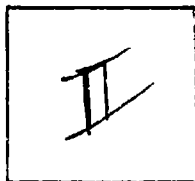


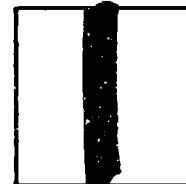
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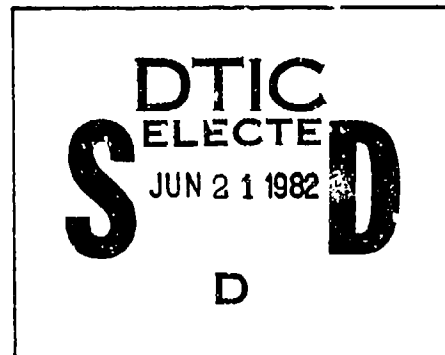
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Army Correctional Training Facility,
Fort Riley, KS

July 1971

LEADERSHIP AND SITUATIONAL FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL:

A Research Report

AD A951770

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

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COMMANDER'S BRIEF

TITLE: Leadership and Situational Factors Related to AWOL

PURPOSE: The Army AWOL Study developed from the recognized need to examine the recurring problem of AWOL. The study was submitted through OTPMG to DCSPER and subsequently became part of the DA Master Study Plan approved by the Study Advisory Committee of the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff.

The original study proposal, entitled "Factors Involved in Initial AWOL and AWOL Recidivism," was followed by a thorough review of the past research related to the problem of AWOL. The review concluded that the problem had been studied extensively and that such efforts, designed to "screen out" the AWOL offender had failed to prove satisfactory to the Army.

Prior research emphasized the need to examine situational and leadership factors related to AWOL. Within the framework of the original proposal, a revised Study proposal, emphasizing the need to study leadership and situational factors, was submitted and approved.

METHOD: The present Study involved selection and comparison of units with high AWOL rates against units with low AWOL rates, using personal interviews, questionnaires, and standardized attitude scales. Four major Army installations which contained a sample of combat, support and training units were selected as representative of activities throughout the Army.

GENERAL FINDINGS: The findings indicate significant differences between units with high AWOL rates when compared with low AWOL-rate units. These differences can be classified into three major categories: the individual soldier, the specific situation in which he functions, and the leadership under which he serves. The Study concludes that AWOL is the result of the interaction of these three primary factors. The findings provide a comprehensive picture of the AWOL problem and suggest a basis for the development of AWOL prevention programs. Significant findings have been translated into a leadership manual designed for use at the unit level.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. AWOL is a complex phenomena. The interactions between high and low AWOL units, and combat, support and training units indicate that leadership, individual and situation factors contribute to AWOL in different ways, in different situations.
2. There are no simple solutions to AWOL. It can be prevented; however, it will require a concerted effort by all levels of Army leadership.
3. A substantial body of knowledge already exists in the Army concerning the prevention of AWOL. What is lacking, in many situations, is only the appropriate implementation of proven techniques.
4. Active problem-solving intervention, concern for the welfare of unit personnel and a just and honest response to AWOL are critical to successful AWOL prevention programs.
5. The typical AWOL offender is a high school drop-out with a civilian history of arrests and convictions before he enlisted in the Army.
6. Men in low AWOL rate units feel their work is interesting and important, and they do it well.
7. Leaders who are effective in reducing AWOL are person-oriented, problem-solvers.
8. Personnel turbulence and the lack of meaningful work are the two main situational variables effecting AWOL.
9. Positive leadership is the key to low AWOL rates in combat units.
10. Meaningful work is essential in support units.
11. Firm discipline and an honest interest in the trainee characterize low AWOL training units.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommend this research study be accepted and approved.
2. Recommend the attached manual on AWOL, entitled The AWOL Soldier: A Challenge to Leadership, based on the findings of this study, be approved and published for Army-wide distribution to include company level.
3. Recommend communication of these research findings to all Army personnel, to make them better understand the problem of AWOL and approaches to its prevention. Recommend the following media be considered:
 - A. Training films
 - B. Posters
 - C. Circulars
 - D. Pamphlets
 - E. Leadership seminars
4. Recommend that all service schools, NCO academies, Drill Instructor schools, Reserve Officer Training courses, and Service Academies examine, as appropriate, the findings of this research for their possible use.
5. Recommend that problem-solving agencies (Judge Advocate General, Mental Hygiene, Personnel, Finance, Red Cross, Army Community Service, Army Emergency Relief, Inspector General, and Chaplain) be authorized and staffed to provide more comprehensive, effective, understanding and efficient service to soldiers in need of assistance.
6. Recommend more extensive and planned use of "problem-solving" facilities for the rehabilitation of initial and repeated AWOL offenders.
7. Recommend support for and development of more effective "problem-solving" services in Personnel Control Facilities and confinement facilities in order to maximize their ability to restore AWOL offenders to duty.
8. Recommend that where practical MOS and duty assignments be made on the basis of maximum individual potential and interest rather than on the basis of minimum qualifications.

9. Recommend that the uncertainty and stress associated with transfer to new duty stations be reduced by improving replacement processing procedures.
10. Recommend that the soldier's job satisfaction be developed through the unit commander's emphasis on the importance of each individual's task to the total unit mission.
11. Recommend that the Army adopt, as policy, a problem solving response to AWOL as opposed to the present punitive response.
12. Recommend that, in support units with diffuse structure (Headquarters and Administration Companies), responsibility for individual problem-solving be assigned to the staff section chiefs.
13. Recommend that existing efforts toward increasing positive programs designed to control drug abuse be encouraged as having beneficial effects on the problem of AWOL.
14. Recommend that the "role" of the Army leader be redefined by instruction and example to exchange the image of the aloof authoritarian for that of a sensitive, aware, and effective manager.
15. Recommend that the importance of communication be reemphasized to Army leaders with regard to the need of their men to have a clear understanding of policies, expectations, standards and the value of work they are required to do.
16. Recommend that consideration be given to the establishment of special personnel "problem-solving" units in BCT and AIT organizations.

FACT SHEET

PROFILE OF ANOL OFFENDERS

AGE	21 YEARS	(AVERAGE)
RACE	CAUCASIAN	(71%)
	NEGRO	(23%)
EDUCATION	10 YEARS	(AVERAGE)
	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	(32%)
	G.E.D.	(17%)
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	(56%)
	MARRIED	(36%)
CHILDREN	NONE	(59%)
	1	(23%)
	2	(12%)
RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE	PROTESTANT	(52%)
	CATHOLIC	(23%)
PARENTS' STATUS	BOTH LIVING	(76%)
	FATHER DECEASED	(17%)
	MOTHER DECEASED	(5%)
SIBLINGS	4	(AVERAGE)
	1-3	(40%)
	4-6	(36%)
	7 OR MORE	(21%)
PARENTS' MARITAL STATUS	MARRIED	(43%)
	SEPARATED	(11%)
	DIVORCED	(14%)
	REMARRIED	(10%)
	DEATHS	(21%)
FATHERS' WORK STATUS	WORKING	(75%)
	WELFARE	(2%)
LIVED WITH BOTH PARENTS UNTIL 16		(64%)

