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U.S. ARMY OFFICER PERCEPTIONS OF THE NEW OER (DA FORM 67-8)

by

Allan C. Hardy

and

Keith B. Harker

December 1982

Thesis Advisor:

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In order to determine the perceptions of Army Officers in the field concerning this OER, a sample of officers in the grades of 0-3, 0-4, and 0-5 from the three Army installations in central California was surveyed by the authors. The results of this survey show a high general level of support for keeping the present OER, even though specific problem areas do exist where the perceptions of the officers surveyed differ significantly from published official statements and policy.

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U.S. Army Officer Perceptions of the New OER (DA Form 67-8)

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The thrust of this thesis involves the examination of the perceptions of U.S. Army officers in the field concerning the present Officer Evaluation Report System (OERS). This will be done by utilizing the results of a survey instrument designed by the authors and administered to army officers at three local installations. By doing this, it is hoped that areas in which common perceptions are held may be identified and analyzed. It is one hope of this thesis that these common perceptions will agree with recent optimistic findings tentatively espoused by Department of the Army (DA). If this is the case, then this study will lend further credence to the statements and claims being made by DA.

If the common perceptions do not agree with these statements and claims, then the DA Form 67-8 system may encounter resistance in the future. It is not the aim of this study to pass judgement on the present OERS nor to predict its ultimate success or failure. However, if there are commonly held perceptions about this latest evaluation report which run counter to the statements and claims being made by DA officials, then it would behoove these officials to become aware of these differences as quickly as possible.

The basic hypothesis of this thesis, then, is that the perceptions of U.S. Army officers in the field concerning the effectiveness of the DA Form 67-8 Officer Evaluation Reporting System are in agreement with the statements already promulgated by officials at Department of the Army, MILPERCEN. The results of this thesis should either support or refute the preceding hypothesis.

Additionally, where possible, this thesis will qualitatively assess whether or not some previously held perceptions concerning earlier officer evaluation reporting systems have changed with the institution of the DA Form 67-8.

B. BACKGROUND

The U.S. Army Officer Evaluation Reporting System (OERS) is the product of many years of research and development. It is part of a performance appraisal system that has few equals in the industrial or academic worlds based upon its size, complexity, and application.

It is of paramount importance that every officer understand the purpose of the Officer Evaluation Reporting System. Each report is designed and intended to provide useful and meaningful information about each officer to Headquarters, Department of the Army (DA). This information becomes the basis for making personnel management decisions which involve every aspect of an officer's career to include promotion, assignments, selection for military and civilian schools,

retention on active duty, entry into a Voluntary Indefinite status, and in some cases, a passover.

The current U.S. Army Officer Evaluation Report - DA Form 67-8 - is the 16th revision since World War I, and the seventh version of the Form 67 series since 1947. The purpose of this form and its predecessors was to provide a more useful, accurate, and equitable performance management system, as well as to control the problem of rating inflation (Consistently placing an inordinantly large percentage of officers at the high end of a rating scale). Although the control of inflation has been a major goal of these forms, it has not been adequately achieved within the last fifty years.

Even as he introduced the latest Army Officer Evaluation
Report System (OERS) in 1979, then Army Chief of Staff
Bernard Rogers cautioned that "officers should not expect
the new OER form to cure the inflation scoring problems within
the Army evaluation system." In testifying before the House
Appropriations Subcommittee, he said the experience of earlier
evalution reports indicates that the new OER will probably
encounter high-score problems as officers become familiar with
the intricacies of the scoring system. Within a few years,
he said, the Army may have to modify the system to counter
scoring tendencies [Ref. 1: p.24]. An extensive study of the
OER system completed in 1972, prior to the latest two revisions,
reached the same conclusions:

"... The adoption of a new report may lower the inflationary trend for a short time as has happened in the past; however, as has also happened with every form since 1925, inflation will take over, making the new report as useless by selection boards as the previous ones" [Ref. 2: p.19].

It is interesting to note, however, that Department of the Army officials have said that the current evaluation report (which has been in use for three years) is not encountering nearly as many problems as many thought it would. These officials have said that this form - DA Form 67-8 - is proving to be much more effective than its predecessors in providing meaningful data to selection boards, as well as in curbing the rating inflation tendency. Further, they have also said that there are presently no plans to replace this form with a new one.

C. THE STUDY CONCEPT

For more than 50 years, the Army used the term "Efficiency Report". With the adoption of DA Form 67-7, the title of the form was changed to "Officer Evaluation Report". This modest change addresses more exactly the function of the report and of the rating officials. It should help remind these officials that they are not simply rating the officer - they are evaluating his ability to perform military duties and to appraise his qualifications for further duties. They are judging his worth to the Army in the duties just concluded and in those duties just ahead. In other words, they are answering the questions "How did he/she do?" and "How can he/she do?".

In order to try to better answer these questions, the Army developed the DA Form 67-8 system. This evaluation system is multi-faceted in that it actually involves the use of three different forms, rather than just one. It relies heavily upon the techniques and concepts of management by objectives (MBO). It is very ambitious in its scope and design, and is largely dependent on a continual system of feedback and give-and-take between the rater and ratee. A more thorough discussion of the specifics of this system is included in chapter two of this thesis.

As mentioned earlier, Department of the Army officials at the Officer Evaluation Branch of the Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) in Washington are supportive of the present evaluation report. They have made several evaluative and judgemental statements concerning the effectiveness of the new evaluation report, and the perceptions of it held by officers in the field. Although outwardly optimistic, they caution that their conclusions are tentative and based only on two and one half years worth of data (some 250,000 reports).

It should be noted, however, that these same officials were the proponent agency for the development and implementation of the new evaluation system in the first place. Further, their office is the agency responsible for the collection and analysis of data concerning the effectiveness of the system. They are the agency which will ultimately pass judgement on the success or failure of the present OER system. It would be natural to

assume, then, that these officials also would have some ownership in the present system and would be interested in seeing it become a success.

Although such ownership is not inherently bad, the authors thought that an outside study of the present evaluation system might lend even more credibility to the initial, optimistic findings of the DA officials. Instead of scoring trends or averages, however, the authors were interested in the perceptions of the present evaluation system held by officers in the field.

D. ORGANIZATION

This thesis was written with the assumption that the reader will neither be familiar with the U.S. Army's present officer evaluation system nor will be aware of the historical development and evolution of this system. Therefore, a rather extensive historical review of the Army's officer evaluation efforts is included in chapter two of this thesis. The thesis then discusses methodology, results and analysis of the survey instrument. Finally, a concluding chapter is included.

II. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

A. EARLY HISTORY

The year 1890 is generally considered to be the date when the U.S. Army first developed a permanent efficiency reporting system for its officers. However, there were earlier attempts to develop a performance evaluation system within the U.S. military. These can be traced back all the way to General Washington and the Continental Army. When he took command, Washington sent out an order that efficiency reports, or what amounted to efficiency reports, be rendered by battalion commanders on all officers in the battalion. These reports were to be used to adjust the grades within the battalion. Those cases which could not be resolved at the lower levels were ultimately referred to the general for resolution. Such records as were retained were lost in the Washington fire in 1813. For the most part, however, these earlier evaluation attempts were sporadic and informal. Evaluation was accomplished principally by way of service reputation. Nepotism and patronage were much in evidence [Ref. 3: p.26].

During most of the period before 1890 the Army remained small, so there was no real need to develop a formal system of evaluation. Officers could expect to stay with the same regiment almost indefinitely. Thus, their capabilities were well known to all members of the organization, including

those in positions to make or influence promotions. It was common for several members of a family to serve together at the same post.

This early period was not entirely devoid, however, of legitimate and conscientious efforts to develop useful evaluation techniques. In 1813 the combined offices of The Adjutant General and the inspector general sent a letter to thirteen regiments asking that a report be provided which assigned a relative rank by grade for all officers of the command. From all available evidence, this was the initial forced ranking technique used by the U.S. Army [Ref. 3: p.27]. The report was to distinguish between those officers known to be meritorious and those who were not. One commander's response "expressed a hope that his communication might remain confidential in order to avoid unpleasant feeling" [Ref. 4: p.II-10 & II-11]. This provided a portent of the controversy that would develop in the 20th century regarding the propriety of not showing an officer his reports. In response to the above-mentioned letter, the first recorded attempt to report observation on subordinates was made by Brigadier General Lewis Cass in 1813. Figure 1 includes excerpts from that report.

