players: the soldier, the PSB and other intermediaries, and EREC. First we look at the interactions in the recent past before EREC initiatives, then we look at the hypothetical situation of the near future if EREC were to have done modernization through the usual contracting process, and finally we look at what these interactions actually are today due to EREC initiatives.

### CY2000: BEFORE EREC PROGRAM INITIATIVES

1. **Before Grade of Senior E6:** Before the grade of senior E6, soldier interaction with the records system is as diagrammed below.

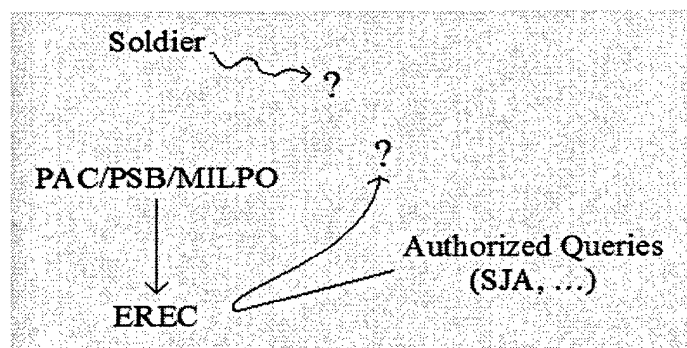


Figure 1: In the Past: Soldier (Non)Interaction with Records System Before Grade of Senior E6

The basic pattern of interaction was actually noninteraction. Many soldiers did not even know that an OMPF was maintained on them. What ensued was basically 9 years of records neglect. Authorized queries would often go unsatisfactorily answered because of the incomplete state of most young soldiers' files.

2.. **After Grade of Senior E6:** After becoming a senior E6, soldier interaction with the records system was as diagrammed below.

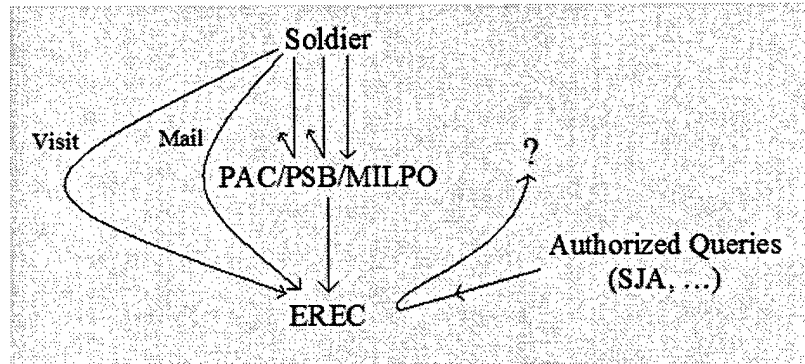


Figure 2: In the Past: Soldier Interaction with Records System After Grade of Senior E6

After years of neglect, senior E6's would prepare for the E7 board by trying to do 9 years of records management in 3 months. Soldiers reported that PSBs often had no time for their multiple emergency inquiries. Soldiers would send documents through multiple channels because they would usually not get positive feedback that an item had been posted after sending it in, so they would send it another way "to make sure". Many unauthorized documents were submitted due to lack of guidance about the system. EREC wasted much time and money dealing with duplicate and unauthorized documents. Faith in the system was low; many soldiers visited EREC because more senior NCOs counseled that was the only way to get squared away for a board. This took time and leadership out of units, took money out of soldiers' pockets, and often put soldiers at risk on the highway hurrying to squeeze in these "road trips".

**CY2005: THE NEAR FUTURE, IF EREC WAS "MODERNIZATION AS USUAL"**

If EREC followed the typical modernization campaign, hypothetical soldier interaction with the records system would probably soon be as diagrammed below.