METHOD OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE . . .	ENLISTED	(59%)
	DRAFTED	(37%)
REASONS FOR ENTRY INTO SERVICE . . .	AVOID PROBLEMS	(32%)
	CURIOSITY	(27%)
	AVOID DRAFT	(26%)
	LEARN SKILLS	(21%)
TRAINING COMPLETED	AIT COMPLETED	(68%)
	SCT COMPLETED	(22%)
	NONE COMPLETED	(10%)
GOOD TIME IN SERVICE	20 MONTHS	(AVERAGE)
	0-6 MONTHS	(31%)
	7-12 MONTHS	(18%)
	1-2 YEARS	(24%)
	OVER 2 YEARS	(26%)
TIME REMAINING	2 YEARS	(AVERAGE)
HIGHEST RANK ATTAINED	E-1	(20%)
	E-2	(26%)
	E-3	(18%)
	E-4	(22%)
	E-5	(12%)
	E-6 OR ABOVE	(2%)
AWARDED MOS		(77%)
WORKED IN MOS (IF AWARDED)		(50%)
SATISFIED WITH MOS (IF AWARDED)		(47%)
REENLISTED IN THE SERVICE	ONCE	(17%)
	TWICE OR MORE	(2%)
CIVILIAN ARRESTS	ONCE	(26%)
	TWICE	(16%)
	3-7 TIMES	(38%)
	8 OR MORE	(18%)
CIVILIAN CONVICTIONS (ONE OR MORE)		(43%)
SERVED IN VIET NAM		(29%)

COURTS-MARTIAL	ONCE	(23%)
	TWICE	(10%)
	THREE OR MORE	(4%)
ARTICLES 15	ONE	(24%)
	TWO	(16%)
	THREE	(7%)
	FOUR OR MORE	(16%)
USE OR HAVE USED DRUGS		(62%)
AGE BEGAN DRUG USE	16	(AVERAGE)
YEARS DURATION OF DRUG USE . . .	FOUR OR MORE	(66%)
	THREE	(11%)
	TWO	(12%)
	ONE	(10%)
LENGTH OF LAST AWOL	4 MONTHS	(AVERAGE)
AWOL FROM VARIOUS ASSIGNMENTS . .	REGULAR UNIT	(68%)
	SPD (PCF)	(56%)
	AIT	(26%)
	BCT	(25%)

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LEADERSHIP AND SITUATIONAL
FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL:

A Research Report

LEADERSHIP AND SITUATIONAL FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL:

A Research Report

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July 1971

LEADERSHIP AND SITUATIONAL FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL

A Research Report

To understand the AWOL offender, the soldier who is absent from duty without authorization, the fundamental questions must be examined: Who is the AWOL offender? What are the major contributing factors to AWOL? What can be done to prevent AWOL? The present emphasis on the restoration of AWOL offenders, a philosophy of a corrective approach rather than a punitive one, and the Army's continuing desire to reduce the frequency of military deviance, encourage the examination of factors that have bearing upon the soldier's behavior and his adjustment in the military setting.

The impact of psychology and psychiatry has led to the examination of the personality of the AWOL soldier and has resulted in much creative thinking concerning the mechanisms soldiers employ in their efforts to adapt to the military way of life. In past years, the research trend has placed a distinct emphasis on personality and background factors, which were felt to be related to AWOL behavior. However, current researchers have emphasized the interaction between the soldier, leadership and the general military climate; the soldier influencing and in turn, being influenced by the environment in which he lives. Recently

investigations have been undertaken by military researchers probing the social and social psychological factors of military deviance.

In reviewing the research and the accumulation of knowledge and creative thought in the field of military corrections and military deviance it has become increasingly apparent that one can no longer focus only upon the individual soldier and his adaptation to the military. Attention must also be devoted to the response given the individual by military leadership.

It is not surprising that the majority of research programs dealing with AWOL offenders prefer to handle one factor in a myriad of possibilities. However, faced with the task of identifying and describing the salient factors related to AWOL behavior, anything short of considering the full range of social, individual and leadership factors would result in an incomplete picture.

It is the charge of past research, the directive of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, and the responsibility of The Office of The Provost Marshal General to seek solutions to the recurring problem of AWOL.

The Problem

In recent years, we have witnessed a significant increase in unauthorized absences in the United States Army. AWOL statistics emphasize the immensity of the problem. The monthly AWOL average for the Continental Army Command is an estimated 23 men per 1000, while the rate for all other commands is 4 men per 1000. Within the overseas commands the monthly rate for Hawaii is 12 per 1000 compared to 3 men per 1000 for all other overseas commands. With the beginning of the Vietnam build up, the AWOL/desertion rates began to increase in relationship to the high number of accessions into the Army. Recent statistics reveal a rapid increase in the number of AWOLs per one thousand personnel per month during each quarter from Fiscal Year 1966 to the present. For the Continental Army Command the overall trend indicates a tripling of AWOL rates.

AWOL STATISTICS: CONARC
(Based on CONARC Briefing 5 Mar 71)

Years	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
1st Quarter	8.6	11.8	13.5	15.7	19.1	25.6
2nd Quarter	7.0	9.5	11.2	15.3	15.4	28.3
3rd Quarter	8.4	12.6	15.6	19.6	24.1	
4th Quarter	9.4	12.4	15.5	16.7	25.3	
AVERAGE	8.3	11.6	13.9	16.8	20.9	26.9

AWOL represents a loss of manpower. A problem of this magnitude is obviously important and requires deliberate action when viewed from all levels of command. Not only do AWOL statistics reveal the loss of men from continuous duty status, but the subsequent requirement placed on military police, legal operations, personnel control facilities, stockades and the correctional training program increase significantly, resulting in a displacement of emphasis from the Army's primary mission. Eighty percent of all military justice actions taken are for the offense of AWOL.

The Army has, for some time, attempted to answer questions concerning the criteria for the screening of potential AWOL offenders from the Armed Forces. Various parameters have been used to describe characteristics of AWOL offenders, few of which seem to touch on those questions pertaining to the relationships among the individual soldier, the military setting and leadership. It is paradoxical that while leaders are expected to maintain control over AWOL in all types of units, and to influence the repeated AWOL offender, we, as yet, lack clarity regarding the salient factors contributing to AWOL and the leadership techniques with which to reduce the problem. Commanders, at all levels, indicate they desire to reduce the problem of AWOL in a systematic fashion, in accord with overall mission requirements and established principles of leadership.

The ability to identify significant factors related to AWOL behavior is extremely valuable. It has significance in the development of AWOL prevention programs based upon a fuller understanding of the AWOL offender, in combination with leadership factors and the military environment.

Review of Prior Research

Research in the area of military corrections, though having changed in emphasis several times since World War II, is on the increase. It has not only lead to a better understanding of the military deviant, but has aided in the development of individual treatment programs. Particularly important in this respect is the individual apprehended for an AWOL offense. These individuals constitute a significant majority of military offenders, thereby representing a significant manpower loss, particularly in times of conflict.

Research on the military offender has occurred in cycles, with greatest emphasis appearing in times of major conflicts. It is cyclical in that studies are often repeated, primarily due to the inability of other researchers to familiarize themselves with past technical and research reports published at individual installations.

Research studies concerning military deviancy, particularly AWOL, can be classified into two general headings.¹ The first area which generated significant research interest is that of individual factors related to AWOL. This research was particularly prevalent in the 40s, and Laird's study can be considered representative.² He presents details regarding an Air Force Officer whose psychiatric problems resulted in behavior which was dangerous to himself and others. Background information regarding the man's family problems, and his personal

life prior entering the service, were emphasized. Bromberg, Apuzzo and Locke pointed to what they termed "separation anxiety" and "anti-authoritarian attitudes" as common characteristics of Naval deserters,³ while Davis et al., in studying hospitalized Army soldiers, found that adult maladjustment and domestic problems were the main complaints of the AWOL soldier.⁴ Guttmacher and Stewart concluded from their studies that a high percentage of AWOL soldiers were "AWOLers," or AWOL-prone, before joining the military, and therefore stressed the need for a treatment based upon clinical diagnosis and judgment.⁵ Manson and Grayson in their study of individual AWOL soldiers' psychiatric interviews, state the "neuropsychiatric reasons predominated in the explanation for AWOL offenses."⁶ This underlying emphasis on individual factors specifically related to the AWOL, or AWOL-prone individual, lead to predictive studies. Recently, however, McCubbin and Fox concluded that prediction studies have been, and continue to be, relatively unfruitful, and suggest instead that emphasis be placed on preventive measures and techniques.⁷

The second area that has been studied in more recent years is that of situational factors related to AWOL.⁸ Representative of this research style is that of the "Wakoff Studies."⁹ These studies present a model for examining small groups, relating military deviance to personal variables, emotional variables and particularly different aspects of the environment.