The inspector general often would also incorporate remarks concerning the quality of officers in various commands in his reports, but little use was made of the information [Ref. 3: p.27]. Almost all formal evaluative effort during

FIGURE 1

EXCERPTS FROM THE EARLIEST RECORDED EFFICIENCY REPORT

EFFICIENCY REPORTS—VINTAGE 1813 Reprinted below are excerpts from an efficiency report which has been gathering dust these many years. Names of the officers have been changed; and any similarity to persons living or dead is coincidental. "Lower Seneca Town, August 15th 1813. I forward a list of the officers of the-th Regt, of Infty, arranged agreeable to rank. Annexed thereto you will find all the observations I deem necessary to make. Respectively, I am, Sir, Yo. Obt. Sevt., Lewis Cass" —th Regi. Infentry
Alexander Brown—Li. Col., Condg.—A good natured man.
Clark Crowell—first Major—A good man, but no officer.
Joss B. Wordewerth—Ind Mojor—An excellent officer.
Captain Shaw—A man of whom all unite in speaking ill—A knave desp by all.

Coptain Thomas Lord—Indifferent, but promises well.

Captain Rockwell—An officer of capacity, but impredent and a man of viole Captain Dan L. Ware Captain Parker Strangers but little known in the regiment. let Lt. Jas. Kearns let Lt. Thomas Dearfoot Merely good-aothing promising. Low, vulgar men, with the exception of Her-ring. From the meanest walks of life-pos-sessing nothing of the character of officers and 1st Lt. Wm. Herring 1st Lt. Dani. Land Lt. Jas. I. Bryan Ist Lt. Robert McKewell gentien 1st Lt. Robert Cross—Willing enough—has much to learn—with small capacity. 2nd Lt. Nicholas Furmer—A good officer, but drinks hard and disgraces himself and the Service. 2nd Lt. Stewart Berry-An ignorant unoffending fellow. 2nd Lt. Darrow-Just joined the Regiment-of fine appearance. 2nd Lt. Pierce Raised from the ranks, but all behave well 2nd Lt. Thos. G. Slicer 2nd Lt. Oliver Warren and promise to make excellent officers 2nd Lt. Royal Gore All promoted from the ranks, low, vulgar men, 2nd Lt. Means without one qualification to recommend them more fit to carry the hod than the epamette. 2nd Lt. Clew 2nd Lt. McLear 2nd Lt. John G. Sheaffer 2nd Lt. Francis T. Whelan Promoted from the ranks. Behave well and will make good officers. Easign Behan-The very dregs of the earth. Unfit for anything under heaven. God only knows how the poor thing got an appointment. Ensign John Breen Promoted from the ranks-men of so manner and Ensign Byor no promise. Ensign North-From the ranks. A good young man who does well. Extracted from the Adjutant General's School Bulletin, April 1942,

this early period was concentrated on elimination of the unfit rather than identification of officers who possessed outstanding value to the service.

Even the Civil War failed to produce any significant developments in the movement toward a formal efficiency reporting system. While the number of men under arms expanded considerably, the size of the Regular Army remained basically static, so that service reputation and patronage could still play the prime roles. The Confederate Army instituted a requirement for periodic reports on all combat officers, but it was never really placed in use. This action is significant, nevertheless, because it was the first time that any requirement for periodic officer evaluation had ever been stated in an American army [Ref. 3: p.28].

B. TOWARDS A PERMANENT SYSTEM (1890-1922)

The 1890's saw the advent of a systematic efficiency reporting system in the Army [Ref. 5: p.291]. Secretary of War Redfield Proctor issued the first directive on this subject in April 1890. In discussing the principles and aims of the reporting system, the directive noted:

"A record will be kept in the War Department of the services, efficiency, and special qualifications of officers of the Army, including the condition of their commands and the percentages of desertion therefrom, and from further reports made for that purpose" [Ref. 4: p.III-1].

This first annual report came in two parts. The first part was completed by the officer himself and the second by his

commanding officer. It was mandatory that the commanding officer's report be shown to the rated officer when it was unfavorable.

It is interesting to note that as early as 1891 there is evidence that the problem of "hard" versus "easy" raters began to be felt, a factor closely related to the problem of efficiency report inflation. A recommendation was made that the officer in charge of the "efficiency record section be of wide personal acquaintance in order that he might give proper weight to the reports in keeping with the characters of the grading officials" [Ref. 4: p.III-4]. There is no indication that the recommendation was favorably considered.

By 1895 the efficiency report had attained the status of a permanent system. As each succeeding year passed, the reports tended to become more and more lengthy. Around 1900 the report consisted of two pages. By 1911 the efficiency report had grown to 24 pages. In 1917 the report was shortened to 12 pages for the sake of simplicity, probably as a result of war mobilization. During World War I, the Army developed a form which became the forerunner of the 2-sided document which has been used (except for a 3-year period) to this date.

Two overriding factors seem to have dictated the acceptance of an Army-wide annual efficiency reporting system by the officer corps during the period 1890-1922. The first step was the withdrawal in 1890 of officer promotion

authority from the regimental commands [Ref. 5: p.291].

Secondly, President Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) decided that too much influence was being wielded by politicians and other powerful civilians in obtaining commissions, promotions, and transfers. He felt the Army should have an officer evaluation system which would be impartial and which would base personnel actions upon individual merit. Therefore, he clearly enunciated officer personnel management policies that ruled out use of patronage for personal advancement, and he threw the weight of the Presidency behind an officer evaluation system that would ensure impartiality and would be based upon individual merit. "If any one factor can be singled out as having been of paramount importance in the development of a viable efficiency reporting system, it would have to be Theodore Roosevelt's intervention" [Ref. 3: p.30].

C. INITIAL FORM 67

Effective 14 November 1922 the War Department established an efficiency report with the base number 711. It was very similar to the form displayed in Appendix A. This form was an outgrowth of research conducted during World War I. It should be noted that the report had no provision for a numeric rating, although the Army did attempt to eventually quantify the adjectival ratings on the various editions of the report form. The same basic system, except for a major change of format in 1945, was used until 1947.

On 1 December 1924 the WD AGO Form 711 was re-issued as WD AGO Form 67. The familiar "67" number series has been used ever since. The original Form 67 brought with it significant improvements over previous methodology. Also, as an earlier thesis pointed out, it represented a milestone in that it brought the U.S. Army's efficiency reporting system to the threshold of the inflation problem that would plague it in later years [Ref. 3: p.31].

During its first few years of existence, the Form 67 reporting system was highly effective in controlling rating inflation and discriminating among officers. The system reached its high-water mark of effectiveness in 1924, and then increasingly came under the influence of grade inflation [Ref. 6: p.2]. However, by World War II, what had started out as good system of the 20's was no longer serving the purpose for which it was intended. Between 1924 and 1945, there had been 7 re-issues of the efficiency report form with no change in the base number. The 1 February 1945 version of the basic Form 67 is included as Appendix B to this thesis.

There is little doubt that Form 67 was well liked by officers in the field. Familiarity with the system through long use surely contributed to this popularity. However, the primary factor in its popularity seems to have been the high assurance of a good rating [Ref. 3: p.35].

As mentioned earlier, by World War II the Form 67 had become largely useless. Personnel selection boards could no longer depend on efficiency reports to identify top caliber officers. Personal knowledge of officer capabilities, by reason of necessity, became a key index in determining officer promotability. In essence, the old service reputation concept was reasserting itself.

D. SUBSEQUENT FORMS 67

At the end of World War II, a major program of scientific research was undertaken to compare the relative merits of several different efficiency reporting systems with the objective of picking the best. The nation's leading behavioral scientists were involved in this research, as well as thousands of officers representing all branches, grades, components, and echelons. The result of all this effort was that the previous evaluation system and its reporting for lat were replaced by Department of the Army Form 67-1 (see Appendix C). This new form was adopted for official use on 1 July 1947 and introduced three fairly radical innovations. First - and most importantly - the form was "validated". This meant that, for the first time, a report form was tested before its adoption to see if the ratings accomplished by the form were related to some other realistic measure of officer efficiency. The second innovation involved the use of a relative-score scale which allowed comparisons among officers.