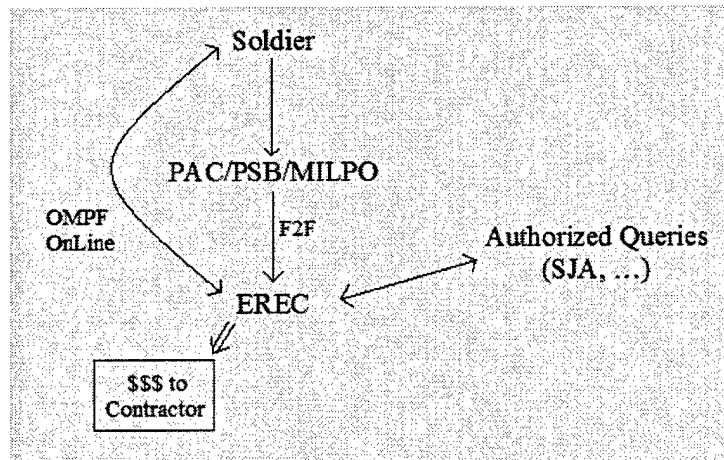


Figure 3: Hypothetical Soldier Interaction with Records System if EREC was "Modernization as Usual"

Soldiers would see what documents were posted and which needed posting via OMPF Online, they would submit their documents to the PSB which uses Field to File to submit, soldiers would soon after (in 1 or 2 days) see the document posted via OMPF Online and so would not submit duplicates, and authorized queries would be satisfied by an up-to-date database with very little of

its information tied up in backlog. There would also be a \$2M drain from EREC to a contractor to prototype, test, and field this system, along with funding for annual maintenance and licensing, and the production version of this system would come online in 2005.

### **CY2003: TODAY, WITH EREC PROGRAM INITIATIVES**

Today, soldier interaction with the records system is as diagrammed below.

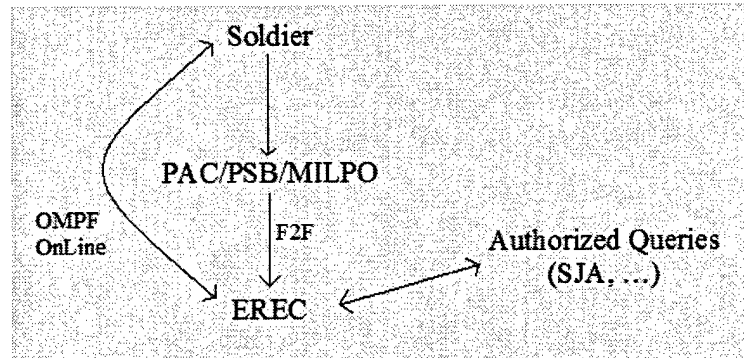


Figure 4: Actual Soldier Interaction with Records System Due to EREC Initiatives

Everything described in the previous hypothetical scenario is happening today: soldiers have 24/7/365 web access to see their files, can submit timely updates from the field, and can see the changes post as they submit them. There is still an education effort ongoing; some more senior NCOs still have not gotten the word and continue to advise soldiers to submit multiple times and to travel to EREC, but this number is continuously decreasing. The difference between today's reality and the hypothetical scenario of "modernization as usual" is that EREC has cut 3 years and several million dollars of contractor development out of the process. Annual support is from salary rather than an annual contractor budget line. Other systems, such as the ORB Online, are today online 2 years sooner as a function of having been pushed by EREC initiatives.

## Chapter 3: Savings and Benefits from Program Initiatives

Program initiatives already fielded or partially fielded by EREC include OMPF Online, Enlisted Career Brief/Soldier Career Snapshot (ERB/SCS), Field to File (F2F) and the closely related Fax to File and Email to File, NCOER Stats Online, NCOER Online, Promotion Point Worksheet Online, Army Selection Board System (ASBS), Assignment Satisfaction Key (ASK), and DIEMS Verification. Several of these programs will be components of the DOD's DIMHRS, the Army's slice of which is eHR, when fielded in the next several years.

We have categorized the benefits of these programs in the areas of Cost Savings, Time Savings, and Trust Issues. We have gathered data while onsite at EREC in order to estimate program benefits in each of these areas. Our analysis and results follow.