From this overview, as well as a perusal of an in-depth review of research on military corrections presented by Fox et al., it becomes apparent that the individual factors which were first thought to be significant in attempting to predict those individuals who may become military deviants, as far back as the recruiter level, have proved to be quite unsatisfactory.¹⁰ Later studies, which focused particularly on the situational and sociological factors associated with the military deviant, also seem to leave gaps in understanding why certain individuals with certain profiles use AWOL as a solution to their problems, while like individuals do not. Hollander and Julian in reviewing leadership processes, suggest that research on task-oriented groups must attend more to the organizational frameworks within which these groups are embedded.¹¹ Fiedler's "contingency model," for example, predicts varying levels of effectiveness for different combinations of leader and situational characteristics.¹²

Current research, then, suggests that, in the determination of AWOL behavior, interactions may in fact exist between individual factors, situational factors, and particularly leadership factors. To this point, leadership factors in AWOL and AWOL recidivism have not been explored, nor have they been used in this interactional setting. This is an area which, while being conceptually relevant, is particularly in need of research at the present time.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

DESIGN:

The variable of primary interest in this Study is the rate of AWOL for a company-sized unit. Since AWOL rates do vary considerably, companies were dichotomized as either high or low AWOL rate units. AWOL rate was then considered as an independent variable, and it was hypothesized that questionnaire and interview responses would differ between high and low AWOL rate units. These differences could then be used to characterize the factors related to AWOL.

It was hypothesized that the factors related to AWOL would differ for different types of Army units. Since there are so many different types of units in terms of mission and function, it was decided to classify units as Combat, Support, and Training. This trichotomy was also considered to be an independent variable, resulting in a 2 X 3 factorial design. It should be pointed out, however, that the factorial design is not pure -- the possible effect of the installation is confounded with the type of unit since it was impossible to locate Combat, Support and Training units on the same post. It was also recognized that companies are highly idiosyncratic within the three classifications. To partly compensate for these two problems, units were considered as a third factor accounting for variance.

The resulting factorial design (2 X 3 X 4) provides information concerning the situational determinants of AWOL, but it was also desired to generalize the AWOL profile developed at the U.S. Army Correctional Training Facility,¹ and to explore the reasons AWOL personnel give for their behavior. In order to do this, soldiers in Personnel Control Facilities and in pre-trial confinement were also studied.

Data were obtained in the form of questionnaire and interview responses. As much as possible, parallel questions were asked of officers, NCOs, and enlisted men in order to obtain cross-references. The instruments themselves are described below:

INSTRUMENTATION:

Four questionnaires and two interview schedules were developed for this Study. Enlisted men completed a 331-item questionnaire (Annex I) measuring six areas of interest: personal background, perception of unit policy, evaluation of facilities and services, evaluation of the unit and unit leaders, social problems^{2,3} within the unit, and the incidence of AWOL in the unit. Thirty-two scales (Annex II) were developed from the 331 items.

The officer and NCO questionnaires (Annex I) contain similar policy questions and measures of leadership style. Items measuring attitudes toward leadership, AWOL, and the present unit were also included. Twenty-four scales (Annex II) were developed from the officer and NCO

questionnaires. The officer and NCO questionnaires were identical except for the addition of a 20-item personality scale in the Officer questionnaires. The Special Personnel Facility questionnaire (Annex I) was in a different format and consisted of 166 items investigating three major areas: background characteristics of AWOL offenders, perceived causes of AWOL and perceived factors affecting the AWOL offense leading to confinement.

Interviews were conducted using a standardized interview format (Annex I) consisting of three parts. The first topic was an open-ended question: "What do you think the Army could do to reduce the problem of AWOL?" Then specific probe questions were asked to obtain the subjects' evaluations of common proposals in terms of efficacy, practicality and desirability. In addition, officers were asked to assess the influence of higher command (Battalion, Brigade, etc.) on the handling of AWOL in their units. Finally, the higher commanders were interviewed (Annex G) and asked open-ended questions regarding the causes of AWOL and possible solutions to the problem.

The instruments were pre-tested at Fort Riley, Kansas, and modifications were made to increase the clarity and comprehensiveness of the instruments.

SAMPLING:

Sample selection was based on several criteria. Four major

installations were selected on the basis of their geographical diversity, because either combat or training units were stationed there, and because the posts were not under study at the time. At each installation, units were selected which had relatively high or low AWOL rates over the previous three months and which had not experienced a change of Commanding Officer or First Sergeant.

Twenty-four company-sized units which met these criteria were selected for the study.

TABLE: SAMPLE OF UNITS

TYPE OF UNIT INCLUDED	NUMBER OF PERSONNEL	AVERAGE AWOL RATES*
COMBAT UNITS:		
2 Infantry	OFF = 39	4 High AWOL Units:
2 Airborne Infantry		36 / 1000
2 Artillery	NCO = 149	
1 Cavalry		4 Low AWOL Units:
1 Engineer (Combat)	EM = 439	10 / 1000
SUPPORT UNITS:		
2 Supply & Transport	OFF = 35	4 High AWOL Units:
1 Aircraft Maintenance		71 / 1000
1 Military Police	NCO = 235	
1 Headquarters Command		4 Low AWOL Units:
1 Engineer (Construction)	EM = 716	11 / 1000
1 Data Processing		
1 Personnel Services		
TRAINING UNITS:		
4 BCT	OFF = 19	4 High AWOL Units:
2 Infantry AIT		89 / 1000
2 Combat Support Training	NCO = 51	
	EM = 1297	4 Low AWOL Units:
		27 / 1000
TOTAL	24	2980

*Based on AWOLs recorded on the unit Morning Report for a 60 day period.

PROCEDURE:

The research team administered the questionnaires to the designated units. A set of standardized instructions was provided and the research team answered questions and monitored responses during administration.**

A sample of men was drawn from the company roster for the purpose of personal interviews. The nature of the sample depended upon the size and composition of the unit, but it was designed to include all officers, a random sample of 50% of the NCOs and 20% of the enlisted personnel.

Following data collection, each questionnaire and interview schedule was coded by a member of the research team, and missing or multiple responses were indicated for special computer processing.

Similar procedures were followed with the Special Personnel Facility questionnaires although interviews were not conducted with Special Personnel Facility personnel.

**In the case of two support units, the questionnaires were administered by Brigade Officers.

DATA ANALYSIS

DATA ANALYSIS

QUESTIONNAIRES

Officer, NCO and Enlisted responses were individually analyzed, using the multivariate analysis of variance¹ applying a least squares solution to the existing unequal cell frequencies (Annex B).

ENLISTED DATA

Discriminating items (.05 level) were selected for further analysis. On this basis, 84 items were isolated. In order to identify the underlying dimension of the discriminating variables and to maximize the opportunity for obtaining statistical relationship among the variables, they were subjected to factor analysis. The aim of factor analysis is to find a set of independent dimensions with which one can describe, in the simplest manner possible, all possible relationships among the important variables.

The analysis was completed at the University of Wisconsin Computer Center, UNIVAC 1108 System. Ten factors, dealing with response to AWOL, were first extracted using the principal components technique. A normalized Varimax procedure was used to rotate these 10 factors to simple structure. The rotated factors accounted for 55.0% of the total variance (Annex D).