Thirdly, the form introduced forced-choice items as a method of evaluation.

For the purpose of checking validity, in 1946 more than 7,700 officers were asked to complete both Form 67 and the proposed Form 67-1. To establish a criterion for measuring the comparative validity of the two forms, superiors, subordinates, and associates of each rated officer rendered their own evaluations. The average score resulting form these ratings became the criterion for validity. The degree of correlation between each evaluation form and the established criterion was then determined. It was concluded that the Form 67-1 generally demonstrated a greater degree of validity than the Form 67 because the correlation values for the new form were higher across the board than for the old form.

The relative scoring system was designed to provide the following kind of comparison: after all the raw scores had been obtained, the middle score was converted to an Army Standard Rating (ASR) of 100. The scores above and below the middle were converted on a uniform basis up and down from 100, within a maximum of 150 and a minimum of 51. The resulting ASR's had meaning in terms of relative position, since half were above 100 and half below; about two-thirds lay between 80 and 120. This score was referred to as the Overall Efficiency Index (OEI) and was computed as of 31 May each year for all reports beginning with the Form 67-1 through the 67-4.

From a validity point of view and the standpoint of improved differentiation and reduced inflation, Form 67-1 showed great promise. However, in terms of acceptablility to the officer corps, it was a total failure. Officers did not like either the relative scoring system or the forced-choice items. Dislikes centered around the unknowns in score obtained, the fact that the rater was required to check off statements that were not complete and meaningful, and because there were no provisions for showing the report to the rated officer.

As a consequence, DA Form 67-2 (see Appendix D) was put into use on 1 September 1950. This revision was intended to address and correct the ills of Form 67-1. Like its predecessor, it was standardized, but no effort was made to validate it. Even more significantly, and in spite of the problems with the previous form, no action was taken to determine its acceptability to the officer corps through field testing. The new form was divided into five separate sections. It provided for information to identify the rated officer, the rater, and the indorser, and also contained comments by the rating and indorsing officers. Sections were also included which contained scored scales on performance and promotability.

One highly significant aspect of the system under DA Form 67-2 was the use of an Overall Efficiency Index (OEI) which covered a 5-year period. It was hoped that the averaging of reports rendered by different rating officials over an extended

period of time would facilitate the rank ordering of officers for promotion purposes. This hope was not fully realized, however.

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Therefore, on 1 October 1953 DA Form 67-3 made its appearance on the scene (see Appendix E). Since it had earlier been determined that acceptability by the officer corps must be achieved, "it was decided to permit the officer corps to construct their own form to a large degree" [Ref. 6: p.4]. The end result was that the new form represented only a modification of the preceding one. The new form was validated in a manner similar to that used before the adoption of Form 67-1. There is a strong suggestion, however, that much more weight was placed on the acceptability issue than on the form's capability to deliver an objective measurement [Ref. 3: p.39].

Perhaps because of this inherent deficiency, DA Form 67-3 gave way to the DA Form 67-4 on 31 December 1956 (see Appendix F). This latest form was also a basic revision of DA Form 67-2, but it did provide some administrative changes. For example, the OEI base was extended from five to seven years "to lesson the impact of extreme reports and to predict an officer's true efficiency more clearly." More importantly, however, this form introduced for the first time the role of a "reviewer": an officer in the chain of command who was expected to insure that the correct officer rated and indorsed each ratee, and that both rater and indorser fully complied with the regulation.

The development of DA Form 67-5 was undertaken in January of 1958, but the report and regulation did not go into Army-wide use until 1 October 1961 (see Appendix G). This revision was based on substantial studies from 1958 onward. Additionally, the form itself was subjected to an intensive field test. The need for the new system paralled the rationale governing previous changes in the "67" series. It had been determined that DA Form 67-4 was losing ground in both validity and acceptability [Ref. 7: p.3].

The DA Form 67-5 did away with the OEI concept and substituted an annual numerical score, dropping the standard scoring scale in the process. The composite numerical score which the rater and the indorser entered on each form became the basis for the annual numerical score. As a safeguard against hard and easy raters, rating officials had to furnish factual support for each award of the highest and lowest numerical rating. The role of the reviewing officer was also increased significantly. Most importantly, greater emphasis was placed upon performance of current duty by downplaying the description of the ratee and instead, evaluating his measurable performance of duties. A mandatory counseling requirement was prescribed and it was also decided that, as a means of controlling rater bias, officers would not be shown their reports.

This efficiency report, like its predecessors, ultimately suffered from the problem of rating inflation. In addition, the no-show policy was frequently attacked by the officer corps and undoubtedly lessened the acceptability of the form.

In 1966, an ad-hoc committee of the Army began work to devise yet another evaluation system. Its charter was to simplifiy the tasks of the rater and indorser in accurately portraying the ratee, while at the same time providing Department of the Army more concise and meaningful information. Less dependence was to be placed on the writing ability of the rater and indorser. It was also planned to provide for "rating the rater" at Department of the Army, by annotating each rater's profile on computer tape. This objective was, however, never realized. Nevertheless, on 1 April 1968 the DA Form 67-6 was made effective with the hope that it would overcome the inflationary trend and be more discriminating in identifying the truly outstanding officer [Ref. 8: p.13.1]. Most of the changes were cosmetic rather than substantive in nature (see Appendix H). As an example, the space allocated on the form for narrative remarks was reduced in size in order to de-emphisize the importance of that particular element.

One important feature of the system initially was the use of a forced ranking scale that required both the rater and the indorser to rank the officer among officers of the same grade "performing similar functions." Rating officials were also required to show the placement of all officers being compared in one of five rating blocks ranging from "top" to "bottom 5th". This technique was designed to present a picture of the standards of the rating officials.

The forced ranking system proved highly ineffective.

Sample surveys showed that about 40 per cent of the raters found reasons not to complete the rank-order portion of the report, and 43 per cent of the remainder ranked the officer either "1" or "2" of "X" number of officers. In effect, each officer, at the time of evaluation, suddenly ranked at the very top of his peer group. [Ref. 3: p.41].

Bowing to an acute acceptability problem, the rank ordering portion of the report was dicontinued in October 1969, but the requirement to place officers in one of the five rating blocks with peers was retained. As mentioned earlier, another one of the original intents of this report form was to commit the portion of the form having to do with forced ranking to computer tape. In this way a running average of annual average scores (AAS) on past reports rendered by each rater and indorser could be developed. Based on what that average turned out to be, each report rendered by that officer would be stamped to reflect his standards (high, medium, or low). This approach to using the form never materialized. It soon became apparent that the DA Form 67-6 fell far short of its expectations. Therefore, continued efforts to develop another new system went on.

In 1969, the Army completed the first comprehensive survey of the overall Officer Efficiency Reporting System (OERS).

Objectives of this study were to determine rating concepts, administrative procedures, automation, rating formats,

personnel and cost implications, and areas of study required to support future changes to the system [Ref. 9: p.14]. This study also looked into the techniques and systems used by the military organizations of four of our allies - Canada, France, Great Britian, and West Germany.

The study developed four principal findings:

- a. There was a lack of confidence by the officer corps in the value and usefulness of the efficiency report system.
- b. The indorsing officer added little substance.
- c. There existed a need for education and training to support the system.
- d. There was a strong requirement for career and performance counseling.

The study concluded that the Officer Efficiency Reporting System needs: (1) Organization for acceptance, (2) Research and development planning for future evolutionary changes, and (3) Automation support, research, and correlation with other officer evaluation management tools [Ref. 9: p.15].

During 1970, a study of the total officer personnel management structure, entitled The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS), was begun. An initial report was published in June of 1971 for information to the officer corps. As part of the report, short and long range goals were identified.

Another part of this effort included the development of DA Form 67-7 for use beginning 1 January 1973. Addressing the evaluation portion, the report's short range goals were specified to be an initial supervisory system, and more automation of selected portions of the efficiency report. Few substantive

changes were made in the form itself. The long term goals were stated as "focusing on reduced dependability of the single report instrument for personnel management and to establish a comprehensive research and development effort towards the goal of restructuring the evaluation, counseling, and personnel selection system by the end of the decade [Ref. 9: p.15].