### COST SAVINGS:

#### 1. At EREC:

a. **Document Processing:** Document processing now costs about \$.76 per document. Decreases in duplicate documents received due to OMPF Online availability (from 30% to 10% of about 2.16M documents annually) mean an annual savings of \$328K.<sup>1,2</sup>

b. **Microfiche Production:** 35K E6s are eligible for each E7 board, 22K E7s are eligible for each E8 board, and 10K E8s are eligible for each E9 board. This means that 67K microfiche are produced annually for these boards. During FY01, 348,210 microfiche were produced at a cost of \$275,086; this was down from \$430,301 the previous year.<sup>3,4</sup> Additionally, about 75%-85% of eligible soldiers would request copies of their microfiche, which meant more production.<sup>5</sup> Records Review has been replaced by OMPF Online and F2F; microfiche is no longer sent to soldiers, and microfiche production and contract machines have been greatly curtailed (retained for board use for a few more boards and for small special soldier categories). Three dedicated people manning phones help close the loop on F2F transactions and enable soldiers to see documents processed within 24-48 hours.<sup>6</sup> On FY03 microfiche volume of 135,488 (projected), total annual savings is \$168K over FY01.<sup>7</sup>

c. **Mailing Costs:** In 2001, mailing costs related to enlisted records and boards were \$74,117 for EREC, \$96,125 for the Army, and \$72,112 for DoD.<sup>8</sup> Savings due to online

<sup>1</sup> EREC Command Briefing, Feb 2002.

<sup>2</sup> EREC Data Call, Mr. Fred Ziegler and Staff, 14 Aug 03.

<sup>3</sup> Personnel Data Strategy Integration Report, 7 Nov 01.

<sup>4</sup> EREC Command Briefing, 27 Sep 00.

<sup>5</sup> Enlisted Records Division (ERD) Interview, Mr. Tony Ecalavea, 7 Aug 03.

<sup>6</sup> Record Support Division (RSD) Interview, Ms. Sylvia Davis, 6 Aug 03.

<sup>7</sup> EREC Data Call, Mr. Fred Ziegler, and Staff, 14 Aug 03.

<sup>8</sup> Personnel Data Strategy Integration Report, 7 Nov 01.

programs are now 10% of that and growing. Additionally, mailing cost savings for NCOER-Stats alone are \$5/ mailing with 110 sites/ mailing for 12 mailings/year. Total savings is now \$30.8K annually.<sup>9</sup>

d. **ASBS:** The Army Selection Board System (ASBS) is 99% complete, and has the potential to cut board time on site in half. However, it is very likely that boards will take advantage of some of this extra time to do a more careful read of files, so there may be only 1-3 board days saved. ASBS will be tested on one panel in Fall 2003, then tested on the full E8 board in Spring 2004. For all boards, each board day saved is about a \$10K savings. This system is also decreasing the number of board assistants (E7s) for each of the three major annual boards from 13 to 4.<sup>10,11</sup> Annual board support costs are \$972K for personnel and \$72.2K for administration. This amounts to a total savings of \$166K once ASBS has been implemented.

e. **Personnel:** Personnel were reduced between 1994 and 1996 in anticipation of moving EREC from Indianapolis to the DC area with some changes in operations (Fig 5). The move and changes did not materialize, but the slots were not restored. Backlog rose drastically in the years after 1996 until 2000-01, when efficiencies due to online programs allowed EREC to return to its former level of backlog. The effect of these programs was to eventually pay the bill for these personnel cuts; this has been a 75.7% savings in the personnel budget from 1994, totaling \$3.4M based on payroll.

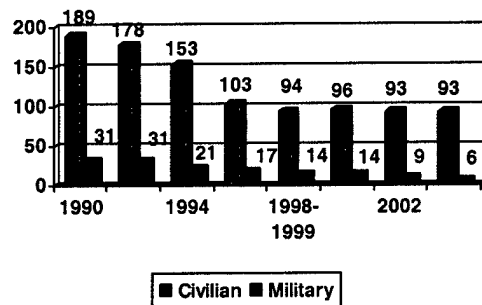


Figure 5: Core Permanent Position Reductions

f. **AIT Support:** AIT support has decreased from 75 in '00, to 53 in '01, to 33 in '02, to 10 in '03. Associated TDY costs have decreased over this period from \$705K to \$390K. Further reductions will eliminate remaining AIT support.<sup>12,13</sup> Ultimate savings will soon be \$705K.

g. **Cost Containment.** From 2000 to 2003, budget growth in core operations has been held to \$506K (Fig 6). This represents an average annual growth rate of 2%, matching inflation. No additional costs were incurred in developing these programs.

<sup>9</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>10</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>11</sup> DA Secretariat Interview, Mr. Bob Wagner, 7 Aug 03.