TABLE: RESPONSE TO AWOL

FACTORS	PERCENT OF VARIANCE ACCOUNTED FOR
I. Concern for the Individual	7.9
II. Limited Concern for the Individual	6.3
III. Response to Unauthorized Absence: Punishment	6.2
IV. Problem-Solving in Critical Situations: Grant Leave	6.1
V. Problem-Solving in Critical Situation: Refer for Verification	5.4
VI. Critical Situation (AWOL): Nonjudicial Punishment	5.3
VII. Problem Avoidance: Through Referral	5.0
VIII. Problem Solving: Direct Assistance	4.9
IX. Consistent Response to AWOL: Tolerant	4.0
X. AWOL: Prescribed Response	3.9

Discriminating "Leadership" items were then included in the Factor Analysis of the Significant Factors mentioned above. The purpose of this analysis was to identify possible relationship between leadership and response to AWOL situations. A total of 23 factors were extracted and rotated to simple structure. The rotated factors accounted for 60.7% of the variance (Annex D).

TABLE: LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSES

FACTORS	PERCENT OF VARIANCE ACCOUNTED FOR
I. Leader-Subordinate Interpersonal Relations	6.3
II. Perceived Helpfulness of Problem-Solving Agencies	4.1
III. Tactful Person-Oriented Leadership	4.0
IV. Response to AWOL: Favoritism	3.1
V. Promotion Policy: Bias	3.0
VI. Response to AWOL: Concern for Individual vs. Prescribed Response	2.9
VIII. Problem-Solving Leave Policy: Immediate Granting vs. Verification	2.8
IX. Response to Unauthorized Absence: Punishment	2.8
X. Leadership	2.7
XI. Job Satisfaction	2.5
XII. Limited Concern for the Individual	2.4
XIII. Disregard for Consequences of AWOL	2.4
XIV. Consistent Response to AWOL: Tolerance	2.3
XV. Problem Avoidance Through Referral	2.2
XVI. Critical Situation AWOL: Nonjudicial Punishment	2.2
XVII. Punishment for AWOL: Bias	2.2
XVIII. AWOL Prevention	2.0
XIX. Problem Solving: Direct Assistance	2.0
XX. Inconsistent AWOL Policy: Lack of Interest	2.0
XXI. Racial Problems	1.8
XXII. Personnel Turbulence: Non-MOS Related Work	1.7
XXIII. Exempt from AWOL: Bias	1.7
XXIV. Personal Evaluation: ISG	1.6

Due to limitations of the Factor Analysis Program, the remaining situational and individual items were not subjected to statistical analysis. Rather, the items were categorized into clusters having

face validity. The resulting 22 clusters with titles were included in further analyses (Annex D).

TABLE: CLUSTERS

TITLES

- I. Contributing Factors to AWOL
 - II. Indicators of AWOL-Prone Soldiers
 - III. Exceptions to AWOL Policy
 - IV. Individual AWOL and Nonjudicial Punishment
 - V. AWOL Policy Communication
 - VI. Attitude Towards AWOL
 - VII. Work Situation: Job Satisfaction
 - VIII. Physical Environment
 - IX. Social Situation
 - X. Recognition/Promotion
 - XI. Education
 - XII. Perceived Helpfulness of Helping Agencies
 - XIII. Evaluation of Unit
 - XIV. Unit Leadership
 - XV. Leadership: Integrity - Credibility
 - XVI. Problem Solving: Non Involvement
 - XVII. Communications with Leaders
 - XVIII. Leadership Scale: CO
 - XIX. Leadership: ISG
 - XX. Asocial Behavior: Attenuated
 - XXI. Race
 - XXII. Turbulence
-

NCO DATA

The significant NCO Leadership, Situational, Individual and "Response to AWOL" items were analyzed together using the previously

mentioned procedures. A total of 9 factors were extracted, which accounted for 56.0% of the total variance (Annex D).

TABLE: FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL

FACTORS	PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VARIANCE
I. Problem-Solving Agencies: Frequent Contacts	11.6
II. Job Satisfaction: Communications and Morale	7.4
III. Rejection of AWOL Offenders: Severe Response	7.1
IV. Response to Critical Situation: Policy Clarification	6.3
V. Reaction to AWOL Soldier: Negative Expectations	5.3
VI. Unofficial AWOL: Frequency of Contact	5.0
VII. Personnel Turbulence: Lenient Unit Policy	4.6
VIII. Daily Activities: Non-MOS	4.5
IX. AWOL Problem: Ineffective Chain of Command	4.2

OFFICER DATA

The factor analytic procedures were also applied to the analysis of officer responses. Analysis of significant Leadership, Situational, Individual, and "Response to AWOL" items resulted in the identification of 9 factors which accounted for 60.8% of the total variance (Annex D).

TABLE: FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL

FACTORS	PERCENT OF TOTAL VARIANCE
I. Attitude Towards Unit: Low Evaluation	10.4
II. Problem Solving: Limited Concern for the Individual	8.6
III. Problem Solving: Concern for the Individual	8.2
IV. Problem Solving Agencies: Frequent Contacts	6.9
V. Unofficial AWOL: Frequency of Contact	5.9
VI. Problem Solving Contacts: Limited Involvement	5.5
VII. Response to AWOL: Unofficial Punishment vs. Training and Assignment	5.4
VIII. Personnel Turbulence: High	5.2
IX. AWOL Indicator: Aggressive Behavior/ Lack of Discipline	4.7

INTERVIEW DATA

Responses to interview questions were analyzed using standard descriptive statistics in an attempt to determine the strength of recommendations to reduce AWOL. Consideration was given to overall recommendations about the problem; recommendations unique to officers, NCOs and enlisted personnel; recommendations unique to types of units (Combat, Support, and Training) as well as the type of recommendations offered by personnel in low as well as high AWOL units.

Command Interviews were given separate consideration. Responses provided by a total of 20 battalion and 10 brigade commanders, and 5 Commanding Generals in the command chain of the 24 units were examined

through the use of descriptive statistics. Specific evaluation was made of recommendations by all levels of command (Battalion, Brigade, Division, Installation, and Corps) as well as the overall recommendations by higher commanders.

PERSONNEL CONTROL FACILITIES

The second emphasis of the AWOL study was to examine Personnel Control Facilities, primarily to obtain a more comprehensive and valid profile of the AWOL offender. A sample of 507 soldiers in PCFs or in pre-trial confinement completed a "Special Personnel Facilities" inventory. Their responses were analyzed using basic descriptive statistics. Factor analytic procedures were used to determine the underlying factors associated with "reasons for going AWOL." A total of 4 factors were identified.

TABLE: REASONS FOR GOING AWOL

FACTOR	FACTOR LOADINGS
<u>I. Leadership</u>	
Ineffective Chain of Command	.8556
Lack of Experienced Leaders	.8400
Meaningless Work	.7759
Constant Rotation of Leaders	.7553
Reception Into Unit	.6273
<u>II. Adjustment</u>	
Can't Adjust to the Army	.7244
Drug Problem	.6424
Alcohol	.5171
Homesickness	.4813
Problems with Parents	.4305
<u>III. Married Family Problems</u>	
Marital Problems	.74
Financial Problems	.7
<u>IV. Job Problems</u>	
No Opportunity for Promotion	.79
Lack of Job Satisfaction	.3

Basic statistics were used to provide both a comprehensive picture of the AWOL offender and the factors associated with AWOL behavior.

FINDINGS

PROFILE OF THE AWOL OFFENDER

PROFILE OF AWOL OFFENDERS*

The purpose of this profile is to present salient characteristics of the AWOL soldier. The profile is not a set of characteristics applicable to all AWOL offenders, rather, it provides a generalized overview based on the statistical average of all offenders. An AWOL offender will not possess all of these characteristics, nor will all soldiers who match these characteristics go AWOL. The profile represents an overall picture, reflecting in general the characteristics of AWOL offenders.

Age: The average age is slightly over 21 years.
More than two-thirds of the men fall between 19 and 22 years of age.

