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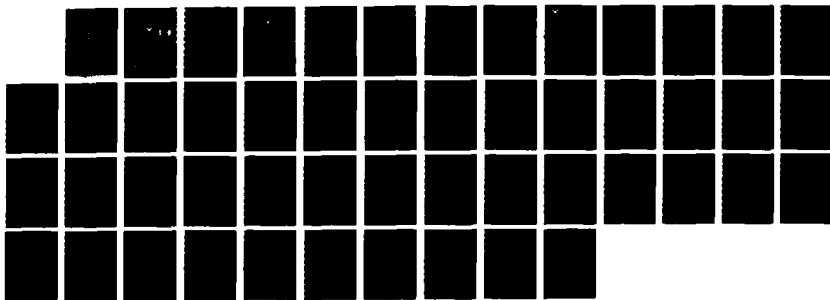
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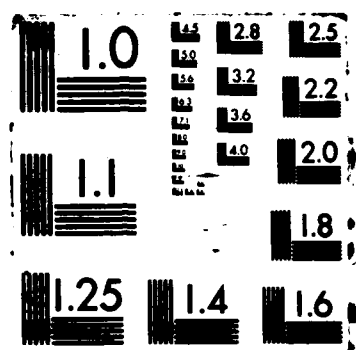
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# AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

## STUDENT REPORT

OUR PERCEPTIONS OF FIELD AND COMPANY GRADE  
LINE OFFICERS

MAJOR GLENN N. PONTIFF

87-2030

*"insights into tomorrow"*

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**TITLE** OER PERCEPTIONS OF FIELD AND COMPANY GRADE  
LINE OFFICERS

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## PREFACE

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The OER arena presents a unique challenge to the Air Force. Providing an organization with the performance and potential information of its members and not alienating them in the process is a very difficult balancing act. In fact, these two objectives are at such odds with each other that their mutual attainment may well be impossible. This study attempts to provide insight into areas of the OER where these disparate goals may be brought closer together. It is not an all encompassing study and does not have all the answers. Hopefully, it can serve as a jumping off point for future discussions. If so, its purpose will have been well served.

I wish to acknowledge the support of three individuals, without whom this project would never have seen the light of day. They are Mr. Jesse Barron of the Statistics and Analysis Section at Maxwell AFB, Capt Mary Daley of the Personnel Evaluation Division at Randolph AFB, and Maj Mark Warner, my faculty advisor at Air Command and Staff College. Mr. Barron's running of the data and advice on statistical interpretation were very helpful. Capt Daley was invaluable in the selection of the survey population, statistical interpretation, source of official data, and answering my many questions. Maj Warner provided much needed administrative and technical expertise. I owe them all a great debt that this acknowledgement cannot begin to repay.



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Major Pontiff is a B-52 pilot whose most recent assignment was at HQ Air Force Military Personnel Center. During this tour he served as a branch chief in both the Personnel Evaluation and the Analysis Divisions. In these capacities, he became intimately involved in OER issues. First, as OPR for AFR 36-10, Officer Evaluations, where he helped define and direct OER policy, and second, as an officer promotion board analyst, working numerous quality force issues. Major Pontiff received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1973, and a Master of Science Degree from the University of Southern California in 1982. He has completed Squadron Officer's School in residence and Air Command and Staff College by correspondence.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Part of our College mission is distribution of the students' problem solving products to DoD sponsors and other interested agencies to enhance insight into contemporary, defense related issues. While the College has accepted this product as meeting academic requirements for graduation, the views and opinions expressed or implied are solely those of the author and should not be construed as carrying official sanction.

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REPORT NUMBER 87-2030

AUTHOR(S) MAJOR GLENN N. PONTIFF, USAF

TITLE OER PERCEPTIONS OF FIELD AND COMPANY GRADE LINE OFFICERS

Purpose: This project sought to answer four basic questions about the current OER system. (1) Does the OER achieve its stated purpose? (2) What is the level of knowledge or compliance with AFR 36-10, Officer Evaluations? (3) Is there a need for change, and if so, where? (4) Is there a difference between field and company grade officers' perceptions?

Data: The survey population for this study was line officers below the grade of brigadier general. This overall population was further subdivided into company and field grade populations. A 95% level of confidence in the responses was achieved for both groups. A Chi square probability of less than or equal to .05 between field and company grade responses was used to determine significant differences between the groups. A total of 1518 survey questionnaires were sent out. Of these, 981 responses were received in time to be tabulated for a 64.6% return rate.

Findings: The purpose of the OER is to provide performance and potential information to the Air Force and the individual. With the exception of providing information on promotion potential to the individual and, to a lesser extent, the Air Force, the officer corps showed an apparent lack of confidence in the OER. In general, the knowledge of AFR 36-10 is quite high. However, complying with the restriction on showing nonfinalized OERs to ratees is generally ignored. In addition, the practice of ratees giving OER drafts they wrote on themselves to their raters is a problem. Sixty-

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• nine percent of the officers said the OER needed to change in some manner. Four areas of change were highlighted as being acceptable to the corps: more realistic frontside ratings, backside ratings that differentiate without imposing controls, reducing the emphasis on OER appearance, and required counseling of ratees. The last finding identified two areas where changes to only company grade OERs may be possible: allowing ratees more input into the OER and restricting OER evaluators to the three closest people in the rating chain.

Recommendations: The areas of change suggested above fall into two general categories. The first category is areas of change that can be implemented without major overhauls or procedural modifications. The second category contains changes that are more radical in nature. The first category includes a reduced emphasis on OER appearance, required counseling of ratees, greater ratee input during the rating process, and the problem of ratees writing OER drafts for their raters. The second category has one underlying theme: differentiation. It deals with front and backside ratings and restricted rating chains for company grade officers.

• The author's recommendation to deal with an overemphasis on OER appearance is a twofold approach. First, educate OER monitors and secretaries in this regard. Emphasize their role and responsibility to ensure OERs are effective, not perfect. Second, the regulation needs concrete examples of the type of errors that are acceptable. A laundry list is not suggested, just a few examples to demonstrate the intent of the regulation. Mandatory counseling of ratees during the rating period is a straightforward change. Modify AFR 36-10 to require counseling at three month intervals. This requirement should be computer tracked to remind raters that counseling is due. The last of the "minor" modifications concerns ratee inputs to the OER and the problems regarding OER drafts. Since the restriction on showing OERs to ratees before they're finalized is essentially unenforceable, as is a prohibition on ratees giving OER drafts on themselves to their raters, the author recommends legalizing these activities. To do otherwise would allow inequities in the system to persist, favoring those unaware of or ignoring the rules. Taking this action allows the ratees more input, which is something they want, and eliminates gross violations of the existing rules.

The second category of change calls for major overhauls or procedural

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modifications. The author's recommendation to deal with frontside OER rating inflation is to prohibit the rater from assigning ratings altogether. The Air Force should designate an officer, higher in the rating chain, to rate the ratee's performance. The designated rater reads the description of performance and determines where it falls on the rating scale. The critical factor in this process is the citing of specific examples of performance by the rater. The author recommends identifying an officer similar to the reviewer under the controlled system to serve as the designated rater. For a typical flying wing, the deputies for operations, maintenance, and resources would be ideal. A new OER form should be introduced coincidentally with the above change. Addressing the problem of backside rating inflation is more difficult.

The basic problem with backside ratings is the officer corps' almost total dislike for anything resembling controlled ratings. Unfortunately, historical experience shows that a lack of controls eventually begets inflation. Because of the corps' dislike of controls, the author recommends leaving this aspect of the OER unchanged. The last area addressed is restricting the rating chain. While a potentially effective means of controlling general officer indorsement inflation, the data at hand preclude definitive recommendations. The author suggests further investigation of this idea by HQ AFMPC. One additional recommendation, independent of the survey findings, is suggested: survey the officer corps on its perception of the OER system on a regular basis. The insights provided by such efforts will help prevent the Air Force from making wide-ranging personnel decisions in a vacuum. This type of assessment can help the Air Force determine the OER's level of success and degree of acceptance in the officer corps.

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### INTRODUCTION

→ Fewer issues in the Air Force will get a more emotional response from the officer corps than the officer effectiveness report (OER) system. The reason for this is obvious. The OER is an officer's report card. It will, for the most part, determine the level of success he or she attains. It strikes at the very heart and soul of every officer whether his goal is to be Chief of Staff of the Air Force or to retire after twenty years of service. Because the Air Force has an "up or out" career progression philosophy, and this "up or out" decision is based upon performance and potential documented in each officer's OER, any discussion of this subject will get the very careful attention of the corps. )

→ Having the acceptance of both the raters and the ratees is a critical factor in the utility and ultimate success of any performance rating system. (1:213). Therefore, knowing how the corps sees the OER system is critical information to those charged with its maintenance and health. It is only through this type of feedback that informed decisions can be made. Basic decisions, such as whether to change the system at all, and lesser decisions, such as minor modifications, can be made in light of what is acceptable to the officer corps. This type of assessment and monitoring is an essential aspect of maintaining the utility of any performance appraisal system (2:107).