<sup>12</sup> Budget Update, Resource Management Office, 6 Aug 03.

<sup>13</sup> EREC Command Briefing, Feb 2002.

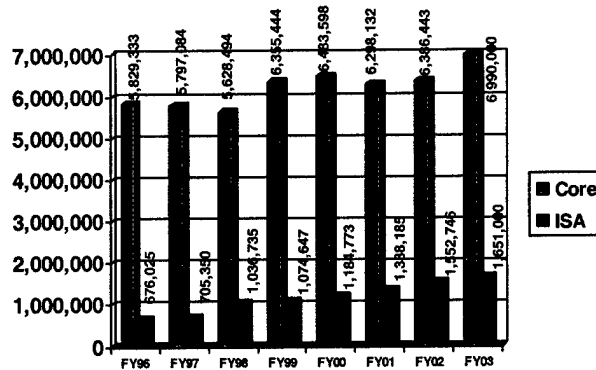


Figure 6: FY Funding Levels

h. **Lower Cost Area:** EREC finds that the cost of doing business is less in Indianapolis than in many other likely alternative locations. Following are the elements of the current EREC budget which are affected by locality.

<b>EREC CORE</b>	
Payroll	4,537,500
Agency Temp Payroll	212,000
Overtime	40,000
Contracts	117,000
Supplies	139,000
<b>BOARDS</b>	
Board TDY	972,000
AIT Soldiers' TDY	390,000
Hotel Contract	304,000
<b>ISA-EREC</b>	
Payroll	1,413,000
Overtime	10,000
Contracts	47,700
Supplies	97,400

Table 1: Locality-Dependent Lines of the FY03 EREC Budget

Based on a 12% cost of living differential between Indianapolis and the Ft Belvoir area, Indianapolis-based operations are a \$993K annual savings on the above elements.<sup>14</sup>

i. **In-House Development:** The EREC ISA is able to develop and outreach through its online activities, resourced by its current budget and payroll. By comparison, St Louis is spending \$30M through contractors for its arguably less-effective web portal. Part of the reason for this creative vision and efficient execution is EREC's location "away from the flagpole";

<sup>14</sup> Cost of Living Calculator, <http://www.homefair.com/homefair/cmr/salcalc.html>, 15 Aug 03.

ideas are conceived and prototyped quickly, then staffed, and then either become the Army standard or push the proper proponent to ramp up and develop their own version. These programs include DIEMS, ASK, OMPF Online, ERB/SCS, NCOER Stats Online and NCOER Online, Fax2File and Email2File (now handed off by the proponent to Northrop Grumman for development), and conversion from IVRS to IWRS.<sup>15,16</sup> Developing this array of prototypes and finished products in-house rather than through a contractor is an estimated \$6M savings.

**j. Equipment Upgrades:** Equipment upgrades to support the initiatives outlined above have been made at the end of existing equipment life cycles, allowing 50-75% of upgrade costs to be funded by existing budget. This leverages life cycle replacement dollars.<sup>17</sup> Approximately 30% of the current \$97.4K equipment/upgrade budget is leveraged in this manner, for \$29K annual savings.<sup>18</sup>

## **2. At Other Organizations:**

**a. Prototype Development:** ASK would have taken \$6M and 2 years of contractor development at EPMD; instead, EREC had already developed and was able to share a prototype for the cost of one TDY trip. Similar savings are associated with the prototyping and development of OPMF Online instead of contracting at OPMD.<sup>19</sup> Associated savings are \$9M.

## **3. By Soldiers:**

**a. Travel:** Most soldiers wait until before the E7 board to check their OMPF, then submit multiple copies of documents through their PSB, also via express mail at \$15 per mailing, and also travel at personal expense to EREC for an in-person Records Review the way the senior NCOs in their units have told them is the only way that is trustworthy. OMPF Online and F2F make it possible to eliminate all these personal expenses and to know with feedback that the correct documents have in fact been received and posted.<sup>20</sup> EREC had 3837 visitors in CY01, 2924 visitors in CY02, and 854 visitors in CY03. The average out-of-pocket cost per visit is \$80-\$110. Total travel costs incurred by soldiers from Jun 02 to Jun 03 were \$131,716.<sup>21</sup> This is down from 2001, when 4164 soldiers made trips at a total cost of \$641,256.<sup>22</sup> Net savings to date for soldiers is \$510K.