Race: The majority of AWOL offenders are white (71%). Negroes account for slightly over 23%, while other races make up the remaining 6%.

Education: The average offender quit school after completing the 10th grade. One-half of these men have no diploma of any kind. Almost one-third (32%) have a high-school diploma while another 17% completed the G.E.D. Only 1% have a college degree.

Marital Status: The majority of these men (56%) are still single. Slightly over one-third (36%) are married. Less than 3% are separated while another 5% are divorced.

Children: Most AWOL offenders (59%) have no children. Less than one-fourth (23%) have one child, 12% have two children and another 6% have three or more children.

Religion: The majority of these individuals express some religious preference. Over one-half (52%) are Protestant, 23% Catholic, and 11% are Jewish. Almost 14% claim no religious preference.

*See Annex A

Parent's Status: Over three-fourths (76%) of these men have both parents living. Only 5% of their mothers have died, while 17% of the fathers are deceased. Only 2% have both parents deceased.

Brothers and/or Sisters: Almost all AWOL offenders (97%) have at least one brother or sister. The average is four siblings. A total of 40% have from one to three siblings, 36% have from four to six siblings, and 21% of the men have seven or more brothers and/or sisters.

Parent's Marriage: Less than half (43%) of the parents of AWOL offenders are still married and living together. Over one-fifth (21%) of the families have one or both parents deceased. Over one-third (36%) of the parents have either separated, divorced or remarried.

Father's Work Status: Three-fourths of the fathers (75%) are still working. Only 2% are on welfare.

Lived With Parents Until 16: Over a third (36%) of the AWOL offenders did not live with both parents until 16 years of age.

Method of Entry Into Service: The majority of these individuals (59%) volunteered for the service. Less than 37% were drafted, while 4% entered through various other channels.

Reasons For Entry Into Service: For those men who enlisted in the service, nearly one-third (32%) indicated they did so in order to "get away from problems." Over one-fourth (27%) indicated some curiosity to "see what the Army was like," while 26% admitted the knowledge that "the draft would get me" was an important factor. One-fifth (21%) indicated that their desire to "learn a skill" was important in encouraging them to join the service, while 17% indicated they "had nothing else to do." Almost 15% of these men indicated they were "forced by a Judge" to join the Army, while another 9% agreed with the statement that they "had always wanted to be a soldier."

Training Completed: The majority of AWOL offenders (68%) have completed AIT. Slightly more than one-fifth (22%) have completed only basic training, while 10% have completed no military training.

Time In Service: The average AMOL offender has 20 months' "good time" in the service. The second largest single group (31%) have 0-6 months, another 18% have 7-12 months, 24% have 1-2 years and 26% have over 2 years good time.

Time Remaining In Service: On the average, AMOL offenders have two full years remaining on their service obligation. Over 16% have up to 6 months remaining, 34% have from 7-12 months to serve, and 35% must serve an additional 1-2 years. Slightly over 31% have more than two years remaining.

Highest Rank Held: One-fifth of the AMOL offenders (20%) were never promoted beyond the rank of E-1. More than one-fourth (25%) held the rank of E-2, 18% were promoted to E-3, and 22% attained the rank of E-4. Promotion to E-5 was made for 12% of these men, while less than 2% attain the rank of E-6 or above.

Re-enlistments: While the majority of these individuals (81%) have never reenlisted in the service, 17% indicate they reenlisted once, and over 2% reenlisted twice or more.

MOS: The majority (77%) of AMOL offenders were awarded an MOS at some time in their tours of duty. Only 23% have no MOS.

Worked in MOS: For those men who were MOS-qualified, exactly one-half (50%) were working in their MOS at their last duty station.

MOS Satisfaction: For those men who were MOS-qualified, a slight majority (53%) indicated they were not satisfied with their MOS.

Viet Nam Service: Over one-fourth of the AMOL offenders (29%) have served in Viet Nam. The average length of their tours was slightly over 12 months.

Civilian Arrests: The majority of AMOL offenders (62%) indicated they were arrested at least once in civilian life. For these men, 26% had a single arrest on their record, 16% were arrested twice, 33% were arrested 3-7 times and 18% indicated more than seven civilian arrests.

Civilian Convictions: A large percentage (43%) of AMOL offenders have civilian convictions on their records. For these men, 39% have one conviction, 27% have two, another 27% have 3-7 convictions, and 7% have been convicted more than seven times.

Courts-Martial: The majority of the AWOL offenders (63%) have yet to receive a court-martial. For those men who have been convicted by a military court, 63% have a single court-martial, 25% have received two convictions, and 12% indicate three or more convictions.

Articles 15: The majority (63%) of AWOL personnel have received at least one Article 15. The average for all AWOL personnel is about two per man.

Drug Use: A majority of AWOL offenders (62%) state they either presently use or have used drugs.

Age of First Drug Use: On the average, AWOL personnel began drug use at the age of 16. The majority (86%) began using drugs between the ages of 13 and 20.

Years of Drug Use: Most of the individuals indicating drug use had a long drug use history. Although all persons may not have used drugs during the entire period, and some persons may have terminated drug use, the average length of time since initial drug use was over four years.

Length of AWOL: The average duration of absence was slightly more than four months. A total of 15% were gone less than a month, 12% were gone 1-2 months, 13% were gone 2-3 months, 23% were absent 3-6 months and 25% were AWOL from six months to a year. Almost 12% were absent for over a year.

Number of AWOL Violations From Different Assignments: The greatest number of individuals (66%) went AWOL (at least once) from their regular unit. However, a majority of offenders (56%) went AWOL from a Personnel Control Facility. Over one-fourth of these men 25% went AWOL from AIT, while 25% went AWOL from BCT. (Note that many men were AWOL from several of these.)

Contributing Factors to AWOL: AWOL offenders point out two significant factors which they indicate had an influence upon their subsequent military offense. One--leadership--includes an ineffective chain of command, lack of experienced leaders, and the reception they themselves received in the unit. The second factor is characteristic of AWOL personnel themselves. It includes an inability to adjust to the Army, problems with drugs and alcohol, homesickness, and problems with their parents.

Consequences of AWOL in Civilian Life: A majority of AWOL personnel (65%) strongly disagree with the suggestion that it would be "hard to get a job after a court-martial." Most of these men also felt that a "Bad Conduct Discharge would not cause problems (for me) in civilian life."

Reasons Which Discourage Others From Going AWOL: In evaluating reasons which might discourage other men from going AWOL, the offender population felt that only the desire for an Honorable Discharge might have any significant effect. Even this factor, however, was not perceived as particularly important.

FACT SHEET
PROFILE OF AWOL OFFENDERS

AGE	21 YEARS	(AVERAGE)
RACE	CAUCASIAN	(71%)
	NEGRO	(23%)
EDUCATION	10 YEARS	(AVERAGE)
	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	(32%)
	G.E.D.	(17%)
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	(56%)
	MARRIED	(36%)
CHILDREN	NONE	(59%)
	1	(23%)
	2	(12%)
RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE	PROTESTANT	(52%)
	CATHOLIC	(23%)
PARENTS' STATUS	BOTH LIVING	(76%)
	FATHER DECEASED	(17%)
	MOTHER DECEASED	(5%)
SIBLINGS	4	(AVERAGE)
	1-3	(40%)
	4-6	(36%)
	7 OR MORE	(21%)
PARENTS' MARITAL STATUS	MARRIED	(43%)
	SEPARATED	(11%)
	DIVORCED	(14%)
	RE-MARRIED	(10%)
	DEATHS	(21%)
FATHERS' WORK STATUS	WORKING	(75%)
	WELFARE	(2%)
LIVED WITH BOTH PARENTS UNTIL 16		(64%)