→ This paper seeks to provide answers to fundamental questions about the OER system from the perspective of the officer corps. (1) Does the OER achieve its stated purpose? (2) What is the level of knowledge or compliance with the OER regulation? (3) Is there a need for change, and if so, where? (4) Is there a difference between field and company grade officers' perceptions? The insights provided will help the Air Force determine the direction it needs to take in the area of OER management. ↗

Using these insights and three years experience working OER and OER related issues at Headquarters, Air Force Military Personnel Center (HQ AFMPC), the author will recommend actions or procedures which address the

findings.

### BACKGROUND

The earliest recorded OERs in the US military date back to 1813. In a letter to his superior, Brig Gen Lewis Cass described ten officers in the 27th Infantry Regiment. He described the commanding officer as "a good natured man" and the second in command as "a good man, but no officer." One captain was described as "a man of whom all unite in speaking ill, a knave despised by all" and the most junior as "a good officer but drinks hard and disgraces himself and the service" (1:241). While such honest appraisals started officer evaluations off on a brutally straightforward note, recent experience with OERs demonstrates a much more lenient outlook by rating officials.

Evaluator leniency is the cancer of the Air Force personnel evaluation experience. In the late 1960s, rating inflation had reached a point to where nine out of ten officers received the highest possible rating (6:xiii). As early as 1962, attempts were made to bring this inflation under control by providing the major commands feedback on their rating tendencies and attempts to persuade commanders to be more realistic in their evaluations (6:11-12). However, no amount of data or guidance could bring a halt to rating inflation. Finally, in 1968, the personnel community began a project to review and revise the OER system (6:10). The eventual result was the introduction of the controlled OER system in 1974.

The controlled system existed for four years and was controversial throughout its lifetime. The system imposed strict controls on the number of officers that could receive the two highest ratings (50%). The resulting anxiety and perceptions of those delegated to the "bottom half" created much concern. The officer corps believed the controlled OER had an adverse impact on morale, motivation, and retention; these perceptions ultimately took priority over the improved management information the system provided (6:xxiii-xxiv). As a result, the system was changed to our current uncontrolled system in 1978.

The OER measures two aspects of an officer: first, his performance (rated on the front of the form) and second, his potential (rated on the back of the form). Following decontrol, OER ratings of potential immediately inflated to the point where 80% of the officers received the highest rating. This has gradually increased to its present rate of over 98% (7:--). As a result, frontside ratings (performance) gained more importance, but inflation entered the picture here also. The percentage of officers with "firewalled" (all frontside ratings given the highest rating) OERs is in the low to mid 90s (7:--). Clearly, differentiation based on

these ratings alone is lacking. The level of indorsement (the grade of the final indorser) filled this void as the most quantifiable factor on the OER. But inflation is making itself felt in this area as well. In an interview with Air Force Times in 1985, Lt Gen Cassidy, AF DCS/Manpower and Personnel, discussed the rationale behind a change in OER procedure requiring the additional rater to be the rater's rater. He said, "Promotion boards have expressed concern that it's become more difficult to differentiate between officers due to the inflation of the number of OERs endorsed by general officers. (The change) is an attempt to control the level of inflation of signatures" (4:6). Inflation (frontside, backside, and indorsement) raises questions as to the credibility of the current OER system.

The current system has been in effect for over eight years. The bitter experience of tampering with OERs in the past has led the Air Force into a "hands off" approach toward further major modifications. In light of the rating inflation problems, is this the best approach to take? How does it compare to the perception of the officer corps? Is the OER still credible in their view? Providing insights into these and other questions is the challenge facing this study.

## Chapter Two

### ANALYSIS PLAN AND POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

#### ANALYSIS PLAN

The Air Force commonly uses surveys to determine the opinions or perceptions of its members. The author felt a survey was within his limited analytical abilities and agreed to use this instrument to obtain the necessary data for this project. An initial draft of the survey questionnaire was submitted to the Personnel Evaluation Branch at HQ AFMPC for their input and approval. A copy of the questionnaire is at appendix A. Some of the responses requested on the survey are beyond the scope of this project (in particular the nonquantifiable responses). Responses not addressed in this project were forwarded to HQ AFMPC for further analysis and research.

The specific population selected for the survey excluded nonline and general officers. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, "officer corps" is defined as all line officers below the grade of brigadier general. Since nonline officers compete for promotions separately, they may have a different perspective than the line officers and were, therefore, not included in the survey population. And, because general officers are evaluated differently, they were also excluded. Having defined the target population, the next step was to determine the desired level of confidence.

Since the OER issue is such a volatile subject, a high level of confidence in the findings was necessary. A 95% level of confidence was preferred. What this translates into, in laymen's terms, is a 5% chance that the findings do not accurately reflect the officer corps' perceptions. Since a comparison of company and field grade perceptions was to be made, these groups were considered as two separate populations. Achieving a 95% level of confidence required 381 company grade and 378 field grade respondents. These numbers are determined by a formula based on the size of the target populations (7:—). To ensure enough responses were received to attain the desired level of confidence, twice as many questionnaires as required were sent out. A computer randomly identified the survey participants.



Percentages, weighted averages, and Chi square techniques were the primary analytical tools used during this study. The bulk of the findings are presented as the simple percentages of officers agreeing or disagreeing with statements on the questionnaire. A weighted average is used when the perception of the officer corps as a whole is needed (as opposed to company versus field grade). This is necessary to account for the much higher proportion of company grade officers in the corps than what is represented in the survey population. Therefore, the company grade responses will receive more weight than the field graders'. Chi square analysis determines significant differences between company and field grade responses. This technique, in simple terms, states a null hypothesis (in this case, that the perceptions of the field and company grade officers are not different) and statistically determines whether to accept or reject this statement. If rejected, it concludes that the opposite of the null hypothesis is true: the field and company grade officers do, indeed, have different perceptions (3:191-192). In conducting this analysis, a Chi square probability is computed. The smaller the value of this probability, the heavier is the weight for rejecting the null hypothesis (3:202). This study used a Chi square probability of less than or equal to .05 to determine significant differences. A word of caution is needed here. Statistical significance mechanically identifies areas of differences. It does not necessarily equate to practical differences of opinion (7:—). This study will highlight all areas of statistical differences, but will concentrate on those areas where practical differences exist.

#### POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 1518 survey questionnaires were sent out. Of these, 981 responses were received in time to be tabulated for a 64.6% return rate. The number of responses was sufficient to achieve the desired level of confidence for both company and field grade officers. The demographics of those responding follows.

Current Grade: 2Lt 6%; 1Lt 11%; Capt 30%; Maj 25%; Lt Col 20%; Col 8%

Sex: Female 9%; Male 91%

MAJCOM: AFLC 3%; SPACECMD 2%; AFSC 12%; ATC 7%; MAC 11%; SAC 17%;  
TAC, USAFE, PACAF 25%; HQ USAF 4%; Other 19%

Organizational Level: Below MAJCOM 69%; MAJCOM HQ 19%;  
HQ USAF/SOA/DRU 12%

Total Military Service: 0-5 yrs 18%; 6-10 yrs 19%; 11+ yrs 63%

Ethnic Background: Black 4%; Cauc. 93%; Oriental 1%; Other 2%

Aero Rating: None 55%; Nav 13%; Pilot 31%; Other 1%

## Chapter Three

### SURVEY RESULTS

#### DOES THE OER ACHIEVE ITS PURPOSE?

Air Force Regulation (AFR) 36-10, Officer Evaluations, outlines the purpose of the OER system.

The purpose of the officer evaluation system is to provide the Air Force with information on the performance and potential of officers for use in making personnel management decisions, such as promotions, assignments, augmentations, school selections, and separations. It is also intended to provide individual officers information on their performance and potential as viewed by their evaluators (5:5).

Survey questions 10 through 20 examine the OER's attainment of its stated objectives. The perceptions are shown by the weighted average percentages of the officers who either agree or disagree with the questionnaire statement. Once again, the weighted average puts more emphasis on the company grade responses due to their greater representation within the corps.

Q 10. The OER provides me with accurate feedback on my duty performance.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
12%	27%	12%	4%	21%	22%	2%

The majority (51%) of the responses indicated some form of disagreement with the statement, while 45% basically agree. This shows the OER may not be achieving its objective of providing performance feedback to the individual in most cases. The OER does better in giving feedback to the individual on his promotion potential.

Q 11. The OER provides me with accurate information on my promotion potential.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
11%	17%	13%	6%	22%	26%	5%

In response to the above question, 52% agreed compared to 41% disagreeing. While not an overwhelming result, the perception appears to show some confidence in the OER in this regard; however, there is room for improvement. How about the feedback the OER provides to the Air Force (AF)? Questions 12 and 13 address this issue.