---

<sup>15</sup> Information Support Activity (ISA) Interview, MAJ(P) Bobby Jarvis, 7 Aug 03.

<sup>16</sup> ISA Interview.

<sup>17</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>18</sup> Resource Management Office (RMO) Budget Update, 6 Aug 03.

<sup>19</sup> ISA Interview.

<sup>20</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>21</sup> EREC Customer Service Center Report, Jul 03.

<sup>22</sup> Personnel Data Strategy Integration Report, 7 Nov 01.

b. **Mailing:** Mailing costs for soldiers totaled \$34,700 in 2001.<sup>23</sup> EREC suspects this is significantly decreased and continues to decrease, but we have no current estimates.

## II. TIME SAVINGS:

### 1. At EREC:

a. **OMPF Online and Field-2-File:** Most soldiers neglect, or are unaware of, their OMPF until just before the E7 board, at which time they take time off from the unit to travel to EREC for an in-person Records Review the way the senior NCOs in their units have told them is the only way that is trustworthy. OMPF Online has been available in some form since Oct '01; OMPF Online and F2F make it possible to eliminate this time away from the unit and to let soldiers know with feedback that the correct documents have in fact been received and posted. 250 visitors per board have been replaced by greater flexibility and less time investment by EREC and the soldier, e.g. before the last E8 board there were 4300 emails, 2590 phone calls, 5252 documents that were either faxed or scanned by the soldier, and only 96 visitors.<sup>24</sup> 70% of NCOER documentation now comes in through F2F.<sup>25</sup> For the April '03 E7 Board, 100K documents were received through F2F, and the number continues to increase.<sup>26</sup> 6M pieces of documentation were received through the mail, but only 1.6M were authorized for inclusion in the OMPF (the rest were duplicate or unauthorized), but this number continues to decrease.<sup>27</sup> A total of 300K NCOERs and AERs are processed annually now; manual reviews used to take 20 min per file, versus 5-10 min per file now.<sup>28</sup> Under NCOER Online, editing and error-checking will be built in through drop down menu choices, cutting manual editing time by another 50%.<sup>29</sup> The NCOER is the most important document for the promotion board, so correcting errors is critical. Of the 181,809 NCOs on active duty, about 10% receive late evaluation reports.<sup>30</sup> The error rate has dropped from 4.8% in '00 to 2.8% in '03, and the late rate has dropped from 12% in '00 to 3% in '03.<sup>31,32</sup> In the mid-90's there were 5K-7K NCOERs that were in the database but missing in PERMS; by '03, online reconciliation had reduced this to 100-600 (1-2% of the total) which saved many hours of research.<sup>33</sup> Total time savings is 60 man years per year. This is based on increases in productivity rather than decreases in personnel; it is the number of additional personnel that would have been required to accomplish the amount of work that has been saved through these initiatives.

---

<sup>23</sup> Personnel Data Strategy Integration Report, 7 Nov 01.

<sup>24</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>25</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>26</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>27</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>28</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>29</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>30</sup> "New Intranet Tool to Keep NCO-ERs On Time", SSG Marcia Triggs, Army News Service, 27 Jun 03.

<sup>31</sup> NCO Branch R&A Report, Nov-Dec '00.

<sup>32</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>33</sup> RSD Interview.

**b. OMPF Online – Authorized Documents:** OMPF Online currently contains 469K Active Army records, consisting of 28M images.<sup>34</sup> EREC gets several tens of thousands of documents/year from PSBs/individuals for posting, but many are either ineligible for posting or are resubmissions; this will be reduced to around 10% as soldiers become educated and check their OMPF online and follow posted instructions.<sup>35</sup> This will save 15 man-years per year in productivity.