METHOD OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE . . .	ENLISTED	(59%)
	DRAFTED	(37%)
REASONS FOR ENTRY INTO SERVICE . . .	AVOID PROBLEMS	(32%)
	CURIOSITY	(27%)
	AVOID DRAFT	(26%)
	LEARN SKILLS	(21%)
TRAINING COMPLETED	AIT COMPLETED	(68%)
	BCT COMPLETED	(22%)
	NONE COMPLETED	(10%)
GOOD TIME IN SERVICE	20 MONTHS	(AVERAGE)
	0-6 MONTHS	(31%)
	7-12 MONTHS	(18%)
	1-2 YEARS	(24%)
	OVER 2 YEARS	(26%)
TIME REMAINING	2 YEARS	(AVERAGE)
HIGHEST RANK ATTAINED	E-1	(20%)
	E-2	(26%)
	E-3	(18%)
	E-4	(22%)
	E-5	(12%)
	E-6 OR ABOVE	(2%)
AWARDED MOS		(77%)
WORKED IN MOS (IF AWARDED)		(50%)
SATISFIED WITH MOS (IF AWARDED)		(47%)
REENLISTED IN THE SERVICE	ONCE	(17%)
	TWICE OR MORE	(2%)
CIVILIAN ARRESTS	ONCE	(25%)
	TWICE	(16%)
	3-7 TIMES	(38%)
	8 OR MORE	(18%)
CIVILIAN CONVICTIONS (ONE OR MORE)		(43%)
SERVED IN VIET NAM		(29%)

COURTS-MARTIAL	ONCE	(23%)
	TWICE	(10%)
	THREE OR MORE	(4%)
ARTICLES 15	ONE	(24%)
	TWO	(16%)
	THREE	(7%)
	FOUR OR MORE	(16%)
USE OR HAVE USED DRUGS		(62%)
AGE BEGAN DRUG USE	16	(AVERAGE)
YEARS DURATION OF DRUG USE . .	FOUR OR MORE	(66%)
	THREE	(11%)
	TWO	(12%)
	ONE	(10%)
LENGTH OF LAST AWOL	4 MONTHS	(AVERAGE)
AWOL FROM VARIOUS ASSIGNMENTS . .	REGULAR UNIT	(68%)
	SPD (PCF)	(56%)
	AIT	(26%)
	BCT	(25%)

SITUATIONAL FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL

SITUATIONAL FACTORS*

HELPPFULNESS OF PROBLEM-SOLVING AGENCIES:

The direct assistance of problem-solving agencies is significant in units with minimal AWOL problems. Men in low AWOL units perceive the Judge Advocate General, Mental Hygiene Consultation Service, Personnel, and the Inspector General as being more helpful than men in high AWOL units.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTION:

Clearly defined, fair promotion policies are related to low AWOL. Promotion policies which are well understood, unbiased, and which make promotions realistically attainable are effective. Promotion policy should be closely related to individual performance and fully understood by the soldier.

UNIT MORALE:

Low AWOL rate unit personnel state there is higher morale. Officers in these units have a better overall impression of their unit. These units are characterized as having better communication with leaders, both in regard to job information and personal problems. The officers have a higher opinion of the soldiers; they feel the enlisted men perform at a higher level when compared to perception of enlisted personnel by officers in high AWOL rate units.

*See Annexes D and E.

PERSONNEL TURBULENCE:

Stability of personnel, whether leaders or enlisted men, is a factor related to decreased AWOL. Stability reduces the changes to which the soldier must adapt, maximizes the possibility of leader-men communication, unit development, and the potential of unit cohesiveness.

SOCIAL SITUATION:

Units with minimal AWOL problems are characterized by less conflict between races. These units also experience less drug use, especially of opiates and barbiturates.

WORK SITUATION:

Adequate staffing to perform a mission, and access to necessary equipment characterize low AWOL rate units. Also significant are the presence of men who are satisfied with their jobs, who perform their jobs better, and who are not required to participate in meaningless work details. They feel their jobs are important to the unit mission and to the Army.

RECREATIONAL SITUATION:

Units with low AWOL rates are characterized by greater availability of sports facilities and a greater opportunity for peace and quiet.

PEER INFLUENCE:

Men in units without serious AWOL problems receive less encouragement to go AWOL from others within their unit.

LEADERSHIP FACTORS RELATED TO ANOL

LEADERSHIP FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL*

COMMUNICATION:

Pertinent to reducing AWOL is effective communication of officers, NCOs and enlisted personnel. Effective units have open door policies, with leaders who listen to what their men have to say, and are tactful, clear and fair in stating their own position. They assure that the chain of command remains open, making NCOs, and particularly officers, readily accessible to enlisted personnel. This is particularly relevant in such areas as family and personal problems, and job satisfaction.

LEADER / SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIP:

Effective leaders demonstrate a basic respect for the dignity and self-esteem of his subordinates, always treating them "as a man." His relationships are just, but fair, with the ever present awareness of the dignity of the individual with whom he is interacting.

AWARENESS:

Effective leaders demonstrate concern for problems experienced by the men in their command, as well as those problems facing the unit. He is, therefore, not only interested in the individual, but in the cohesiveness of his unit. He is also concerned with the military mission of his particular unit.

*See Annexes D and E

CREDIBILITY:

Leaders that are effective in reducing AWOL are characterized as trustworthy, reliable and consistent in their dealings with subordinates.

ATTITUDE:

A leader's attitude is very important. He believes he can influence the potential AWOL soldier. His attitude must reflect his respect for the individual, even though he has a problem and may need help. A positive attitude becomes particularly relevant at this time in that the subordinate must not feel the leader is looking down at him, or lose respect for himself because he is experiencing some problem.

EXPERIENCED LEADERS:

Experience is a key factor possessed by leaders who are able to deal effectively with AWOL. These leaders, through maturity and sensitivity, have learned to administer rewards effectively and to structure situational factors so that alternatives to AWOL are always present.

DEMONSTRATED CONCERN:

Leaders seen as showing concern for their subordinates are characterized as just, good, decisive and enthusiastic, and are responsive to suggestions made by their men. In particular, the unit CO and ISG

are seen as the most effective problem solvers in the unit. Their concern is reflected in their perception of the individual's own self-worth, dignity and integrity. The subordinate is indeed treated like a man."

ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESSES:

Referrals of soldiers with personal problems to problem solving agencies is most effective when the leader takes an active part in the referral process. The leader is responsive to the problems faced by his subordinate, and is willing to become actively involved by dealing with the problems himself, or personally making contact with an appropriate helping agency. The emphasis here is on the leader's awareness that a problem exists in the eyes of the subordinate, and a willingness to become actively involved in attempting a solution.

UNIT LEADERSHIP:

The overall leadership elements of a unit effective in reducing AMOL are characterized as just, good and decisive. These characteristics are most often attributed to the CO and ISG of these units. While these two individuals are seen as highly responsible for the problem solving aspects of the unit, the ability of all members to function as a united team is very important.

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL*

JOB SATISFACTION:

Higher job satisfaction was characteristic of individuals who are working in their MOS, interested in their work, and who perceive themselves as fulfilling an important function within the unit. These individuals are less likely to go AWOL. Individuals not working in their MOS, or who find themselves placed on meaningless details, are dissatisfied and more likely to resort to AWOL behavior. Individual job satisfaction is a significant characteristic of units with minimal AWOL problems. Satisfaction is derived by individuals working in their MOS, interested in their work, and who perceive themselves as serving an important function in their unit.

MISSION ORIENTATION.

The importance of the unit mission is a factor seldom debated by commanders, however, the perceived importance of the unit mission, and how it related to that of the total Army mission take on special significance when related to AWOL. In low AWOL situations men perceive their unit mission as being very important.

ATTITUDE TOWARD CONSEQUENCES OF AWOL:

Many individuals go AWOL because of an inaccurate view of consequences. They believe that a bad conduct discharge will not cause

*See Annexes D and E.

them any problems in civilian life, that those who go AWOL usually don't get caught, and that having been court-martialed does not hinder their chances of getting a good job.