When the DA Form 67-7 was inaugurated, then, the earlier report form had been revised from the basic forced choice type to a composite checklist, narrative description, and preferred ranking type (see Appendix I). Personal qualities had been revised to read as professional attributes; the numerical ratings converted to "boxed scores"; and a 70/30 performance to potential numerical weighting arrangement established. Its main claims to fame were "an overt scoring system to combat inflation, the capability of automating much of its data, and an attempt to measure rater tendencies." Each officer charged with responsibility of rating other officers was also encouraged to use performance counseling or "coaching" to develop his subordinates, particularly with junior officers [Ref. 10: p.1.1]. It is also interesting to note that in conjunction with the development of the DA Form 67-7, an OER research element was added to the Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) at Department of the Army on a permanent basis.

Much like its predecessors, the DA Form 67-7 also failed to live up to its expectations. Even though this form was

used until October of 1979, Department of the Army had announced by early 1975 that this form was going to be replaced.

The main arguments against the DA Form 67-7 were that it provided no guidance to the rated officer on how he was doing or in what areas he should improve; and selection boards again had very little to go on when making promotion, schooling, and assignment selections because of the inflated OER. Also, arguments were made that there was nearly a total disbelief in the usefulness of the OER system; and anyone outside the system (civilian) who acted as a rater or indorser had to be coached about its intricacies - or have the rated officer suffer [Ref. 11: p.43].

E. PRESENT SYSTEM: DA FORM 67-8

The latest version of the Army's evaluation report made its debut on 1 November 1979. This report took five years to develop and test, and is intended to be geared to provide realistic evaluations of an officer's performance and potential. The major function of this new system is to provide information from the organizational rating chain to Department of the Army for officer personnel decisions, just as with its predecessors. The secondary functions of the system are to encourage the professional development of the officer corps and to enhance mission accomplishment [Ref. 12: p.1-1]. These functions represent an expanded view of the importance and pervasiveness of the OERS.

In explaining the purpose of the system to officers in the field, the stated objectives were to:

- 1) Increase mission-related communications between officers and their raters.
- 2) Improve performance couseling.
- 3) Better relate the evaluation to performance and the performance to the mission.
- 4) Increase the involvement of the rating chain.
- 5) Dampen inflation [Ref. 13: p.20].

In order to meet these objectives, several changes have been incorporated in the new evaluation system. The most notable of these is the fact that the new OER system uses three forms instead of just one. The DA Form 67-8 (OER) is used to evaluate the officer. The DA Form 67-8-1 (Support Form) is used in the field for mission related communication and professional development. Finally, the DA Form 67-8-2 (Profile Report) is used at Department of the Army to track the rating history of the senior raters (previously called indorsers). These three forms are included as Appendices J through L.

The first two of the above-mentioned objectives are to be achieved through the Support Form. It is used as a guide by the rated officer and his rater to clearly outline the rated officer's mission responsibilities at the beginning of the rated period. Throughout the rating period it is used to update objectives as missions and priorities change.

At the end of the period, the rated officer submits a completed Support Form to his rating chain. This provides them his assessment of his duty description, major performance objectives, and significant contributions during the rating period. This should assist the rating officials in rendering a more complete evaluation. The Support Form is not forwarded to Department of the Army with the OER, but is returned to the rated officer.

The OER itself addresses the rated officer's performance. Professionalism is addressed by requiring the rater to rank the officer on a series of fourteen professional competencies using a five point Likert scale ("1" being high). A comment block is also included where the rater can describe areas of professional ethics where the ratee is particularly strong or weak. The rated officer's potential is evaluated by all rating officials, but the senior rater is required to render a separate and critical evaluation of the officer's potential on the new report by using a modified forced distribution type system.

The inflation problem has been addressed through the senior rater profile and the DA Form 67-8-2. First of all, a profile is entered on the OER beside the senior rater's evaluation. This profile shows exactly how the senior rater evaluated all officers of the same grade as the rated officer up to the time the report was received at DA. This profile addresses the question of hard versus easy raters by enabling

personnel managers and selection boards to compare that report against the senior rater's normal rating tendencies.

DA Form 67-8-2, which is used at DA, tracks the rating history of the senior rater. One copy is placed in the performance portion of the senior rater's official personnel file. It is also made available to senior raters on an annual basis. This particular form highlights the importance the Army has placed on senior raters performing their evaluation duties with this new system.

In order to enhance the acceptability of this new system among the officer corps, the Army used a wide variety of implementation techniques to introduce and establish the new OER. A major education program from May 79 to August 79 included: publication of a Department of the Army (DA) Circular, release of a TV instruction tape, tours by DA briefing teams to major units and installations, distribution of the revised Army Regulation concerning the OERS (AR 623-105), a training package for resident and non-resident schools, and a DA pamphlet for every officer. A transition period from 15 September to 1 November 1979 was established during which virtually all officers received one final "closeout" OER using the old system (DA Form 67-7).

The DA Form 67-8 has now been in effect for three years.

Conclusions as to its ultimate success or failure have not yet been fully determined. Initial comments from Department of the Army have been encouraging. Even more important is the fact that, as of this writing, no new OER system is being envisioned.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. SELECTING A SAMPLE

Before selecting a population from which to sample, several requirements were established which would determine whether or not a particular population was suitable for study. First, the sample had to comtain large numbers of officers from all branches of the Army. It was necessary that individuals in the sample not be restricted to a particular branch because this would reduce the validity of the study. Second, there had to be large numbers of officers in the ranks to be sampled for the reason similar to the one above, Third, the sample needed to be located as close as possible to the Naval Postgraduate School. The reasons for this are two-fold. One, it would be easier to make any coordination necessary to gain access to the sample. Two, it would reduce the time lost in mailing out and sending in the survey.

After establishing these criteria, the first choice was

Fort Ord and the Seventh Infantry Division. This post is

geographically close to NPS and contains large numbers of officers

in the grades under study. Initial contact was made with the

Seventh Infantry Division Adjutant General on 8 June 1982.

After hearing what the study entailed he agreed to allow his

officer population to be surveyed, but under two conditions.

First, his office could not become involved in any administrative

actions relating to the survey. Second, the survey had to be administered so that it did not put any administrative burden on the surveyed officers, commanders or unit staffs. These conditions were accepted.

He then introduced the warrant officer who was responsible for maintaining the Officer Records Branch. This individual was instructed to provide a print-out of all officers in the ranks of CPT, MAJ, and LTC for which he maintains records. In addition to Ft. Ord, his office maintains records for officers assigned to Ft. Hunter Liggett and the Defense Language Institute. The total number of officers included on the print-out was 1117.

B. THE SAMPLE

As previously mentioned, the officers selected for the study were in the ranks of Captain through LTC. There were several reasons why these officer grades were chosen. First, officers in the grades 0-3 through 0-5 have been in the service long enough to have received several reports under the new OER system. This allows them to base their answers to the survey questions on a larger experience base than would be the case if lower grades were included. Second, since several questions also deal with rating fellow officers of lower ranks, 0-1's and 0-2's would not be able to respond to these questions. Third, there were large numbers of officers available in the population in these grades. If officers 0-6 and above were included there would not have been sufficient numbers available to make statements about their responses. Lastly, most of the officers

included in the study have been rated under at least one other OER system and could, therefore, make experiential judgements on how the current system compares with earlier systems.

Having obtained a population, the authors then wanted to select a sample that closely paralleled the rank structure of the parent population. In order to do this, the population was first broken down by rank. Then a one-third sample was taken from each of the three categories. Following this, the samples were screened to eliminate those officers who would be departing their current duty station before 1 July 82. The purpose of this was to screen out those officers who would be in a transient status at the time the survey was mailed out. It was felt that the chances of these officers receiving the survey and completing it before the 23 July 82 cut-off date was very low and, therefore, they did not warrant inclusion in the sample.

The total number of officers in the sample after the screening process was 276. Broken down by rank there were 138 captains, 78 majors and 60 LTC's. Surveys were then sent out on 23 June 82 to all officers in the sample. A cut-off date of 23 July 82 was established for receipt of completed surveys. By 23 July, 180 surveys had been completed and returned. Additionally, 15 surveys had been returned unopened beca. a the mailing address was incorrect or the recipient could not be located. After 23 July four surveys were returned completed but were not included in the data base.