**c. Digital Senders:** 144 Digital senders are currently fielded at a current cost of \$3018 ea<sup>36</sup>. Currently no MEPS have digital senders, but if they were to procure them, transmission and processing would take 30 min a day. Currently, about 9K-10K hard copy documents arrive from MEPS every month (mostly accession packets) and require 12 hours of processing. EREC is finding ways to promote digital scanners to the MEPS and of funding them; a reasonable goal is to equip half of the MEPS within the next 2 years, with savings of one man-year per year.<sup>37</sup>

**d. Document Scanners:** The old document scanners (TDC-400) used at EREC were one-sided operation and scanned 400 images/hour. These have been replaced with new Kodak 3520s which permit 2-sided operation and scan 35K images/day. Money saved from this has been reinvested in other services (mainly digital senders for units) so cost savings has been transformed into reduced backlog and time savings of one person every day.<sup>38</sup>

**e. Backlog:** EREC backlog was about 12 months in '98, consisting of 69K accession packets from MEPS of 1.5M images and 654K update documents for NCOERs, about 2 months in '98, and essentially zero (same day or next day processing) in '00<sup>39,40</sup>. Putting people who used to be dedicated to backlog onto current work saves the equivalent amount of time: 45 man-months.

**f. NCOER-Stats:** NCOER-Stats used to require one dedicated person for processing, mailing or e-sending, and for research and resending of address errors. Now with units pulling via the web rather than EREC pushing, the time cost is essentially just verifying eligibility of those requesting to pull; updates and availability is almost real time. This saves one person every day.

**g. DIEMS:** When soldiers identify DIEMS as incorrect, about 85% of soldiers use the web site or other sources to identify the correct documentation and send it in without prompting.<sup>41</sup> About 70K soldiers have verified or corrected DIEMS so far.<sup>42,43</sup> This has saved 1.8K man-days of processing.

---

<sup>34</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>35</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>36</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>37</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>38</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>39</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>40</sup> Request for Temporary Hiring Authority, submitted to TAPC, Feb 97.

<sup>41</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>42</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>43</sup> DIEMS Report, EREC, 1 Aug 03.

h. **Falling Timber:** A recent operation that illustrates another way that time savings are achieved is Falling Timber, where 32 pallets of records were taken from St Louis' backlog, and then sorted, digitized, and processed. These 32 pallets contained 1021 boxes of records, a total of 36K records, which included Guard, Reserve, officer, and Temporary Disability Retired List (TDRL). The factor that enabled EREC to efficiently accomplish this processing for St Louis, beyond its own mission, is the emphasis on individual performance standards.<sup>44</sup>

## 2. At PSBs, PSCs, MILPOs, and Other Intermediaries:

a. **OMPF Online:** PSBs get several hundred documents/year from individuals for posting, but many are either ineligible for posting or are resubmissions; this will be reduced to 10% when soldiers have been educated to check their OMPF online and follow posted instructions, saving one man-year per year.<sup>45</sup>

b. **CC-Redesign:** Future ISA initiatives include a proof concept for USAREC MEPS to digitally send accession packets through CC-Redesign, which would involve sending and handling data rather than forms and images. This is another example of EREC leading from the front; other agencies will eventually be talking about dealing with data rather than documents, but EREC is acting on it now.<sup>46</sup> This could save 2 years of development time.

c. **Verification:** Online programs help keep other data and programs more accurate, more quickly. For example, a soldier in Iraq recently could not see his OMPF Online and asked why. Research showed that he had been mistakenly DFR'd 3 years ago, but the problem was not identified because his account in JUMPS continued correctly. OMPF Online helped identify and fix the problem quickly.<sup>47</sup>

## 3. By Soldiers:

a. **OMPF Online and F2F:** Real time access to data allows soldiers to check accuracy immediately without querying intermediaries. F2F allows updates to the system, and then the real time access again allows soldiers positive verification when changes are made rather than querying the system (usually multiple times) to see if they have been made.<sup>48</sup>

b. **Travel:** For soldiers visiting EREC to do a records review, the average number of days of travel is 1.6. 3837 visitors made this trip in CY01, 2924 in CY02, and 854 in the first half of CY03. 1606 made the trip in the period Jun 02-Jun 03.<sup>49</sup> The savings to field commands is 3570 man-days per year.

4. **By Army Unit Leaders:** The Army Selection Board System (ASBS) will shave board on-site time from 30 days to 25.<sup>50</sup> This will save 900 man-days a year.

---

<sup>44</sup> ERD Interview.

<sup>45</sup> RSD Interview.

<sup>46</sup> ISA Interview.

<sup>47</sup> ISA Interview.