Q 12. The OER provides the AF accurate information on my duty performance.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
13%	23%	15%	6%	23%	18%	2%

Q 13. The OER provides the AF accurate information on my promotion potential.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
11%	20%	13%	7%	25%	20%	4%

The corps' perception regarding performance information sent to the AF is essentially the same as feedback to the individual. In general, the perception is the information isn't very accurate. There is a slightly degraded perception of promotion potential sent to the AF compared to that sent to the individual (49% say it's accurate to the AF; 52% say it's accurate to the individual). The next question shows slightly less confidence in the AF's ability to promote the right officers.

Q 14. OERs and other documents in the promotion folders permit promotion board members to select the best qualified officers for advancement.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
12%	18%	18%	8%	24%	18%	2%

In this case 48% felt the information in promotion folders was insufficient to make correct promotion decisions, while 44% agreed with the statement. One could infer this lack of confidence in the promotion system stems from an overall mistrust of the OER's ability to differentiate between levels of performance. Questions 16 through 19 are designed to provide insight in this area, but first, let's examine the OER's utility in the assignment process.

Q 15. OERs permit assignment officers to make good assignment decisions.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
12%	23%	19%	15%	20%	10%	1%

The perception appears to be overwhelmingly negative, with 54% disagreeing and only 31% agreeing with the statement. Once again, this

may be based on the OER's perceived inability to differentiate between officers. The next set of questions list a level of performance and whether or not the OER can identify officers at that level.

Q 16. An officer whose duty performance is well below average is easily identified under the current OER system.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
10%	18%	14%	4%	20%	26%	8%

Q 17. An officer whose duty performance is below average is easily identified under the current OER system.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
12%	25%	21%	7%	20%	12%	3%

Q 18. An officer whose duty performance is average is easily identified under the current OER system.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
17%	29%	24%	9%	13%	7%	1%

Q 19. An officer whose duty performance is above average is easily identified under the current OER system.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
13%	25%	20%	7%	22%	12%	1%

Q 20. An officer whose duty performance is well above average is easily identified under the current OER system.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
11%	17%	11%	6%	26%	23%	6%

The results of the above questions can be nicely summarized by listing the level of performance with the percentage of officers agreeing the OER can identify officers at that level. For instance, 54% say the well below average performer can be identified; below average, 35%; average, 21%; above average, 35%; and well above average, 55%. This shows the belief that officers at the extreme ends of the performance spectrum can be identified in most cases, while the closer the performance is to average, the more degraded the OER's capability to distinguish becomes. This apparent inability of the OER to differentiate (except for "fast burners" and "slugs") may account for the lack of confidence in the promotion and assignment processes. Overall, in the eyes of the officer corps, it

appears the OER doesn't quite do all it's designed to do.

Of the purposes for the officer evaluation system (providing performance and potential information to the AF and the individual), the only areas where the officer corps sees the OER doing what it's intended is in giving promotion potential information to the individual and, to a lesser degree, the AF. Even in this area, a general lack of confidence in the promotion and assignment systems exists. In that sense, the OER apparently comes up short on all accounts. The OER's capability to differentiate between officers of various quality needs to be restored. The controlled OER system accomplished this difficult task, but it proved to be unacceptable to the officer corps. Later on, this study will examine possible changes that appear acceptable to the officer corps, but first, it looks at the corps' compliance with and knowledge of AFR 36-10.

#### COMPLIANCE/KNOWLEDGE OF AFR 36-10

An especially important aspect of any performance appraisal system is the user's level of knowledge and degree of compliance with the governing regulation. Inequities in compliance or failure to abide by the rules can create cases where one group of officers has an advantage over another. In the competitive environment of the Air Force, any inequities within the OER system are undesirable. It is, therefore, essential that those charged with ensuring equity within the system know what provisions of AFR 36-10 are being followed.

Since the OER is one of the most visible and highly scrutinized documents in the Air Force, most of the provisions of AFR 36-10 are complied with; especially procedures dealing with timeliness, rating chains, mandatory comments, and so on. Before an OER is placed in an officer's selection folder, it goes through three separate screening filters (CBPO, MAJCOM, and HQ AFMPC) (5:11-12). As a result, provisions dealing with the final written product are generally strictly enforced. However, three areas of compliance/knowledge dealing with the OER process, rather than the product, need further investigation. These areas are the general knowledge of the regulation, knowledge of the appeal process, and showing OER drafts to ratees. The following information from the survey provides insight into these areas.

An overwhelming percentage of officers have read AFR 36-10, either in part or in total, as evidenced by the following.

Q 49. Have you ever read AFR 36-10, Officer Evaluations?

Yes, all the way through  
48%

Yes, partly  
45%

No  
7%

From these data, one can infer the general awareness of the regulation is excellent. When questioned about knowledge of a specific provision in the regulation, the numbers are also encouraging. AFR 36-10 states that appeals and requests for changes to OERs are permitted (5:14). Question 44 tested the corps' knowledge of this.

Q 44. Once an OER is put into your record, it can never be changed.

True  
22%

False  
78%

As one would expect, the level of knowledge of this aspect of the OER system is less known within the company grade than the field grade officers. Twenty-five percent of the company grade officers thought the above statement was true compared to 18% of the field graders. The final area of compliance deals with raters showing copies of OERs to ratees.

AFR 36-10 prohibits ratees from seeing their OER until the indorser completes the report and it's filed at the local CBPO (5:12). The following data show a major disregard or lack of knowledge of this prohibition.

Q 43. Has your rater ever shown you a copy or draft of your OER before it was finalized and put in your record?

Yes  
63%

No  
37%

This is an area of concern. It has the potential for creating inequities between those officers afforded the opportunity to influence their rater's choice of words or ratings and those that aren't. An even more alarming statistic is that 74% of the ratees have given an OER draft they wrote on themselves to their rater and, of those, 71% reported between 75% and 100% of their draft actually appeared in the final OER.

Q 42. If you've given an OER draft you wrote on yourself to your rater, about what percent of your input actually appeared on the final OER?

None  
3%

25%  
9%

50%  
15%

75%  
47%

100%  
24%

Don't know  
2%

Soliciting OER inputs from ratees is an accepted practice in the AF. The regulation even encourages raters to "get meaningful information from as many sources as possible" (5:5). However, using drafts prepared by ratees goes beyond the intent of AFR 36-10. Has the OER become just another piece of paper to move from the in basket to the out basket, even to the point where its accomplishment can be delegated? Insight to this question will be provided when examining areas for change in the next section. Overall, this section of the report found mixed results.

Apparently, knowledge of AFR 36-10 is quite good within the officer corps, both in a general sense and in a specific instance. However, the degree of compliance with the restriction on showing nonfinalized OERs to ratees and the widespread use of ratee supplied OER drafts by raters is an area of definite concern. It creates a tremendous problem because the regulation is unenforceable in this respect. OER policymakers must give this issue particularly close attention to preclude gross inequities from existing within the system. The next section addresses potential OER system changes and their acceptability to the officer corps.

### DOES THE OER NEED CHANGING?

The officer corps' apparent belief that the OER generally doesn't accomplish what it's designed to do was demonstrated earlier. Two obvious questions to that viewpoint arise: is there a need for change and, if so, what aspects of the OER system need changing? Answers to these questions are discussed below. Once again, except where noted, percentages are based upon the weighted average of company and field grade responses. Also, a reminder that the purpose is to highlight areas of potential change that would be acceptable to the corps. By identifying these areas, the AF may be able to make the OER a more effective instrument without the turmoil that accompanied the immensely unpopular controlled OER system. The study begins by answering the basic question.

Q 47. Do you believe a change to the current OER system is warranted?

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
69%	17%	14%

Having answered this question with a resounding "yes," the next step becomes much more difficult: determining areas to change. The next series of statements were designed to get a feel for the acceptability of changing various aspects of the OER system. A good jumping off point is determining the corps' perception of front and backside rating inflation. Below are questions on frontside (performance) ratings.

Q 39. As your best estimate, what percent of OERs written on officers in your grade are firewalled (all frontside ratings rated the highest)?

	<u>70% or less</u>	<u>71-80%</u>	<u>81-90%</u>	<u>91-100%</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Co Grd	4%	7%	19%	63%	5%
Fld Grd	4%	2%	11%	81%	2%

Q 23. A nonfirewalled OER given today will preclude an officer from future promotions.

<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Slightly Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Slightly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>
1%	7%	13%	8%	26%	28%	17%

Q 24. A nonfirewalled OER given today will preclude an officer from future good assignments.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
1%	10%	14%	14%	27%	23%	10%

With 71% of the officers agreeing a nonfirewalled OER will preclude promotion and 60% agreeing it will preclude good assignments, this appears to be an area of needed and acceptable change. In the last chapter the author will make recommendations regarding these findings. For now, let's continue to identify additional areas for change. How does the corps feel about backside (potential) ratings?