In summary, 276 surveys were sent out, 180 (65%) were completed by the cut-off date, 4 (1.4%) were completed after the cut-off and 15 (5.4%) were returned unopened. Tables I through V show a breakdown of the completed surveys by rank, sex, race, source of commission, and branch. Table VI shows how well the officers returning surveys correspond to the original population by rank.

C. INSTRUMENTATION

The survey instrument used was developed specifically for this study. Material used to design survey questions was obtained from three primary sources. First, Department of the Army pamphlets, memos, and letters were reviewed and several statements were found which contained information relating to how officers and officer selection boards felt about specific portions of the OER. These statements were then written into question formats with as much as possible of the original statement quoted verbatim.

The second major source of information was a survey that was conducted by the Department of the Army prior to implementation of the current OER. The original survey was conducted in 1976 and administered to 1596 officers. Questions relating to performance assessment, potential assessment, performance counseling and OER format preference were taken directly from this study. The purpose of using the identical questions was to see how, if at all, officer respondents' opinions had changed three years after the 67-8 had been implemented.

*********	****
	,
RANK OF RESPONDENTS CPT MAJ (31) LTC	
	(94)
CPT	
(51)	
MAJ	•
LTC (31)	
, <u>FIC</u>	
* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *	*****
**************************************	*****
k K	
k k	
TABLE II	
k k	
SEX OF RESPONDENTS	
Mala	(164)
Male	
* ************************************	
Female	

TABLE III

RACE OF RESPONDENTS

Caucasian	(163)
(2) Asian-American	
(3) Hispanic	
(2) Other	
·	

TABLE IV

SOURCE OF COMMISSION

	Academy (19)	
!	ROTC	(85)
	OCS (42)	
	(28) Direct	
	(5) Other	

TABLE V

· 사람들 가게 하는 것이 있는 사람들이 가는 사람들이 가득하게 하는 것이 되었다. 그는 사람들이 사람들이 하는 것이 되었다. 그는 사람들이 사람들이 사람들이 되었다. 그는 사람들이 사람들이 되었다.