<sup>48</sup> ISA Interview.

<sup>49</sup> EREC Customer Service Center Report, Jul 03.

<sup>50</sup> EREC Command Briefing, COL Reuben Jones, 6 Aug 03.

## 5. Availability:

a. F2F enables documents to be posted and available for viewing within 24-48 hours of receipt by EREC.<sup>51</sup>

b. "Pushing the product concept and development envelope" pushes other directorates (e.g. OPMD, EPMD, PERSINSD, via OPMS online and F2F) into action, shaving 2 years from the development cycle in programs related to but outside of EREC.<sup>52</sup> E.g., EREC development has pushed the Army Publishing Directorate into action to webify the Promotion Point Worksheet possibly 2 years before it would have otherwise.<sup>53</sup> EREC may not receive due credit (e.g., as in a recent GCN article on the PERMS PM and OMPF Online, but with no mention of how EREC initiated work on this project).<sup>54</sup>

c. EREC is now storing an image of all DAPMIS photos to populate the ERB/SCS; a fortunate byproduct is the fact that this constitutes an offsite backup for DAPMIS.<sup>55</sup>

d. After selection boards, EREC is allowed 30 days to forward results to DA and PERSCOM. New systems have quickened this process; for example, after the recent E7 board, EREC only took 7 days to forward results as required. This saved a month of cycle time, and DA was able to release the list a month earlier. This enabled more timely management decisions at DA, and reduced soldier angst.<sup>56</sup>

## III. TRUST ISSUES:

1. Field interviews indicate that the biggest problem in the enlisted personnel/records/promotion system is trust. E.g., before the latest E7 board, 30 E6s from Ft Lewis bought plane tickets to come to Indianapolis to do a face-face records review because that is what the more senior NCOs told them would be required to have any chance of getting promoted. EREC found out when the NCOs called to coordinate a meeting, explained the current OMPF Online and F2F system, and talked them out of visiting and to instead use OMPF Online and F2F. They did, and 17/30 were selected for promotion. Ft Campbell was routinely bussing eligible soldiers up for a records review. Other posts such as Ft Bragg would see their eligible NCOs carpool and drive all night to do a records review. Stories like these are common at EREC. When soldiers express mail documents to EREC, the cost is about \$5 and there is no guarantee it has been received, whereas the digital sender has tracking info and can confirm receipt for the soldier.

---

<sup>51</sup> EREC Command Briefing.

<sup>52</sup> EREC Command Briefing.

<sup>53</sup> ISA Interview, 7 Aug 03.

<sup>54</sup> Vandana Sinha, "Army Automates Paper Records System", Government Computer News, 10 July 03.

<sup>55</sup> ISA Interview.

<sup>56</sup> DA Secretariat Interview.

2. One experienced personnel operator compared IT initiatives to DFAS operations: "In both areas, doing something that the soldier wants is worth any cost. But by the same token, doing something just because it is possible but that the soldier does not care about is not worth anything."<sup>57</sup> Soldiers having 24/7/365 access to their OMPF delivers what they want.

3. DIEMS development is a good example of how out-front development can unify and fight compartmentalization. EREC was so far out front on DIEMS that it went ahead and fielded not only for active enlisted soldiers, but also for active AGR and soon also for officers. It is rare to field a Total Army program like this, and helps build a Total Army mentality. If left to the proper proponents, there would be several different systems running in parallel.

**SUMMARY OF SAVINGS:**

Total savings attributable to all the programs detailed above is as follows. We produce this aggregate savings to the Army by summing from all categories considered above.

**Cost Savings:**

Annual recurring cost savings:	\$5.52M
One-time cost savings:	\$15M

**Time Savings:**

Annual recurring time savings:	76.2 man-years
One-time time savings:	10.8 man-years
Product development cycle time savings:	4 years

**Trust and Effectiveness Issues:**

- Increased soldier trust in the records and promotion processes.
- More timely management decisions flowing from more timely promotion decisions.

---

<sup>57</sup> Clive Barker, ERD Interview.

# Bibliography and References

## Bibliography

Air Force Institute of Technology. Office of Research and consulting. *Style Guide For AFIT Theses and Dissertations*. Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH, June 1997.