Q 38. As your best estimate, what percent of OERs written on officers in your grade are given an evaluation of potential rating of "1"?

	<u>70% or less</u>	<u>71-80%</u>	<u>81-90%</u>	<u>91-100%</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Co Grd	3%	4%	16%	70%	7%
Fld Grd	2%	2%	13%	81%	2%

Q 21. Any evaluation of potential rating (backside OER) of "2" or worse given today will preclude an officer from future promotions.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
0%	2%	5%	3%	13%	34%	43%

Q 22. Any evaluation of potential rating (backside OER) of "2" or worse given today will preclude future good assignments.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
0%	3%	7%	11%	21%	30%	28%

As with frontside ratings, this appears to be another area to consider changing, with 91% agreeing a rating worse than a "1" will preclude promotion and 81% agreeing it will preclude good assignments. Since there is a desire to instill more integrity into the OER ratings, would today's officers be more inclined toward controlled backside ratings?

Q 37. OER ratings should be strictly controlled, that is, limits imposed on the percentage of officers who can get "1s" or "2s."

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
46%	22%	7%	8%	7%	6%	4%

With 75% of the officer corps disagreeing with a controlled OER concept, controlling ratings is not an acceptable means of revitalizing



the OER system. This creates a tough problem, since past experience shows uncontrolled rating systems are inflation prone. How does the corps feel about changes to restrict level of indorsements?

Q 29. Each evaluator who signs my OER should be designated at the beginning of the rating period; i.e., there would be no elevated indorsements.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
16%	30%	14%	15%	9%	10%	6%

Q 30. The evaluators on my OER should be the three people closest to me in my chain of supervision.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
11%	24%	16%	8%	14%	19%	8%

The majority, 60% regarding predesignated and 51% regarding the three closest evaluators, disagreed with changing this aspect of the OER. It appears tampering with indorsement policies in the manner described would not be an acceptable alternative. It's interesting to note the difference in the positive response between the two statements. Only 25% agreed with the concept of predesignating evaluators, while 41% agreed with having the three closest in the chain of command write the OER. This tells us that the latter of the two options would be the more acceptable of the two if the AF were to move in this direction. The next three questions were designed to measure the utility of written comments on the OER.

Q 34. Frontside OER comments are meaningful and necessary.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
9%	18%	16%	8%	23%	23%	3%

Q 35. OER job descriptions are meaningful and necessary.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
2%	6%	6%	6%	25%	42%	13%

Q 36. Backside OER comments are meaningful and necessary.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
3%	3%	6%	5%	21%	45%	17%

The percentages agreeing the written portions of the OER are needed follow: frontside, 49%; job description, 80%; and backside, 83%. While

the data do not call for an elimination of any written portions of the OER, it's fairly obvious the frontside comments are the least regarded of the three. If the AF chooses to reduce the writing burden of its raters, frontside comments should be the first to go. The next two statements suggest more radical changes to the OER form.

Q 28. OERs should measure duty performance only and not assess potential for increased responsibility.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
20%	45%	17%	6%	5%	5%	2%

Q 33. Each career field should have its own OER format which concentrates on areas important to that specialty, not a single form which measures general categories of officership.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
17%	26%	12%	12%	12%	11%	10%

Neither of these options appear viable; only 12% agree with measuring only performance and 33% agree with different OER forms for each career field.

Up to this point, the suggested areas for change have dealt with the OER product itself (formats, comments, rating chains, rating inflation, and so on). The remainder of this section deals with the OER process. More specifically, the issues of time spent on OERs, ratee inputs, and required counseling are addressed. Below are the responses to questions on the time spent on OERs.

Q 46. What is the average amount of time you spend preparing each OER?

<u>Less than 2 hrs</u>	<u>2-4 hours</u>	<u>5-7 hours</u>	<u>8+ hours</u>
2%	18%	36%	44%

Note: Respondents to the above question were only those with OER writing experience (632 total respondents).

Q 25. More time is spent on OER appearance than content.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
2%	11%	11%	16%	21%	19%	20%

Q 26. Too much time is taken up by the entire OER process (from initial draft to becoming a matter of record).

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
3%	10%	8%	14%	18%	22%	25%

Q 32. The time needed to prepare OERs is well worth the effort.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
9%	12%	15%	17%	19%	20%	8%

The data above sends a slightly mixed signal. First of all, it shows 80% of the raters spend five or more hours on each OER they write (44% spend eight or more hours). This represents a considerable effort and may be why so many ratees are providing OER drafts to the raters. The raters may be simply trying to cut down on their time investment. Then, the corps agrees more time is spent on appearance than content (60%), and too much time is spent on the entire process (65%). Yet, just under half (47%) say their time is worth the effort. The author's interpretation of this is that the raters realize the critical role the OER has on an officer's career, and they'll put whatever time is required to ensure they're not hurting their people. In that sense, the time is well spent; however, they would dearly like to see a reduction in the noncritical "administrivia"; i.e., reaccomplishing an entire report because of a misused hyphen. Taking care of this problem may help reduce the time involved in the overall process and is an area where change may be in order. The study next examines two other issues dealing with the OER process: ratee inputs and counseling.

Q 27. I should have more input into my OER before it becomes a matter of record.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
4%	17%	9%	26%	17%	19%	8%

Q 31. OER policy should require my rater to counsel me on my duty performance and potential during the rating period.

Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
1%	2%	2%	5%	13%	39%	38%

While the corps' response to allowing ratees more input into their OER is lukewarm (43% agreeing), there's overwhelming support for requiring raters to counsel ratees during the rating period (90% agreeing). This is a definite area for change in the OER system.

A summary of areas of acceptable change identified in this section follows: frontside rating inflation, backside rating inflation (without imposing controls), reducing the emphasis on OER appearance, and required counseling of ratees. The author makes recommendations regarding these changes in the last chapter. The next section examines areas where significant differences exist between the company and field grade perceptions.

### COMPANY VS FIELD GRADE PERCEPTIONS

Understanding differences in perceptions between field and company grade officers can be invaluable insight. Most importantly, it can identify areas where OER changes would be acceptable to one group (even preferred) and allow development of separate policies or procedures to satisfy that group. In the following section, the author attempts to provide insight into why the differences in views exist. Much of the discussion is speculation on his part. For that reason the comments should not be considered all encompassing. As a reminder, a Chi square probability of less than or equal to .05 was used to determine statistical significance.

Because we are interested in differences in perceptions, only survey questions 10 through 37 and question 47 were analyzed, and only areas of actual differences will be discussed in detail. Appendix B lists the responses of company and field graders to the above questions along with the weighted average, Chi square statistic value, and the Chi square probability. Questions 15, 31, and 47, although statistically significant, are not discussed. Field and company grades basically have the same perceptions on these questions. The reason they were found to be "significant" was due to one group having a stronger feeling on the issue. So, although statistically significant, there was no practical difference of opinion. The first area where practical differences existed was in promotion decisions based on the OER.

Q 14. OERs and other documents in promotion folders permit promotion board members to select the best qualified officers for advancement.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	13%	19%	20%	8%	22%	17%	1%
Fld Grd	9%	18%	15%	7%	27%	21%	3%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0444</u>						

The company grade officers have a more negative viewpoint (52% disagreeing) compared to the field graders (42% disagreeing). The field grade's more positive outlook may be a result of their having survived the promotion board screening on at least two occasions plus the fact they

have controlled OERs in their folders to help board members identify consistent performers. The next questions deal with the OER's ability to differentiate between levels of performance.

Q 16. An officer whose duty performance is well below average is easily identified under the current OER system.

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	13%	17%	15%	5%	22%	21%	7%
Fld Grd	6%	18%	13%	4%	15%	35%	9%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0000</u>						

Q 17. An officer whose duty performance is below average is easily identified under the current OER system.

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	15%	24%	22%	8%	18%	11%	2%
Fld Grd	8%	26%	20%	6%	22%	14%	4%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0017</u>						

Q 20. An officer whose duty performance is well above average is easily identified under the current OER system.

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	13%	18%	11%	6%	26%	21%	5%
Fld Grd	9%	15%	12%	4%	25%	27%	8%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0165</u>						

In this case, the field grade officers have more confidence in the OER's ability to differentiate. The percentage agreeing follow: for well below average officers, 59% field grade and 50% company grade; for below average officers, 40% field grade and 31% company grade; and finally, for well above average officers, 60% field grade and 52% company grade. This constant 8-9 percentage point difference may be due to the field grader's higher confidence in using levels of indorsement as a differentiator or in their familiarity with more subtle techniques used to discriminate between officers; i.e., damning with faint praise. Another area where significant differences in perceptions existed was on backside ratings.

Q 21. Any evaluation of potential rating of "2" or worse given today will preclude an officer from future promotions.