BRANCH OF RESPONDENT

```
Infantry (15)
Armor
(25)
(5)
Air Defense (6)
Engineer (10)
Signal
(5)
Quartermaster
(4)
Transportation
(5)
Military Police
(3)
Finance
(7)
Military Intelligence
(3)
Chaplin
(2)
Jag (7)
Ordnance
(1)
Chemical
(6)
Adjutant General
(2)
Aviation
(2)
Dental
(6)
Medical
(6)
Medical Service
(9) Army Nurse
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TABLE VI

COMPOSITION OF ACTUAL ARMY AND SAMPLE POPULATIONS

!	ARMY	FT. ORD AREA	SAMPLE	RETURNED
CPT	28553 (51%)	657 (59%)	138 (50%)	94 (52%)
MAJ	15917 (29%)	288 (26%)	78 (28%)	51 (28%)
LTC	11159 (20%)	172 (15%)	62 (22%)	35 (20%)
				•

[Ref. 14: p.152]

The third principle source of information used to develop survey questions was a thesis written in 1971 by Major Robert Dilworth, USA, concerning officer efficiency report inflation. The questions taken from this thesis center around the inflation problem associated with OER systems. Specifically, the questions deal with the OER system's capability to identify officers of little potential to the Army, officers with the greatest future potential, and whether the system accurately portrays an officer's performance. The reason for selecting these questions for inclusion in this study was to examine how perceptions of a previous OER system (67-6) and the current system (67-8) compare in their capability to identify an officer's potential value to the service.

After reviewing the three primary data sources, 30 questions were selected for inclusion in the survey. Of the 30 questions, seven were demographics, one was an open-ended comment question, and the remainder addressed a specific area of interest. Three questions were included in the survey in two slightly different formats. The first time they asked how an officer felt about a certain event when he received an OER; the second time they asked how an officer felt when he was rating a subordinate. The purpose of this was to determine if an officer's perception was different depending on whether he was giving or receiving an OER.

Whenever possible a five point Likert scale was used to record survey responses. The scale went from strongly agree

(rated 5) to strongly disagree (rated 1). On questions which did not lend themselves to this format, respondents were given multiple choice items and told to select the one most accurately depicting their: Desponse.

D. ANALYSIS

After the cut-off date of 23 July 82, all survey responses were coded and entered into a computer program utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). All subsequent statistical data analysis was done using procedures contained in the SPSS software package. The computer analysis of the data was conducted from 25 July 82 until 1 October 82.

The basic plan for data analysis was to first break the sample down demographically to see what the respondents looked like. Following this, the BREAKDOWN subprogram was used to provide mean scores for questions 8-28 by rank of respondent. The same procedure was then used to perform a t-test of statistical significance at the .05 level. Based upon the results of these tests, further tests were conducted using various demographic categories to try and identify significant differences and trends among groups.

After looking at how the sample was compared, the survey data was then compared to the earlier findings of the three principal data sources. The responses of officers in the current sample were compared question by question to the results of the earlier studies to try and identify whether major

differences existed in the perceptions of the different groups. The results of the data analysis are presented in detail in the following chapter.

IV. RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. GENERAL

As mentioned earlier, the survey instrument used to gather data for this thesis consisted of 30 questions. The first five of these were basic demographic questions, the results of which were addressed at the end of the previous chapter. Question 6 and 7 also sought to gather background information on each of the respondents. They will be addressed shortly. Questions 8 through 26 pertained to a specific portion or aspect of the present Officer Evaluation Report System (DA Form 67-8). They were answered using a five point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Questions 27 through 29 also addressed specific areas of interest, but they did not lend themselves to using the Likert scale format. For these questions respondents were given multiple choice items and told to select the one most accurately depicting their response. Finally, question 30 requested that respondents use the back of the last page of the survey for any comments they might wish to make concerning the questionnaire itself or the Army's OER system. Slightly over 30 percent of these respondents did so, as will be discussed towards the end of this chapter.

The authors will now address, in turn, each of the abovementioned survey questions starting with number 6. A specific format will be used in discussing each of these questions. First, the general area or subject of the question will be identified. Next, the entire question will be stated verbatim as it appeared on the survey instrument. Where appropriate, the mean (broken down by rank), level of statistical significance, and/or frequency are given.

Discussion of specific points and highlights about each question follows the previously mentioned information. The reason for the inclusion of the question in the survey is then explained. Finally, the results of the question will be compared with the information source from which the question was drawn or developed.

The reader will remember from chapter three that there were three primary information sources used: 1) DA pamphlets, memos, and letters, 2) a previous DA survey conducted in 1976, and 3) a 1971 thesis concerning OER inflation. Hopefully, comparisons of the current data with these earlier data resources will enable the authors to gain added insight into the present OER situation, and will result in more valid and far-reaching conclusions.

The format as discussed above will be used for each of the survey questions except the last one, which solicited additional respondent comments. This "comments" question will be handled separately by highlighting common areas of concern, referencing certain specific comments, and trying to relate the data to the results of earlier questions.

Before addressing the specific results from each of the individual questions, the reader will note that a summary table of means broken down by rank is included in Table VII. It should also be noted that the respective questions are listed by their appropriate number and description. This table will serve as a ready reference for the reader as he proceeds through the remainder of this chapter.

B. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In comparing the results of this study to earlier studies it was at times necessary to group data into categories used in the earlier works. For example, the survey conducted by DA in 1976 prior to implementation of the current OER system presented its findings by company grade and field grade categories as opposed to by individual ranks. In an attempt to allow comparisons between the two studies, 0-3 results have been equated to company grade and 0-4 and 0-5 results have been equated to field grade. This procedure was necessary only on questions 10, 11, 26, 27 and 29.

Another adjustment was made to allow for comparisions between this study and an earlier study by Dilworth. The convention used was to equate the responses "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" to "Yes", and "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" to "No". This procedure was necessary on questions 18, 20 and 21. Also in the Dillworth thesis the data is not broken down by rank so no comparison is possible on this variable.

	TABLE VII				
	SUMMARY TABLE OF MEANS FOR SURVEY QUESTIONS	QUESTIONS			
QUESTION NO.	QUESTION DESCRIPTION	OVERALL	CPT	MAJ	LTC
80	SUPPORT FORM'S AID IN RATING PERFORMANCE	3.70	3.63	3.73	3,85
6	SUPPORT FORM'S HELP IN IMPROVING PERFORMANCE	3,25	3.20	3,41	3.14
10	RATER'S QUALIFICATION TO EVALUATE PERFORMANCE	4.54	4.49	4.59	4.60
11	SENIOR RATER'S QUALIFICATION TO ASSESS POTENTIAL	2.69	2.75	2.63	2.62
12	NEED TO RECEIVE ALL "1's" IN PROFESSIONALISM SECTION	4.30	4.30	4.29	4.31
13	NEED TO RECETVE MAX RATING IN PERFORMANCE/POTENTIAL SECTION	4.33	4.28	4.47	4.24
14	NEED TO RECEIVE TOP BOX RATING FROM SENIOR RATER	3.08	2.95	3,33	3.06
15	COMPARISON BASE FOR SENIOR RATER ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL	2.72	2.69	2.90	2,54
16*	SELECTION BOARD EMPHASIS OF SENIOR RATER INPUT	3.60	3.71	3,63	3,26
17** VIEW THAT RATER'S NARRATIVE 3.17 3.18 3.43 3.77 IS MOST IMPORTANT INPUT	VIEW THAT RATER'S NARRATIVE IS MOST IMPORTANT INPUT	3.17	3,18	3,43	3.77

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QUESTION NO.	TABLE VII (CONTINUED) QUESTION DESCRIPTION	OVERALL	CPT	MAJ	LTC
18	INFLATION IS NOT A PROBLEM WITH CURRENT OER	1,97	2.07	1,88	1,82
19	CURRENT OER HAS REDUCED	3.14	3.05	3.20	3.30
20***	OER IDENTIFIES OFFICERS WITH LITTLE POTENTIAL	3,34	3,19	3,41	3,63
21	OER IDENTIFIES OFFICERS WITH GREATEST POTENTIAL	2.94	2.79	3.12	3.09
22	NEED TO GIVE ALL "1's" IN PROFESSIONALISM SECTION	3.73	3,69	3.75	3.80
23	NEED TO GIVE MAX RATING IN PERFORMANCE/POTENTIAL SECTION	3.70	3,69	3.73	3,71
24	SR, RATER LOSS OF CREDIBILITY BY CONFINUED TOP BOXING	4.05	3.82	4.14	4.09
25	SENIOR RATER NEED TO GIVE TOP BOX RATING	2.91	3,00	3,14	2.65
26	OER SHOULD BE REPLACED	2.68	2,66	2.68	2.73
27	NO, OF DISCUSSIONS WITH RATER IN LAST 6 MONTHS	1,98	2.04	1.92	1,94
* Difference in means significant at the .	n means between Captains and Lieutenant at the .05 level.	c Colonels	is	statistically	y11y

Differences in means among all ranks are statistically significant at the .05 levels

Difference in means between Captains and Lieutenant Colonels is statistically

1. Number of OERs Received and Completed (Familiarization)

The subject of question 6 had to do with the familiarity of the respondents with receiving an OER under the present system. Specifically, the question states:

"Approximately how many OER's have you received under the current system (DA Form 67-8)?"

The results of this question are given in Table VIII.

The point of interest with this question is simply that over 96 percent of the respondents had received six or less evaluation reports under the present system. This result was to be expected given the newness of the DA Form 67-8.

The reason for including this question was to determine the experience base from which the respondents were answering the other survey questions. It can be assumed, then, that most of the respondents do not have enough first-hand experience with the new form, as a rated officer, to be aware of any trends, nuances, or eccentricities associated with this system.

Question 7 also attempts to guage the familiarity of the respondent with the new OER system. However, this question deals with being a rater rather than a ratee. It is stated as follows:

"Approximately how many OER's have you completed as a rater or senior rater under the current system (DA Form 67-8)?"

The results are shown in Table IX.

The results of this question are also highly skewed toward the low end of the scale (just as with question 6).

Again, this might easily be expected. A number of the

TABLE VIII

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NUMBER OF OERS RECEIVED BY RESPONDENTS

94)

TABLE IX

NUMBER OF OERS COMPLETED BY RESPONDENTS

Less than 5

(45)
6-10

(100)

11-15

(10)
16-20

(12)

More than 20

respondents have had a fair amount of experience acting as raters or senior raters (over 12 percent have filled out 16 or more OER's), but the general trend again is towards a small experience base.

2. Helpfulness of OER Support Form

The next pair of questions, 8 and 9, deal with the OER Support Form (DA 67-8-1). Question 8 seeks to determine whether the DA 67-8-1 had been helpful to the rating officer in measuring and accessing the rated officer's performance. The question is:

"The development of the OER Support Form (DA 67-8-1) has significantly aided me in measuring the rated officer's performance."

The overall mean (3.70) indicates that officers feel the Support Form has been helpful but not overwhelmingly so. This may be in conflict with the source document for this question, <u>DA SPOTLICHT</u> No. 6, Aug 1981, which states the Support Form "appears to be making a significant contribution" to the evaluation process. It should be pointed out, however, that a respondent could consider the support form helpful but still think of it as not adding significantly to the rating process.