EXPERIENCE WITH PUNISHMENT:

Units experiencing AWOL problems are further characterized by personnel who have received a greater number of courts-martial and Articles 15 since entering the Army.

RECOGNITION:

Recognition through promotion has an important influence on morale and performance, and is significant in reducing AWOL. The importance of recognition is even more significant for personnel with greater time in grade. Promotion policies should emphasize equality and fairness.

INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS:

Individual performance, which includes AWOL, is influenced by both alcohol and drugs. While the extent of drug abuse and alcohol use cannot be fully determined they are significantly related to AWOL.

RESPONSES TO AWOL

RESPONSES TO AWOL*

ORIENTATION

COMMUNICATION:

In preventing AWOL, an effective chain of command is important. Without this line of communication the EM feels his problems are all his own, that he must solve them in his own way rather than request assistance.

CONSIDERATION FOR THE INDIVIDUAL:

Effective leaders in low AWOL situations are concerned with the men in their unit and with their problems. Their concern encompasses not only the AWOL rates but, more important, the individuals who make up those statistics.

BIAS REGARDING AWOL:

Individuals in selected categories, to include rank and position, can be absent for short periods of time without being declared AWOL. This presents a significant morale problem for other men in the unit, and may encourage others to go AWOL.

REPLY

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AWOL OFFENDERS:

There is a greater tendency for leaders to punish men for AWOL

*See Annexes D and E

who are suspected of committing other offenses even though their involvement in these situations may remain questionable.

AWOL POLICY:

AWOL policies vary between units, some being extremely lenient, others providing rather harsh punishment. Instead, a well understood AWOL policy, fairly administered, and responsive to existing situations, is essential to AWOL reduction.

PUNISHMENT:

Punishment is not seen as a significant deterrent to AWOL. Instead, a prevention-directed program, characterized by concern for the individual, is seen as an effective approach.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

FLUCTUATION OF APPROACHES:

Numerous approaches have and are being attempted to solve the problem of AWOL. These vary from not reporting an absentee soldier to a court-martial for the apprehended offender. The most significant variable, however, is the leader's willingness to become personally involved in the case, and his attempt to treat each case in light of all possible extenuating factors.

ACTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING:

The positive aspects of AWOL prevention are problem-solving and personal involvement. The important distinction is the leader's willingness to actively work with the individual who is experiencing the problem, and the fact that he demonstrates a willingness to help.

INTERACTION

RELATIONSHIP OF TYPE OF UNIT

(COMBAT, SUPPORT, TRAINING)

TO AWOL

INTERACTION ANALYSIS

FINDINGS*

The significant interactions in the officer, NCO, and enlisted data indicate the following relationships exist between different types of units.

Combat Units. Low AWOL rate combat units in comparison to support are more concerned about AWOL and have more problem-solving, flexible policies concerning leaves and AWOLs. Leaders make more frequent referrals to various assistance agencies, are more concerned about their men and more often try to help them solve their problems. The unit mission is more often made meaningful by command emphasis on its importance.

Support Units. Young, well educated leaders and men who are relatively new to the service and doing inherently meaningful work are found in low AWOL support units.

Training Units. Low AWOL training units are concerned about AWOL and have very strict policies about AWOL and the granting of leaves. Experienced career NCOs and person-oriented leadership are found in low AWOL training units.

*See Annex E

INTERACTION ANALYSIS

FINDINGS

TABLE: RELATIONSHIP OF AWOL FACTORS TO TYPE OF UNITS

FACTORS RELATED TO AWOL	IMPORTANT AND RELATED TO AWOL REDUCTION	IMPORTANT BUT NOT RELATED TO AWOL REDUCTION	IMPORTANT BUT INVERSELY RELATED TO AWOL REDUCTION
LEADERSHIP			
Referrals to Helping Agencies	Combat	Training	Support
Problem-Solving Leave Policy	Combat	Support	Training
Problem-Solving AWOL Policy	Combat	Support	Training
Concern About AWOL	Combat Training		Support
Problem-Solving	Combat	Training	Support
Person-Oriented Leadership	Training	Combat Support	
SITUATION			
Unit Problems		Training	Combat Support
Command Emphasis on Importance of Mission	Combat	Training	Support
Meaningful Work	Support	Combat Training	
PERSONNEL			
Young, Well-Educated Officers	Support	Training	Combat
Career NCO	Training		Combat Support
Well-Educated Enlisted Men, New to the Service	Support	Training	Combat

UNIT INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES*

GENERAL:

Recommendations for reducing AWOL centered around treatment of the soldier as an individual. Personal attention was cited most frequently as a method of reducing AWOL. Other popular recommendations were: reduction of harassment, more lenient leave and pass policy, providing more meaningful work, and improved leadership.

Evaluations of recommendations to reduce AWOL, irrespective of the nature of unit or individual making the recommendation, were: "special rehabilitation programs for those who need it would reduce repeated AWOL," and "improving the quality of unit leadership would reduce AWOL." These recommendations were also seen as being good ideas and as practical. Likewise, the recommendations "an all-Volunteer Army would reduce AWOL" and "higher pay would reduce AWOL" were responded to frequently, were seen as practical, and thought to be good ideas.

While the recommendations "giving a less than honorable discharge to anyone who wants one would reduce AWOL" and "more severe punishment would reduce AWOL" were cited as important in reducing AWOL, respondents emphasized that such approaches were not thought to be a good idea nor were they seen as being practical.

*See Annex F

HIGH VS LOW AWOL UNITS

The most frequently cited recommendation by both high and low AWOL units for reducing AWOL was an emphasis upon the individual, his problems, and their solutions. High AWOL rate units recommended more severe punishment as a method of reducing AWOL, whereas low AWOL rate units indicated that more severe punishment was not a good idea and would not reduce AWOL.

COMBAT VS SUPPORT VS TRAINING UNITS

The most frequently cited recommendation by these units was, again, the placing of emphasis on the individual. Combat units stated that stopping the war would not reduce AWOL, whereas Training units indicated that stopping the war would reduce AWOL. Significant recommendations made by Combat units for reducing AWOL included a reduction of harassment and more meaningful work assignments. The most significant Support unit recommendation was that more severe punishment would reduce AWOL.

OFFICER VS NCO VS EM

The most frequently cited recommendation by all groups was again the placing of emphasis on the individual. NCOs stated that punishment would reduce AWOL, whereas EM indicated that more severe punishment would not reduce AWOL. EM also indicated that ending the draft

was a good idea, practical, and would reduce AWOL. Officer recommendations focused on personal attention to the individual; NCOs on more severe punishment as a method of AWOL reduction; and EM on the reduction of harassment.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCING AWOL

RECOMMENDATIONS	PERCENT
Personal Attention	43.8
Lenient Pass and Leave Policy	30.8
Reduce Harassment	28.5
Improve Leadership	25.4
Meaningful Work	18.5
Discharge/Screening	14.7
Improve Facilities	12.8
More Severe Punishment	11.7
Reduce Personnel Turbulence	10.3
Increase Pay	9.5
Lenient AWOL Policy	7.4
VOLAR	7.1
Recognition	6.7
Nothing	5.9
Don't Know	5.2
Reduce Racism	4.8
Reduce Social Problems	2.7
Special Rehabilitation Programs	2.2
AWOL No Crime (Absenteeism)	1.5
End Draft	1.3
Stop War	0.9

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

GENERAL EVALUATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCING AKOL

RECOMMENDATIONS	"REDUCE AKOL" (%)	"NOT REDUCE AKOL" (%)	"PRACTICAL" (%)	"NOT PRACTICAL" (%)	"GOOD IDEA" (%)	"NOT GOOD IDEA" (%)
Special rehabilitation program for those who need it.	79.9	20.1	81.7	18.3	84.9	15.1
Improving the quality of unit leadership.	79.5	20.5	91.0	9.0	95.7	4.3
All-Volunteer Army.	74.9	25.1	68.2	31.8	80.8	19.2
Giving a less-than-honorable discharge to anyone who wants one.	60.9	39.1	35.2	64.8	39.7	60.3
Higher pay.	59.9	40.1	90.0	10.0	96.1	3.9
Ending the draft.	52.8	47.2	40.3	59.7	64.0	36.0
Stopping the Vietnam conflict.	41.3	58.7	61.5	38.5	78.5	21.5
More severe punishment.	33.3	66.7	38.9	61.1	37.0	63.0

COMMAND INTERVIEWS

HIGHER COMMAND INTERVIEWS *

Higher commanders were asked to respond to the following question:
"Sir, based on your total experience at all levels of command, what would you say are the major causes or contributing factors to AWOL?"