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Slightly</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	0%	2%	6%	4%	15%	34%	39%
Fld Grd	0%	1%	3%	2%	10%	34%	50%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0010</u>						

Q 22. Any evaluation of potential rating of "2" or worse given today will preclude future good assignments.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	1%	4%	7%	13%	22%	27%	26%
Fld Grd	0%	3%	6%	7%	19%	34%	31%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0028</u>						

The fact a potential rating worse than a "1" is viewed as more harmful to the field grade officers is not surprising. The author's experience as a promotion board analyst indicates a lieutenant could conceivably get a "2" OER and still recover in time to make captain; the same rating would be the "kiss of death" to a major or higher. The same thing may apply to the assignment process as well. It's difficult to justify putting a noncompetitive officer in a key billet. Differences in perceptions also existed on the time spent on the OER process.

Q 25. More time is spent on OER appearance than content.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	1%	8%	12%	16%	21%	19%	23%
Fld Grd	3%	17%	10%	16%	20%	19%	15%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0001</u>						

Q 26. Too much time is taken up by the entire OER process.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	2%	9%	9%	16%	20%	22%	22%
Fld Grd	4%	13%	8%	10%	14%	21%	30%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0003</u>						

Q 32. The time needed to prepare OERs is well worth the effort.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	9%	10%	14%	20%	21%	18%	8%
Fld Grd	10%	17%	15%	12%	15%	23%	8%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.00</u>						

The above data are somewhat contradictory. On one hand, the field grade officers have higher rates of disagreement with the first two statements, 30% versus 21% disagreeing that more time is spent on appearances and 25% versus 20% that too much time is taken by the entire process. This indicates a more supportive viewpoint. Yet, 42% say time spent on OERs is not worth the effort compared to 33% of the company grade officers, indicating a higher degree of frustration with the system on a personal level. The author has no explanation other than when the Air

Force establishment (the OER process) is attacked, the field grade officers appear to adopt a more defensive attitude than their younger counterparts. However, when asked about their own time, they're more critical. The next area examined shows a truly significant difference in beliefs.

Q 27. I should have more input into my OER before it becomes a matter of record.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	2%	12%	8%	27%	19%	21%	11%
Fld Grd	7%	25%	12%	23%	14%	15%	4%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0000</u>						

In this case, the field grade officers have twice the rate of disagreement with the statement (44% versus 22%) than the company grade. It's interesting to note that 86% of the field grade officers have provided OER drafts on themselves to their raters compared to 67% of the company grade. This statistic may account for the difference between responses. The field grade already provide a very large input to their raters. The next two areas of disagreement demonstrate the field grade officers' bias towards the status quo relative to the company grade.

Q 30. The evaluators on my OER should be the three people closest to me in my chain of supervision.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	11%	20%	16%	8%	15%	21%	9%
Fld Grd	11%	30%	15%	8%	14%	16%	6%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0096</u>						

Q 33. Each career field should have its own OER format which concentrates on areas important to that speciality, not a single form which measures general categories of officership.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	14%	25%	13%	11%	13%	12%	12%
Fld Grd	23%	29%	9%	12%	11%	10%	7%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0004</u>						

In these areas, the company grade officers are more in favor of restricting the rating chain, required counseling, and career specific OER forms than the field grades. The company grade opinion is split on the issue of restricting OER evaluators to the three closest people in the supervisory chain (47% disagreeing and 45% agreeing). The field grade officers are much more opposed to this idea, with 56% disagreeing. This may be an area where separate policies for field and company grade officers are feasible. Regarding career specific OER forms, neither category of

officer favored it to the point of making this an area of probable change. However, it shows the field grades' apparently stronger perception that an individual is an officer first, and an engineer, pilot, or personnel officer second. The next two areas show where the field grade officers are more receptive to change than the company grade.

Q 34. Frontside OER comments are meaningful and necessary.

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	7%	13%	17%	10%	24%	26%	3%
Fld Grd	11%	26%	16%	7%	20%	17%	3%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0000</u>						

Q 37. OER ratings should be strictly controlled, that is, limits imposed on the percentage of officers who can get "1s" or "2s."

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	Slightly <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u>	Slightly <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
Co Grd	49%	22%	7%	8%	6%	4%	3%
Fld Grd	41%	22%	7%	7%	7%	10%	6%
Chi Sq probability	<u>.0019</u>						

The first question shows the field grade's preference to delete frontside OER comments (53% say these comments are unnecessary). This may stem from their having to write more OERs than the company grade officers where 53% thought the comments were needed. The response to controlling OER ratings was interesting. Although neither group favored this idea, the field grade officers, who lived through the controlled era, had a higher percentage agreeing to controls than the company grade officers (23% versus 14%). One explanation may be the officers that survived the controlled system were those who fared well. That is, they received the higher ratings and, as a result, are more prone to favor a return to a controlled system. A brief recap of areas of disagreement follows.

The areas of disagreement between the two groups are the OER's utility to promotion boards, differentiating levels of performance, time spent on OERs, ratee inputs into the OER, restricting rating chains, career specific OER forms, and finally, frontside comments. Of these, two have a potential for changing the company grade OER procedures. They are ratee inputs and restricted rating chains. Career specific OER forms appear to be an unacceptable alternative because they run counter to the Air Force's philosophy of officership ahead of occupationalism. The other areas will, in all probability, remain as differences of opinion. Despite these differences, the overall perceptions of the field and company grade officers are remarkably homogeneous.

Up to this point, the study looked at the officer corps' perceptions



of how well the OER is achieving its purpose, the level of knowledge/compliance with AFR 36-10, what areas of change would be acceptable, and differences between field and company grade views. The last chapter will attempt to tie all of this together and make recommendations based on the above insight.

## Chapter Four

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY

This project sought to answer four basic questions about the current OER system. (1) Does the OER achieve its stated purpose? (2) What is the level of knowledge or compliance with AFR 36-10? (3) Is there a need for change, and if so, where? (4) Is there a difference between field and company grade officers' perceptions? In this chapter, the author briefly summarizes the answers to these questions and makes recommendations regarding these answers. Below are the findings for the first question.

The purpose of the OER is to provide performance and potential information to the Air Force and the individual. With the exception of providing information on promotion potential to the individual and, to a lesser extent, the Air Force, the officer corps doesn't see the OER accomplishing its purpose. A general lack of confidence in the promotion and assignment process shows some doubt about the potential information being accurate as well. In total, the OER appears to be ineffective in the eyes of the officer corps. This project also detected a problem area in complying with the governing regulation.

In general, the knowledge of AFR 36-10, Officer Evaluations, is quite high. However, complying with the restriction on showing nonfinalized OERs to ratees is generally ignored. In addition, the practice of ratees giving OER drafts they wrote on themselves to their raters needs to be addressed. The survey pointed out a number of areas where the corps felt changes to the OER system may be in order.

In answering the basic question, 69% of the officers said the OER system needed changing. Four areas of change were highlighted as being acceptable: more realistic frontside ratings, backside ratings that differentiate without imposing controls, reducing the emphasis on OER appearance, and required counseling of ratees. The answer to the fourth question also identified areas of potential change.

The final question sought to identify differences between company and field grade perceptions. A number of areas of disagreement were highlighted. Two of these areas lend themselves to possible changes to the OER for company grade officers. They were allowing ratees more input into the OER and restricting the evaluators on the OER to the three closest people in the rating chain. The next section addresses the above findings and makes recommendations.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The areas of change suggested above fall into two general categories. The first category is areas of change that can be easily implemented without major overhauls or procedural modifications. The second category contains those changes that are more radical in nature and somewhat riskier. The former category will be addressed first.

Those areas for change that would require minor modifications to the current OER system are reducing the emphasis on OER appearance, required counseling of ratees, and allowing ratees more input into the rating process. In addition, the author will address the problem of ratees writing OER drafts for their raters in this portion of the report. The first recommendation deals with OER appearance.

AFR 36-10 says this about minor corrections to OERs, "While the quality of reports should be emphasized, good judgment should be exercised in the type of errors that are significant enough to require reaccomplishing a report. Every effort should be made to reduce errors but not to demand unrealistic standards" (5:12). The basic problem stems from the fact the OER is seen as so critical to an officer's career that even a minor error could result in his nonselection for promotion. As a result, perfection is the norm, and reports are reaccomplished many times until this standard is achieved. The author's recommendation in this area is twofold. First, educate OER monitors and secretaries in this regard. Stress to them the intent of the regulation, their responsibility to keep the reaccomplishment of OERs to the absolute minimum, the fact promotion board members spend a minimum of time reading OERs, and the amount of frustration that's caused when reports are returned to raters. Emphasis must be placed on their role and responsibility to ensure OERs are effective, not perfect. Second, the regulation needs concrete examples of the type of errors that are acceptable. For example, using a comma instead of a semicolon or the improper use of a hyphen would be deemed acceptable errors. A laundry list is not recommended, just a few examples to demonstrate the intent of the regulation. Two questions need answering before a report is returned: does the OER communicate and is the message unmistakably clear? If the answer to these questions is yes, the OER is effective and acceptable. The next area discussed addresses the need for

required counseling.