In question 9 the rated officer is asked if the Support Form has helped his performance through the joint objective setting process he goes through with his rater. The exact question is:

"I feel the OER Support Form (DA 67-8-1) had helped to improve my performance through the objective and responsibility setting process."

The overall mean for this question is 3.25 or just slightly above the median response of "No Strong Opinion" (3.0). This finding is also in apparent conflict with the source document for this question, <u>DA SPOTLIGHT</u> No.6, Aug 1981, which states the Support Form appears to be making a significant contribution to the goal of better officer performance.

3. Rater/Senior Rater Qualifications For Assessing Performance And Potential

The performance and potential assessment process are the subjects of questions 10 and 11. Question 10 asks whether the rater or senior rater can best evaluate an officer's performance. Specifically, it says:

"In most cases the rater is in a better position to evaluate an officer's performance than is the senior rater."

The mean for this question is 4.54 with 170 of 179 officers (94.9%) agreeing with the statement. These results indicate most officers feel that the rater should be responsible for rating performance, as is now the case on the 67-8. When these results are compared with the earlier DA study it should be noted that the same question produced virtually identical results. 94.3% of the company grade officers and 94.5% of the field grade officers agreed with the statement.

Question 11 seeks to determine whether or not officers feel the senior rater is better suited than the rater to evaluate an officer's future potential. The question says:

"By virtue of his experience and broader organization perspective the senior rater is in a better position than the rater to accurately assess an officer's potential."

The mean for this question is 2.69; that is, officers tended to disagree with the idea that senior raters can do a better job of assessing an officer's potential than can the rater. Only 51 officers out of 178 (28.7%) actually agreed with the statement while the remainder either disagreed or said it made no difference. A similar question in the earlier 1976 study dealing with the indorser position found that 20.1% of company grade officers agreed that the indorser was better able to assess potential than the rater. The results of questions 10 and 11 in this study and their counterparts in an earlier study indicate that the majority of officers feel the rater should be responsible for both performance evaluation and potential assessment.

4. Perceptions of Scores and Ratings on Promotion Opportunity

The related series of questions 12, 13, and 14 are all concerned with how an officer feels certain scores or ratings on the OER directly affect his promotion opportunity. The sources for these questions were a DCSPER (Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel) memo on the status of the OER system and an untitled memo whose subject was the status of the OER system. Question 12 asks the officer if he feels that his promotion opportunites are significantly diminished if he does not receive all "1's" in Part IV of DA 67-8. It should be recalled that Part IV is a series of 14 questions concerning the ratee's performance which are scored from 1, high degree, to 5, low degree. The survey question is:

"I feel that if I do not receive all "l's" in the rater's numerical professionalism section of the DA 67-8 (Part IV), it will greatly reduce my promotion opportunity."

The mean for this question was 4.30 with 96 of 179 officers (53.6%) marking "Strongly Agree". It should be noted that no officer marked "Strongly Disagree" and only 14 marked "Disagree". These results agree with DA findings which have found scores in Part IV to be skewed toward the high end of the rating scale. Apparently rating officers are concerned that less than maximum scores will have unduly negative impacts on an officer's promotion chances and, consequently, are inflating the scores.

The purpose of Question 13 is to find out how officers feel about the rating they get in Part V, the rater's performance and potential section, of DA 67-8 in regards to its impact on their promotion opportunities. Specifically it says:

"If I do not receive checks in the blocks "always exceeds requirements" and "promote ahead of contemporaries" in the rater's performance and potential section of DA 67-8 (Part V), it will greatly reduce my promotion opportunity."

The mean for this question is 4.33 with only 11 of 178 officers (6.2%) disagreeing with the statement. As with the preceding question, this finding substantiates recent DA findings which say that this section of the OER remains skewed toward the high end.

An officer's perception of the importance of the senior rater's potential evaluation (the box check in Part VIIa) in regard to his promotion chances is dealt with in question 14.

This box check involves selecting a rating for the officer from a forced distribution scale of 100 officers. The statement is:

"If I am not placed in the top box of the senior rater's potential evaluation scale, I feel my chances for promotion are greatly reduced".

The mean for this question is 3.08 with roughly the same number of officers agreeing (76) and disagreeing with the statement (78). Evidently officers do not feel as strongly about this section having adverse impacts on their promotion chances as they do about sections IV an V. This finding supports a recent selection board member, MG Louis G. Wagner, Jr., who said:

"...the senior raters in general are doing a good job. They are spreading their officers. This does not mean that rated officers not in the top box will not be selected. The board looks far beyond the box check."

5. Comparison Base for Potential

Question number 15 addresses the issue of whether a rating officer should assess a ratee's potential by comparing him with all other officers of the same grade, or with some smaller, and more specific, population of officers. The exact statement is:

"Senior rater assessments of potential should compare the rated officer's abilities with those of all other officers of the same grade, regardless of branch, specialty, or other considerations."

The overall mean (2.72) indicates that the respondents as a whole slightly disagreed with the statement. Furthermore, there was very little difference among the three grades of

officers (captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels) that constituted the total respondent population. Each subgroup was also slightly below the median response of "No Strong Opinion".

This stated perception is in direct conflict with the source document for this question, an undated DA information sheet entitled "Status-Officer Evaluation Reporting System (OERS)". This document states:

"The proper manner for the senior rater to assess potential is to compare the rated officer's ability to perform in positions of greater responsibility with the abilities of officers of the same grade...it is equally improper to compare the rated officer's potential with a grouping narrower than the same grade, such as branch or specialty."

This question seems to highlight an obvious "disconnect" between the ideas being promulgated by DA and the perceptions of the surveyed officers.

6. Perceived Importance of Specific OER Sections

The next two questions both deal with the perceived importance of various portions of the DA Form 67-8. Question 16 looks at the importance that selection boards place on the rater's imput vis-a-vis the senior rater's input. Specifically, the question states:

"I feel that selection boards viewing the current OER Form place more emphasis on the senior rater's evaluation than the rater's input."

The overall mean is 3.60, which indicates that the survey respondents were in slight agreement with the statement. This particular question evolved from a statement in the

DA Spotlight No. 6 dated August 1981, which said, "There does not appear to be undue focus on the senior rater portion of the OER." The reader will note that the survey results tended to contradict the above-referenced source. There does seem to be a general perception that more emphasis is placed on the senior rater's evaluation than the rater's input.

It is also interesting to note that the strength of this perception is lessened as the officer becomes more senior in rank. The mean for captains is 3.71, which falls to 3.63 for majors and 3.26 for lieutenant colonels. This trend is reinforced by the fact that a two-way analysis of variance showed that the difference in means between captains and lieutuenant colonels was statistically significant at the .05 level.

The focus of question 17 is on the rater's performance narrative section of the OER. The actual question is stated as follows:

"I feel that the rater's performance narrative is the single most important part of the OER."

The overall mean for this question is 3.17, which is only slightly above the median response of "No Strong Opinion". The interesting point here is that there are notable differences among the subgroup means (3.18 for captains, 3.43 for majors, 2.77 for lieutenant colonels). The difference between majors and lieutenant colonels is statistically significant at the .01 level (again using two-way analysis of variance).

This question was also drawn from a statement in the DA Spotlight No. 6 dated August 1981. The actual statement

of efficiency rating?" Respondents had five answers to Choose from, ranging from "Overplayed, not really a problem" to "Single most important problem". It is interesting to note that of 208 respondents to this earlier (1971) thesis question, 164 (78.8%) answered either "Significant problem" or "Single most important problem". This compares with 78.2% of the respondents of the present survey who answered either "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree". It would seem in this case that officers' perceptions have changed very little in eleven years!

Question 19 wants to find out to what extent, if any, the rating inflation problem has been reduced or ameliorated by the present OER form. The actual survey question states:

"I feel that the current OER has helped to reduce the inflation problem of past OER systems."

The overall mean for this item is 3.14, which is barely above the median response (3.0) of "No Strong Opinion". When broken down by rank the captains have the lowest mean of 3.05 followed by the majors with 3.20 and the colonels with 3.30. Even though these subgroup means are still fairly close, it is interesting to note that the strength of agreement with this statement seems to increase with increasing rank.

What might be of even more importance is the fact that strong differences of opinion were indicated from survey respondents. Of 180 respondents, 64 said "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree", while 94 said "Strongly Agree" or "Agree". This large spread of opinion was not manifested in the preceding question having to do with rating inflation.

said, "Significantly, several of the recent boards (promotion boards) have indicated that the performance narrative, Part Vc, is the single most important part of the OER." Although the overall survey results for this item tend to support the above-referenced statement, this support is neither broadly shared nor strong, as is shown by the rank subgroup means noted above. It is also noteworthy that the most senior officers tend to disagree with the statement. This might not be expected since they are the most likely to have had experience serving on such promotion boards, or to be selected to do so. Further, it is unclear to the authors why such a difference of opinion should exist between majors and lieutenant colonels concerning this question.

7. Perceptions of Rating Score Inflation

Rating score inflation is addressed by both questions 18 and 19. Question 18 states:

"I feel that inflation is not a problem with the current OER."

The mean for this item is 1.97, which is the lowest for any of the survey questions. Of 179 respondents, only 13 agreed to any extent that this statement was true. On the other hand, 58 individuals responded "Strongly Disagree" and another 82 responded "Disagree". The implication of this result is clear: rating inflation is still widely perceived as a problem, even with the DA Form 67-8 system.

This question was developed from a similar question in the Dilworth thesis which asked, "How do you view inflation