Cost of Living Calculator, <http://www.homefair.com/homefair/cmr/salcalc.html>, 15 Aug 2003.

Department of Defense. *Clearance of DOD Information for Public Release*. DOD Directive 5230.9. [http://www.defenselink.mil/admin/dd5230\\_9.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/admin/dd5230_9.html). Washington: GPO, 9 April 1996.

SSG Marcia Triggs, "New Intranet Tool to Keep NCO-ERs On Time", Army News Service, 27 Jun 2003.

Vandana Sinha, "Army Automates Paper Records System", Government Computer News, 10 July 2003.

## Interviews

EREC DA Secretariat Interview, Mr. Bob Wagner, 7 Aug 2003.

EREC Data Call, Mr. Fred Ziegler and Staff, 14 Aug 2003.

EREC Enlisted Records Division (ERD) Interview, Mr. Tony Ecalavea, 7 Aug 2003.

EREC Information Support Activity (ISA) Interview, MAJ(P) Bobby Jarvis, 7 Aug 2003.

EREC Record Support Division (RSD) Interview, Ms. Sylvia Davis, 6 Aug 2003.

## Reports and Briefings

EREC Command Briefing, COL Reuben Jones, 6 Aug 2003.

EREC Command Briefing, Feb 2002.

EREC Command Briefing, 27 Sep 2000.

EREC Customer Service Center Report, Jul 2003.

EREC DIEMS Report, EREC, 1 Aug 2003.

EREC NCO Branch R&A Report, Nov-Dec 2000.

EREC Personnel Data Strategy Integration Report, 7 Nov 2001.

EREC, Request for Temporary Hiring Authority, submitted to TAPC, Feb 1997.

EREC Resource Management Office (RMO) Budget Update, 6 Aug 2003.

## Appendix A: List of Abbreviations

AER	Academic Efficiency Report
AGR	Active Guard/Reserve
AIT	Advanced Individual Training
AKO	Army Knowledge Online
ASBS	Army Selection Board System
ASK	Assignment Satisfaction Key
CY	Calendar Year
DA	Department of the Army
DAPMIS	Defense Automated Photograph Management System
DFAC	Dining Facility
DFR	Dropped From Roles
DIEMS	Date Initially Entered Military Service
DIMHRS	Defense Integrated Management Human Resources System
DoD	Department of Defense
DTIC	Defense Technical Information Center
eHR	Electronic Human Resources
EPMD	Officer Personnel Management Directorate
ERB/SCS	Enlisted Career Brief/Soldier Career Snapshot
ERD	Enlisted Records Division
EREC	Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center
F2F	Field to File
FY	Fiscal Year
ISA	Information Support Activity
IT	Information Technology
IVRS	Interactive Voice Response System
IWRS	Interactive Web Response System
JUMPS	Joint Uniform Military Pay System
MEPS	Military Entry Processing Station
MILPO	Military Personnel Office
NCOER	Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report
OMPF	Official Military Personnel File
OPMD	Officer Personnel Management Directorate
PERMS	Personnel Records Management System
PM	Project Manger
PSB	Personnel Support Battalion
PSC	Personnel Service Center
RMO	Resource Management Office
RSD	Records Services Division
TDRL	Temporary Disability Retired List
TDY	Temporary Duty
USMA	United States Military Academy

## Distribution List

This list indicates the complete mailing address of the individuals and organizations receiving copies of the report and the number of copies received. This list provides a permanent record of initial distribution.

NAME/AGENCY	ADDRESS	COPIES
Author	Department of Mathematical Sciences Thayer Hall West Point, NY 10996	2
Commander, US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center	US Army Enlisted Records and Evaluation Center 8899 East 56 <sup>th</sup> Street Indianapolis, IN 46249-5301	4
Dean, USMA	Office of the Dean Building 600 West Point, NY 10996	1
Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC)	ATTN: DTIC-O Defense Technical Information Center 8725 John J. Kingman Rd, Suite 0944 Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-6218	1
Department Head-Dept of Mathematical Sciences	Department of Mathematical Sciences Thayer Hall West Point, NY 10996	1
Mathematical Sciences Center of Excellence	Department of Mathematical Sciences Thayer Hall West Point, NY 10996	2
USMA Library	USMA Library Bldg 757 West Point, NY 10996	1