Requiring raters to counsel ratees at some point during the rating period is a straightforward change. AFR 36-10 is simply modified to reflect this new requirement. It then specifies the point in time when the counseling takes place. The author's recommendation would be at three month intervals. This allows for sufficient supervision and is prior to the minimum four months supervision needed to write an OER. He also recommends computer tracking to remind raters that counseling is due, much in the same manner OER requirements are tracked. The computer generated reminder should have signature blocks for both the rater and ratee to sign once counseling is completed. The form would then be returned to the CBPO to update the computer file. The last of the "minor" recommendations this study discusses concerns ratee inputs to the OER and the problems regarding OER drafts.

Since the restriction on showing OERs to ratees before they're finalized is essentially unenforceable, as is a prohibition on ratees giving OER drafts on themselves to their raters, the author's recommendation is to legalize these activities. To do otherwise would allow inequities in the system to persist, favoring those unaware of or ignoring the rules. AFR 36-10 should include the following provision.

Ratees are encouraged to provide information on their duty performance to their raters. Any and all aspects of performance the ratee feels are relevant may be brought to the rater's attention. Raters may request proposed OER comments from ratees; however, this in no way relieves the rater of his responsibility to prepare accurate, objective, and noninflated OERs.

In addition, all references to restricting the ratee from seeing copies of his OER before it's finalized should be deleted. The author recognizes this is an unorthodox approach; however, the current rules are not working as intended, and he can't think of a way to enforce them. The only other option is to keep the status quo which has the potential to create inequities. Taking the proposed action allows the ratees more input, which is something they want, and eliminates gross violations of the existing rules. Now, the study moves on to the more radical changes.

The second category of change calls for major overhauls or procedural modifications. These changes are more dramatic in nature and somewhat riskier in that they have the potential to have wide-ranging impacts on the officer corps. These changes all have one underlying theme: differentiation. They deal with front and backside ratings and restricting rating chains for company grade officers. The study starts with a look at frontside rating inflation.

The author's recommendation to deal with frontside OER ratings is to prohibit the rater from assigning ratings altogether, and designate an officer higher in the rating chain to rate the ratee's performance (a designated rater). Under this system, the rater's job is to describe, by specific examples, how well the ratee has performed in each of the areas evaluated. The officer designated to assign ratings is responsible for reading the description of performance and determining where it falls on the rating scale. The critical factor in this process is citing specific examples of performance.

There is one hard and fast rule to this approach: if performance is described only in general terms, full of glowing adjectives, but without substance, then a rating of "meets standard" is mandatory. Here's an example from an OER the author has written describing an officer's leadership. "Unsurpassed. Mike maintains the delicate balance of mission accomplishment and concern for people better than any company grade officer I've seen. His imaginative and dynamic leadership style easily adapts to any situation." On first reading this officer sounds super. However, if read carefully, nowhere is a specific example showing how he demonstrated "unsurpassed" leadership. Unfortunately, this is typical of many OERs. Under the proposed change, this comment would receive an average rating. Raters would soon learn that the higher ratings are unattainable without substance and would write their comments accordingly. Once the comments become realistic, the ratings will follow.

When the designated rater gets an OER to rate, he is free to assign ratings without restriction (keeping in mind the rule above). There is no quota on the number of "above" or "well above standard" ratings that can be assigned. He simply evaluates the comments and determines the level of performance based on his experience of what is expected and what is above and beyond the call of duty. The designated rater can be anyone in the rating chain (except the rater). The author recommends identifying an officer similar to the reviewer under the controlled system. For a typical flying wing, the deputies for operations, maintenance, and resources would be ideal. The other key to the success of this system is training.

First of all, raters need to be trained to write in terms of what the ratee did and how well he did it. Exaggeration must be discouraged and, when it's suspected, raters should be confronted by the additional rater. More importantly, officers assigned as designated raters must be aware that the credibility of the OER rests squarely on their shoulders. Honesty and integrity are essential. The officer corps wants it and, in the author's opinion, the Air Force needs it. Finally, quality control personnel at base and MAJCOM level must be trained to carefully screen OERs for noncompliance and to return reports for reaccomplishment when necessary. One other step is needed to transition to this system.

A new OER form should be introduced coincidentally with the above change. The new form need not be radically different from the current form. A cosmetic change, such as combining, deleting, or adding performance factors, or introducing a new rating scale would suffice. The sole intent is to make a psychological break with the current system. By doing so, everyone starts out with a clean slate; everyone is equal. This will go a long way toward the corps' accepting a new system and help prevent digression to the old ways. This recommendation is by no means complete. Many of the mechanics need to be worked out. The author is introducing a simple framework to build upon. Addressing the problem of backside rating inflation is more difficult.

The basic problem with backside ratings is the officer corps' almost total dislike for anything resembling controlled ratings. Unfortunately, historical experience shows that a lack of controls eventually begets inflation. A system similar to the Army's (where the indorsing officer's rating history is on every OER he signs) requires predesignating the rating chain. Otherwise, our general officers, who normally sign only the best performers' OERs, would have highly inflated rating histories. And, because 60% of the corps disagreed with predesignated rating chains, a system based on the Army approach would be hard pressed to find much support. What remains is a "damned if you do and damned if you don't" situation. The author recommends leaving this aspect of the OER unchanged.

Even though no formal changes are recommended, spinoff benefits from the change to frontside ratings may help reduce backside rating inflation. Hopefully, with more realistic ratings on the front of the OER, those officers with a majority of their ratings in the "meets standard" column will receive correspondingly lower ratings of potential. This is another area where evaluator awareness needs to be heightened through a vigorous training and education campaign. Even so, if history is a valid indicator, the prospect for long term reductions to backside rating inflation is dim. The last area addressed is restricting the rating chain.

Company grade officers expressed a split opinion regarding a proposal to restrict the ratees' OER evaluators to the three closest people in their supervisory chain (45% agreed and 47% disagreed with the idea). This could be an effective means of controlling general officer indorsements. Unfortunately, with the data at hand, the author cannot make any definitive recommendations other than suggesting further investigation of this idea by HQ AFMPC. The potential for having a positive impact on indorsement inflation by not allowing elevated indorsers until an officer achieves field grade is tremendous. A final recommendation, independent of the survey findings, is suggested.

The author recommends surveying the officer corps on its perception

of the OER system on a regular basis. This particular study is by no means a comprehensive effort. It is a point of departure upon which more refined surveys can be based. The insights provided by such efforts will help prevent the Air Force from making wide-ranging personnel decisions in a vacuum. It is only through this type of assessment that the Air Force can ensure the OER is doing what it's designed to do and if it has the support and acceptance of the officer corps. For these reasons, continued polling is essential.

The OER is a critical force management tool and, as such, is an extremely sensitive subject. This sensitivity should not prevent the Air Force from making the tough decisions needed to maintain the OER's vitality.

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## APPENDICES

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OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORT (OER) SURVEY

I. Demographics

1. What is your current grade?

- A. Second Lieutenant
- B. First Lieutenant
- C. Captain
- D. Major
- E. Lieutenant Colonel
- F. Colonel

2. What is your gender?

- A. Female
- B. Male

3. To what major command or headquarters are you currently assigned?

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| A. Air Force Logistics Command | F. Strategic Air Command                   |
| B. Air Force Space Command     | G. Tactical Air Forces (TAC, USAFE, PACAF) |
| C. Air Force Systems Command   | H. Headquarters USAF                       |
| D. Air Training Command        | I. Other                                   |
| E. Military Airlift Command    |  |

4. To which organizational level are you currently assigned?

- A. Less than MAJCOM Headquarters
- B. MAJCOM Headquarters
- C. Headquarters USAF/SOA/DRU

5. How much total active federal military service (TAFMS) have you completed?

- A. Five years or less
- B. 6 - 10 years
- C. 11 years or more

6. Did you serve as an enlisted member of any of the military services before receiving your commission?

- A. Yes
- B. No

7. What is your active duty component/career status?

- A. Regular officer
- B. Career reserve officer
- C. Reserve officer (noncareer)

8. What is your racial or ethnic background?

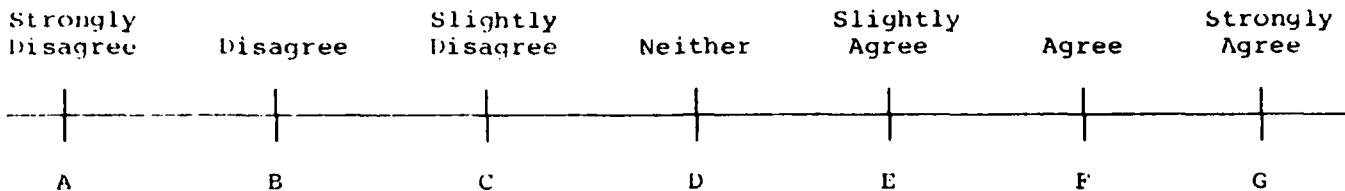
- A. American Indian
- B. Black/Black American/Afro-American
- C. Caucasian/White (Other than Spanish speaking)
- D. Oriental/Oriental American (Asian American, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean)
- E. Spanish speaking origin (Chicano, Cuban, Latin American, Mexican)
- F. Other