CAUSES OF AWOL: FINDINGS

The higher commanders listed individual factors most frequently as a cause of AWOL. Poor unit leadership, excessive rotation of personnel and leaders, poor relations between leaders and their enlisted men, and lack of recognition were frequently listed as causes of AWOL.

The following table lists the Higher Command responses comprising the most frequently mentioned causes of AWOL.

* See Annex C

HIGHER COMMAND INTERVIEWS

TABLE: COMPOSITION OF MOST FREQUENTLY MENTIONED CAUSES OF AWOL

CATEGORY	COMPOSITION
Individual Causes	Poor Attitude Inappropriate Values Immaturity Go AWOL to Get Out of Army GO AWOL to Get Transfer Personal Problems Background Factors Faulty Problem Solving
Unit Leadership	Inappropriate Standards Lack of Discipline Other Leadership Problems Poor Quality Leadership Leadership Style Lack of Consistency Lack of Responsibility Management/Organizational Problems Poor Leader Motivation General Comments
Rotation of Leaders and Personnel Turbulence	Turbulence Transfers, etc. Personnel Shortages
Leader/Subordinate Relationships	Limited Access to Leaders Poor Reception by Leaders Lack of Demonstrated Concern Lack of Effective Help
Recognition	Lack of Recognition and Promotion Lack of Incentives

WHAT HIGHER COMMANDERS CAN DO TO REDUCE AWOL:

Higher commanders were asked to respond to the following question:
"What can Brigade and Higher Commanders do to reduce AWOL?"

WHAT HIGHER COMMAND CAN DO: FINDINGS

The most frequent suggestions of things higher commanders could do to reduce AWOL were to improve unit leadership, increase communication, and improve AWOL policies.

The following table lists the individual responses comprising the most frequently mentioned recommendations.

HIGHER COMMAND INTERVIEWS

TABLE: WHAT HIGHER COMMANDERS CAN DO TO REDUCE AWOL

CATEGORY	COMPOSITION
Unit Leadership	Improve: Appropriateness of Standards Discipline Other Leadership Problems Acceptance of Change Quality of Leadership Leadership Style Consistency Responsibility Management/Organization Leader Motivation General Comments
Communication	Communication with Men
AWOL Policy	Policy Consistency

FACTORS TO REDUCE AWOL AT THE UNIT LEVEL:

Higher commanders were asked to respond to the following question:
"Sir, based on your total experience, what can Battalion and Lower
Commanders do to reduce AWOL in their units?"

WHAT UNIT COMMANDERS CAN DO: FINDINGS

Most higher commanders felt that improved leader-subordinate relations would reduce AWOL. They also felt that AWOL could be reduced by unit leaders improving their problem-solving approach to AWOL, and demonstrating their awareness and concern.

In general, higher commanders felt that both personal and leadership factors were related to AWOL. They emphasized improved leadership policies to reduce AWOL.

The following table lists the individual responses comprising the most frequently mentioned recommendation.

HIGHER COMMAND INTERVIEWS

TABLE: FACTORS TO REDUCE AWOL AT UNIT LEVEL

CATEGORY	COMPOSITION
Leader/Subordinate Relationship	Improve: Access to Leaders Reception and Listen to Problems Demonstrated Concern Effective Help
Problem-Solving Approach to AWOL	Demonstrated Concern Effective Help Emphasize Prevention
Awareness	Knowledge of Men Recognition of Problems
Demonstrated Concern	Demonstrated Concern

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study confirm the basic assumptions upon which it was based: AWOL behavior can better be understood in terms of the interaction of individual, situational and leadership variables than in terms of any of these variables taken alone.

While these variables do, in fact, interact in both the causation and prevention of AWOL, significant over-all conclusions may also be drawn. One of the most interesting results of this study is that the Army already knows a great deal about the prevention of AWOL. What is lacking in many problem situations is only the appropriate implementation.

The results of the study validate the profile of the AWOL offender developed at the Correctional Training Facility in all major respects. Some characteristics of the AWOL offender have been found so consistently in this and prior research that they may be considered facts.

The typical AWOL offenders is a high school drop out and has a history of civilian arrests and convictions and who enlisted in the Army, usually to avoid problems.

The unfortunate fact remains, however, that these variables are not strong enough to permit efficient predictions of AWOL. Each man's experiences in the military can drastically affect the probability of AWOL, both positively and negatively.

Individuals in low AWOL rate units have had considerably more positive experiences in the Army. They are most often working in their MOS and interested in their work. Their work is important to their unit and to the Army, and the quality of their work has been recognized and rewarded with promotions. They have had fewer problems in the Army and have had less experience with punishment in the form of courts-martial or Articles 15.

Leaders who are effective in reducing AWOL are not the stereotyped, rigid authoritarian. Rather, effective leaders are aware of and concerned about their men's problems. These leaders are well liked by their men and go out of their way to foster informal communication. Effective leaders are not content with making referrals to assistance agencies or with giving advice to the troubled soldier; they take an active, cooperative part in the problem-solving process. Their response to AWOL is to intervene BEFORE the violation occurs and to treat those AWOLs which do occur with justice tempered with understanding.

Two situational variables stand out in the understanding of AWOL. Personnel turbulence, the constant rotation of leaders and men, can obviate all efforts at AWOL prevention. It takes time for a leader to lead or help his men, and it takes time for a man to develop trust and confidence in his leaders. Too often, that time is not available.

The second major situational variable is meaningful work. Meaningful work is interesting, challenging and rewarding. Most soldiers want to do their job, but when there is no work to do or when their time is filled with seemingly meaningless details, disillusion sets in and the unit is headed for trouble.

Even in these respects, however, AWOL is a complex phenomena. The interactions between high and low AWOL units, and combat, support and training units indicate that leadership, individual and situational factors contribute to AWOL in different ways in different situations.

In combat units, the Army standard of good leadership applies. Good communication between the leaders and the men, concern about AWOL and about the men's problems, and a devoted effort to help the men with their problems are the keys to low AWOL combat units.

In support units, however, good leadership is not enough. Support units are often very good units where AWOL is not even a problem and leaders concentrate on the unit mission, but other support units have severe problems, many of which are beyond the leaders' control. Multiple missions and diffuse structure characterize many support units. The key to low AWOL in support units is meaningful work that the men are trained for and interested in. In the absence of meaningful work, leave policy, open door policies, referrals to social service agencies and the like are only palliative measures and not very effective at that.

In training units, AWOL shows yet another aspect. Training is at time of transistion and stress. Firm discipline and strict policies are appropriate there. Many of the factors that influence AWOL are relatively unimportant in training units because of the constraints and structure inherent in a training situation, but experienced leadership, especially among the career NCOs, and an honest interest in the individual trainee are essential here. The image of the "Old Army" sergeant with the "heart of gold" is far from inappropriate in a training unit.

FOOTNOTES

FOOTNOTES

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