9. What is your current primary aeronautical rating?

- A. No aeronautical rating
- B. Navigator
- C. Pilot
- D. Other aeronautical rating

11. General

PLEASE RATE QUESTIONS 10 THRU 37 ON THE FOLLOWING AGREE - DISAGREE SCALE:



- 10. The Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) provides me with accurate feedback on my duty performance.
- 11. The OER provides me with accurate feedback on my promotion potential.
- 12. The OER provides the Air Force accurate information on my duty performance.
- 13. The OER provides the Air Force accurate information on my promotion potential.
- 14. OERs and other documents in promotion folders permit promotion board members to select the best qualified officers for advancement.
- 15. OERs permit assignment officers to make good assignment decisions.
- 16. An officer whose duty performance is well below average is easily identified under the current OER system.
- 17. An officer whose duty performance is below average is easily identified under the current OER system.
- 18. An officer whose duty performance is average is easily identified under the current OER system.
- 19. An officer whose duty performance is above average is easily identified under the current OER system.
- 20. An officer whose duty performance is well above average (below-the-promotion-zone quality) is easily identified under the current OER system.
- 21. Any evaluation of potential rating (backside OER) of "2" or worse given today will preclude an officer from future promotions.
- 22. An evaluation of potential rating (backside OER) of "2" or worse given today will preclude future good assignments.
- 23. A nonfirewalled OER (any rating below the highest on the frontside OER) given today will preclude an officer from future promotions.
- 24. A nonfirewalled OER given today will preclude an officer from future good assignments.
- 25. More time is spent on OER appearance than content.
- 26. Too much time is taken up by the entire OER process (from initial draft to becoming a matter of record).

~~Strongly~~  
~~Slightly~~  
Disagree

Disagree

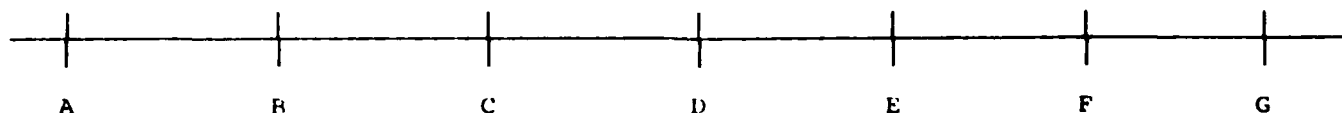
Slightly  
Disagree

Neither

Slightly  
Agree

Agree

Strongly  
Agree



27. I should have more input into my OER before it becomes a matter of record.
28. OERs should measure duty performance only and not assess potential for increased responsibility.
29. Each evaluator who signs my OER should be designated at the beginning of the rating period; i.e., there would be no elevated indorsements.
30. The evaluators on my OER should be the three people closest to me in my chain of supervision.
31. OER policy should require my rater to counsel me on my duty performance and potential during the rating period.
32. The time needed to prepare OERs is well worth the effort.
33. Each career field should have its own OER format which concentrates on areas important to that specialty, not a single form which measures general categories of officership.
34. Frontside OER comments are meaningful and necessary.
35. OER job descriptions are meaningful and necessary.
36. Backside OER comments are meaningful and necessary.
37. OER ratings should be strictly controlled, that is, limits imposed on the percentage of officers who can get "1s" or "2s."
38. As your best estimate, what percent of OERs written of officers in your grade are given an evaluation of potential rating of "1?"
- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| A. 1 - 10%  | G. 61 - 70%   |
| B. 11 - 20% | H. 71 - 80%   |
| C. 21 - 30% | I. 81 - 90%   |
| D. 31 - 40% | J. 91 - 100%  |
| E. 41 - 50% | K. Don't know |
| F. 51 - 60% |               |
39. As your best estimate, what percent of OERs written on officers in your grade are firewalled (all frontside ratings rated the highest)?
- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| A. 1 - 10%  | G. 61 - 70%   |
| B. 11 - 20% | H. 71 - 80%   |
| C. 21 - 30% | I. 81 - 90%   |
| D. 31 - 40% | J. 91 - 100%  |
| L. 41 - 50% | K. Don't know |
| F. 51 - 60% |               |

40. As your best estimate, what percent of OERs written on officers in your grade are indorsed by a general officer?
- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| A. 1 - 10%  | G. 61 - 70%   |
| B. 11 - 20% | H. 71 - 80%   |
| C. 21 - 30% | I. 81 - 90%   |
| D. 31 - 40% | J. 91 - 100%  |
| E. 41 - 50% | K. Don't know |
| F. 51 - 60% |               |
41. Have you ever given a draft OER that you wrote on yourself to your rater?
- A. Yes  
B. No (SKIP to Question #43)
42. If the answer to #41 is "YES," about what percent of your input actually appeared on the final OER?
- A. None  
B. 25%  
C. 50%  
D. 75%  
E. All  
F. Don't know
43. Has your rater ever shown you a copy or draft of your OER before it was finalized and put in your record?
- A. Yes  
B. No
44. Once an OER is put into your record, it can never be changed.
- A. True  
B. False
45. During your career, how many OERs have you written?
- A. Zero  
B. 1 - 2  
C. 3 - 10  
D. 11 - 20  
E. 21 - 30  
F. Over 30
46. What is the level of indorsement on your last OER?
- A. Colonel  
B. Brigadier General  
C. Major General  
D. Lieutenant General  
E. General  
F. Don't know
47. Do you believe a change to the current OER is warranted? (Please elaborate)
- A. Yes  
B. No  
C. Don't know
- 
- 
-

IF YOU ARE PRESENTLY A RATER, OR HAVE BEEN ONE IN THE PAST, PLEASE COMPLETE QUESTIONS 48 THROUGH 53 FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE AS A RATER.

48. What is the average amount of time you spend preparing each OER?

- A. Less than 2 hours
- B. 2 - 4 hours
- C. 5 - 7 hours
- D. 8 + hours

49. Have you ever read AFR 36-10, Officer Evaluations?

- A. Yes, all the way through
- B. Yes, partly
- C. No

50. What is the primary purpose of the OER for you, as the rater?

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51. What training have you received on writing an OER?

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52. How do you track a subordinate's performance throughout the rating period?

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53. What criteria do you use when recommending level of indorsement on an OER?

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# APPENDIX B

## COMPANY VS FIELD GRADE RESPONSES

Note: Numbers in parentheses are Chi square degrees of freedom and p = probability.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q 10.							
Co Grd	11.7%	24.9%	14.1%	4.6%	21.1%	21.6%	2.0%
Fld Grd	12.2%	29.8%	9.1%	3.6%	20.5%	22.2%	2.5%
Wgt Avg	11.8%	26.7%	12.3%	4.3%	20.9%	21.8%	2.1%
Chi Sq=8.458 (6)							
Chi sq p=.2064							
Q 11.							
Co Grd	9.0%	16.3%	14.5%	6.6%	22.2%	25.3%	5.9%
Fld Grd	13.3%	19.6%	10.6%	5.1%	20.3%	25.9%	5.1%
Wgt Avg	10.6%	17.6%	13.0%	6.1%	21.5%	25.5%	5.6%
Chi Sq=10.000 (6)							
Chi sq p=.1247							
Q 12.							
Co Grd	12.3%	22.0%	16.5%	6.6%	23.1%	16.7%	2.6%
Fld Grd	13.0%	25.5%	12.6%	4.4%	23.2%	19.0%	2.3%
Wgt Avg	12.6%	23.3%	15.1%	5.8%	23.1%	17.6%	2.6%
Chi Sq=7.034 (6)							
Chi sq p=.3177							
Q 13.							
Co Grd	10.6%	19.6%	13.5%	7.5%	25.4%	19.0%	4.4%
Fld Grd	12.9%	21.1%	11.4%	6.5%	23.8%	20.5%	3.8%
Wgt Avg	11.4%	20.2%	12.8%	7.2%	24.8%	19.6%	4.2%
Chi Sq=3.363 (6)							
Chi sq p=.7620							
Q 14.							
Co Grd	13.0%	18.5%	20.0%	7.9%	22.5%	16.7%	1.3%
Fld Grd	9.1%	17.7%	15.4%	7.2%	26.5%	21.3%	2.7%
Wgt Avg	11.7%	18.2%	18.4%	7.7%	23.9%	18.4%	1.7%
Chi Sq=12.917 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0444							

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q 15.							
Co Grd	10.1%	22.5%	21.8%	16.7%	18.5%	9.5%	0.9%
Fld Grd	15.4%	24.1%	15.0%	11.6%	23.6%	10.1%	0.2%
Wgt Avg	12.0%	23.0%	19.4%	14.9%	20.3%	9.7%	0.7%
Chi Sq=21.625 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0014							
Q 16.							
Co Grd	12.7%	17.4%	15.4%	4.8%	21.8%	21.1%	6.8%
Fld Grd	5.9%	17.7%	12.6%	3.8%	15.6%	35.0%	9.3%
Wgt Avg	10.3%	17.5%	14.4%	4.4%	19.6%	26.1%	7.8%
Chi Sq=38.041 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0000							
Q 17.							
Co Grd	15.0%	24.4%	22.0%	7.7%	18.5%	10.6%	1.8%
Fld Grd	7.6%	26.5%	19.6%	6.3%	22.3%	13.9%	3.8%
Wgt Avg	12.4%	25.2%	21.1%	7.2%	19.8%	11.7%	2.5%
Chi Sq=21.187 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0017							
Q 18.							
Co Grd	18.7%	28.2%	24.0%	9.3%	12.8%	6.6%	0.4%
Fld Grd	12.7%	31.9%	25.3%	10.1%	12.4%	7.0%	0.6%
Wgt Avg	16.6%	29.5%	24.5%	9.5%	12.6%	6.8%	0.5%
Chi Sq=7.270 (6)							
Chi sq p=.2966							
Q 19.							
Co Grd	14.6%	24.5%	20.5%	7.5%	20.5%	11.7%	0.7%
Fld Grd	10.1%	27.2%	19.2%	6.3%	23.6%	13.0%	0.6%
Wgt Avg	12.9%	25.5%	20.1%	7.1%	21.7%	12.1%	0.6%
Chi Sq=6.821 (6)							
Chi sq p=.3377							
Q 20.							
Co Grd	12.6%	18.1%	10.8%	6.6%	26.0%	20.9%	5.1%
Fld Grd	9.3%	14.8%	11.6%	3.6%	25.5%	27.2%	8.0%
Wgt Avg	11.4%	16.9%	11.1%	5.6%	25.7%	23.1%	6.1%
Chi Sq=10.527 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0165							
Q 21.							
Co Grd	0.4%	2.4%	5.7%	4.0%	14.8%	33.9%	38.8%
Fld Grd	0.4%	1.1%	3.0%	1.7%	9.7%	34.4%	49.6%
Wgt Avg	0.4%	1.0%	4.8%	3.2%	13.0%	34.1%	42.7%
Chi Sq=12.562 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0010							



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q 22.							
Co Grd	0.7%	3.7%	7.5%	13.0%	21.8%	27.1%	26.2%
Fld Grd	0.0%	2.7%	5.7%	7.4%	19.0%	33.8%	31.4%
Wgt Avg	0.4%	3.4%	6.8%	11.0%	20.8%	29.5%	28.1%
Chi Sq=19.945 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0028							
Q 23.							
Co Grd	1.5%	7.5%	13.2%	7.7%	27.9%	25.1%	17.1%
Fld Grd	0.8%	6.3%	12.4%	7.4%	23.2%	33.3%	16.7%
Wgt Avg	1.3%	7.0%	12.8%	7.5%	26.2%	28.0%	17.0%
Chi Sq=9.740 (6)							
Chi sq p=.1360							
Q 24.							
Co Grd	1.5%	10.8%	13.8%	14.9%	27.0%	21.3%	10.5%
Fld Grd	0.6%	8.8%	14.7%	12.0%	26.7%	27.2%	10.1%
Wgt Avg	1.2%	10.1%	14.1%	13.9%	26.9%	23.4%	10.3%
Chi Sq=8.492 (6)							
Chi sq p=.2042							
Q 25.							
Co Grd	1.3%	7.7%	11.7%	15.9%	20.9%	19.2%	23.3%
Fld Grd	2.7%	16.7%	9.7%	15.8%	20.5%	19.4%	15.2%
Wgt Avg	1.7%	10.9%	10.9%	15.8%	20.8%	19.3%	20.4%
Chi Sq=17.372 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0001							
Q 26.							
Co Grd	2.0%	9.2%	8.6%	16.5%	19.8%	22.0%	22.0%
Fld Grd	4.4%	12.5%	7.6%	10.3%	14.3%	20.5%	30.4%
Wgt Avg	2.8%	10.4%	8.3%	14.3%	17.8%	21.5%	25.1%
Chi Sq=25.401 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0003							
Q 27.							
Co Grd	1.5%	12.3%	8.1%	27.1%	18.9%	21.1%	10.9%
Fld Grd	7.0%	25.5%	12.0%	23.0%	13.9%	14.7%	3.8%
Wgt Avg	3.6%	17.1%	9.5%	25.6%	17.2%	18.8%	8.3%
Chi Sq=69.808 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0000							
Q 28.							
Co Grd	18.3%	44.7%	17.4%	7.0%	5.3%	5.5%	1.3%
Fld Grd	22.6%	46.6%	15.8%	4.9%	4.0%	4.2%	1.9%
Wgt Avg	19.8%	45.4%	16.8%	6.2%	4.8%	5.1%	1.8%
Chi Sq=6.431 (6)							
Chi sq p=.3766							

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q 29.							
Co Grd	14.4%	28.3%	14.6%	16.2%	9.1%	10.6%	6.9%
Fld Grd	17.9%	34.6%	12.5%	11.8%	8.7%	9.3%	5.1%
Wgt Avg	15.7%	30.5%	13.8%	14.6%	9.0%	10.1%	6.3%
Chi Sq=10.627 (6)							
Chi sq p=.1006							
Q 30.							
Co Grd	11.5%	19.9%	15.7%	8.2%	14.6%	21.0%	9.3%
Fld Grd	10.6%	30.4%	14.8%	7.8%	13.9%	16.2%	6.3%
Wgt Avg	11.2%	23.7%	15.3%	8.0%	14.3%	19.3%	8.2%
Chi Sq=16.921 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0096							
Q 31.							
Co Grd	.7%	1.5%	1.5%	5.1%	11.9%	38.1%	41.2%
Fld Grd	1.3%	4.0%	2.5%	5.9%	14.3%	40.9%	31.2%
Wgt Avg	.9%	2.5%	1.9%	5.4%	12.7%	39.0%	37.5%
Chi Sq=15.853 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0146							
Q 32.							
Co Grd	8.6%	9.7%	14.1%	19.9%	21.0%	18.3%	8.4%
Fld Grd	10.1%	16.9%	15.4%	11.8%	14.8%	22.8%	8.2%
Wgt Avg	9.1%	12.3%	14.6%	17.0%	18.8%	19.9%	8.4%
Chi Sq=27.942 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0001							
Q 33.							
Co Grd	13.9%	25.1%	13.0%	11.5%	13.0%	11.7%	11.9%
Fld Grd	23.0%	28.7%	8.7%	11.6%	11.0%	10.3%	6.7%
Wgt Avg	17.1%	26.4%	11.5%	11.5%	12.3%	11.1%	10.0%
Chi Sq=24.693 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0004							
Q 34.							
Co Grd	7.0%	13.4%	16.5%	9.7%	23.8%	26.2%	3.3%
Fld Grd	11.1%	26.0%	16.2%	6.3%	20.4%	17.0%	3.1%
Wgt Avg	8.5%	18.0%	16.4%	8.5%	22.6%	22.9%	3.3%
Chi Sq=37.308 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0000							
Q 35.							
Co Grd	1.8%	5.5%	6.6%	6.6%	25.1%	41.9%	12.6%
Fld Grd	2.1%	6.5%	5.9%	4.6%	25.3%	42.6%	13.1%
Wgt Avg	1.8%	5.9%	6.4%	5.9%	25.2%	42.0%	12.7%
Chi Sq=2.651 (6)							
Chi sq p=.8512							

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q 36.							
Co Grd	2.6%	3.5%	5.9%	5.5%	20.3%	45.8%	16.3%
Fld Grd	1.9%	3.2%	6.1%	5.1%	22.7%	44.2%	16.8%
Wgt Avg	2.5%	3.4%	5.9%	5.4%	21.0%	45.3%	16.6%
Chi Sq=1.546 (6)							
Chi sq p=.9564							

Q 37.							
Co Grd	49.3%	21.5%	7.3%	8.2%	6.6%	4.2%	2.9%
Fld Grd	41.0%	22.3%	7.0%	6.5%	7.4%	9.7%	6.1%
Wgt Avg	46.3%	21.7%	7.3%	7.6%	7.0%	6.2%	4.0%
Chi Sq=20.857 (6)							
Chi sq p=.0019							

	Yes	No	Don't know
Q 47.			
Co Grd	68.5%	15.8%	15.8%
Fld Grd	69.0%	20.4%	10.6%
Wgt Avg	68.7%	17.4%	13.9%
Chi Sq=7.633 (2)			
Chi sq p=.0220			

END

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