This question developed from two sources. The October 1979 issue of Soldiers magazine listed as one of the objectives of the new OER to "dampen inflation". Then in the May 24, 1982 edition of the Army Times, DA officials said (among other things) that the new OER "has checked the inflated scoring problems that destroyed previous OER systems". From the results of the survey question concerning this point, it would appear that the perceptions of survey respondents are still mixed despite such statements by such DA officials.

8. <u>Identification of Officers of Least and Greatest</u> <u>Potential</u>

The problem of identifying officers of the least and greatest potential value to the Army is addressed in questions 20 and 21. Question 20 states:

"I feel the present OER system is effective in identifying officers of little potential value to the Army."

The overall mean is 3.34, which indicates that the survey population tended to agree with this statement. A little over half of the respondents answered "Strongly Agree" or "Agree", while slightly under one fourth disagreed to some extent.

When examined by rank, the more senior officers again tended to agree more strongly. The captains' mean was 3.19, the majors' 3.41, and the lieutenant colonels 3.63. The difference between the captains and lieutenant colonels was statistically significant at the .05 level using a two-way analysis of variance.

This question was developed from an earlier version in the Dilworth thesis which asked, "Is our present OER system effective in identifying officers of little potential value to the service (Yes or No)?" Nearly 67.5% of the respondents to this earlier question responded "Yes". If the current survey responses of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" are equated to a "Yes" answer, then the present survey results in nearly a 54% affirmative response rate. Such a comparison is difficult at best, especially since nearly 24% of the current respondents indicated "No Strong Opinion". This additional category may, however, partially explain the different affirmative response rates indicated by the two surveys.

The opposite end of the potential spectrum is handled by question 21. Specifically, it states:

"I feel the present OER system effectively identifies those officers having the greatest future potential."

The mean for this item is 2.94, which is just below the median response (3.0) of "No Strong Opinion". When examined by subgroup, the captains have the lowest mean of 2.79, while the majors are highest with 3.12. There is no significant difference between these groups, however. The distribution of responses to this statement is very wide and balanced. While 37.7% disagree to some extent, they are balanced out by 34.5% who agree to one extent or another. Nearly 28% of the respondents have "No Strong Opinion".

This question was also adapted from the Dilworth thesis.

In its earlier form it asked, "Do you feel that the present

OER system effectively identifies those officers having the greatest future potential (future colonels and generals) (Yes or No)?" Nearly 64% of the respondents to this question answered "No". If the authors again take the liberty to equate "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" to "No", then the present survey results (37.7%) seem to show an improvement in this area with the new OER form. This observation must again be tempered by the fact that 27.8% of the current survey respondents indicated "No Strong Opinion".

9. Perceptions of Scores and Ratings on Promotion Opportunity of Others

The following four questions, 21-25, seek to find out how officers think their responses on the DA 67-8 affect a rated officer's promotion chances. Three of these questions (22, 23, and 25) are slightly different versions of questions 12-14. Here they have been restated so that they now ask an officer how he feels about his actions as a rater as opposed to asking how he feels as the ratee. The purpose of this is to find out whether an officer's perception of promotion opportunities changes if he is talking about himself or other officers he is rating. The fourth question in this group, 24, is concerned with the senior rater's perception of his credibility in relation to Part VIIa of the DA 67-8.

In question 22 the officer is asked how he thinks his failure to give the ratee all "l's" in Part IV of the OER will affect the ratee's promotion opportunity. The question says:

"When acting as a rater, I feel that if I do not give the rated officer all "1's" in the rater's numerical professionalism section of the OER (Part IV), it will greatly reduce his promotion opportunity."

The results of question 22 and question 12 are presented in Table X. It is readily apparent that the perceptions of all the respondents concerning the importance of receiving the maximum score in Part IV of DA 67-8 change, depending upon whether they are the rater or ratee. In answering question 22, 121 of 176 officers agreed with the statement versus 151 of 179 with question 12. When the results of these two questions are compared using a two-way analysis of variance all ranks show that the difference in their means is statistically significant at the .05 level. The sharp differences in the responses to these two questions could be partially attributed to the emotional involvement most officers have in discussing their own OER's versus the "objective" thought they give to someone else's rating.

The subject of question 23 is how an officer feels his assessments of the rated officer's performance in Part Vb and d will affect the rated officer's promotion chances. The statement is:

"When acting as a rater, I feel that if I do not check the blocks "always exceeds requirements" and "promote ahead of his contemporaries" in the rater's performance and potential section of the OER (Block V), it will greatly reduce the rated officer's promotion opportunity."

The results of question 23 and its earlier companion, question 13, are presented in Table XI. As with the previous pair of questions it is clearly obvious that officers'

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF MEANS FOR QUESTION 12 AND QUESTION 22

	QUESTION 22	QUESTION 12
	MEAN	MEAN
OVERALL	3.70	4.33
CPTS	3.69	4.30
MAJS	3.73	4.29
LTCS	3.71	4.31

TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF MEANS FOR QUESTION 13 AND QUESTION 23

	QUESTION 23	QUESTION 13
	MEAN	MEA N
OVERALL	3.70	4.32
CPTS	3.69	4.28
MAJS	3.73	4.47
LTCS	3.71	4.24

perceptions of the importance of the ratings they receive change depending upon whether they are the rater or ratee. In answering question 23, 117 of 176 agreed with the statement compared to 152 of 178 agreeing with question 13. When the means of these two questions are tested using a two-way analysis of variance they are found to be statistically significant at the .05 level. The differences in the means for these two questions can also be partially explained using the same arguments presented in the previous analysis.

Question 24 is the first of two questions dealing specifically with the senior rater. It seeks to determine whether the senior rater feels a threat to his rating credibility by continuing to place officers in the uppermost block of Part VIIa of the OER. The question is:

"I feel that by rating officers predominantly in the top box in the senior rater's potential evaluation scale, I am in danger of losing my credibility as a rating official."

Since this question is addressed only to officers who have been senior raters, the sample is much smaller (55) than on most other questions. The mean for this question is 4.05 indicating most officers agree with the statement. This finding supports recent DA reports which have cautioned senior raters that selection boards have less faith in their ratings if they topblock a majority of their officers. This is summarized by a comment made by a recent selection board member, MG Oren E. DeHaven, who said:

"Senior raters who placed most of their officers in the top box tended to have less credibility with our boards. (\underline{DA} Spotlight No.6, Aug 1981)

It should be noted that only 4 of 55 officers responding to question 24 actually disagreed with the statement.

In question 25 the senior rater is asked if he feels by failing to place the rated officer in the top block of Part VIIa of the OER, he is significantly reducing the rated officer's promotion chances. The question is:

"When acting as the senior rater, I feel that if I do not place the rated officer in the top block of the potential evaluation scale, it will greatly reduce his promotion opportunity."

When the results of question 25 and question 14 are compared, there is very little difference in how officers responded; Table XII summarizes the results of the two questions. When subjected to a two-way analysis of variance there is no significant difference at the .05 level. Taken together, these results provide a great deal of support to DA findings which have repeatedly reported that successful officers are being spread over at least the top four blocks (DA Spotlight No.6, Aug 1981). Another source reported that selection boards for 0-4's, 0-5's, and 0-6's in 1981 had selected officers for promotion with at least one OER as low as the fifth box (Army Times, May 24, 1982). Evidently officers have accepted DA guidance regarding Part VIIa, and do not feel some less than maximum ratings will severly affect their chances.

10. OER Replacement

The topic of whether or not to replace the current OER is dealt with in question 26. The authors purposely placed this question towards the end of the survey so that the

TABLE XII

COMPARISON OF MEANS FOR QUESTION 25 AND QUESTION 14

	QUESTION 25	QUESTION 14
	MEAN	MEAN
OVERALL	2.91	3.08
CPTS	3.00	2.94
MAJS	3,13	3.33
LTCS	2.65	3.06

TABLE XIII

RESULTS OF QUESTION 26 (OER SHOULD BE REPLACED)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NO STRONG OPINION	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
CPTS	8	25	25	14	1
MAJS	1	20	22	1	3
LTCS	3	10	15	3	2
TOTAL	12	55	62	18	6
PERCENTAGE	7.8	35.9	40.5	11.8	3.9

respondents would have already thought about specific portions of the OER system before having to make such an overall judge-ment. The question specifically states:

"I feel that the current OER, DA Form 67-8, should be replaced with a new report."

The mean for this item is 2.68, indicating that the general population of respondents tends to disagree with the statement. The rank subgroup means are all very close to one another, ranging only from 2.66 (captains) to 2.73 (lieutenant colonels). Of 153 respondents to this question, 67 either "Strongly Disagreed" or "Disagreed", while 24 "Strongly Agreed" or "Agreed". See Table XIII.

It is interesting to note that there were 27 missing responses (15%) to this particular question. This is by far the highest number of missing cases for any of the Likert scale questions. There were also 62 responses of "No Strong Opinion".

This question was drawn from the DA survey conducted in 1976, prior to the initiation of the current OER form. Originally the question asked, "Should the current report, DA Form 67-7, be replaced with a new report?" The results of this earlier survey showed that 49% of the "field grade" and "company grade" officers (0-1 through 0-6) said "Yes", while approximately one third were "Uncertain".

In the present survey, only 15.7% of the respondents indicated that the present OER should be replaced, while 40.5% had "No Strong Opinion". Over 43% indicated that it should

not be replaced. Once again, these results seem to be supportive of the DA Form 67-8 system.

11. Discussions with Rater

To try and gauge how much communication is going on between raters and ratees concerning job performance, question 27 asks how many discussions have been held during the last six months. The question is:

"In the last six months, how many times have you had discussions with your rater about how well you were doing in your job?"

This particular question, along with questions 28-30, was not conducive to using a Likert scale to obtain answers.

The answers from which the respondent could choose were "None", "1-2", "3-4", "5-6", or "Greater than 6". The results of this question are shown in Table XIV.

The reader will note that one third of the respondents (56) indicate that they have not had any discussions with their rater about job performance in the last six months. Another 45% (76) have only had one or two such discussions during the same period. Only nine officers out of 169 respondents have had more than four of these discussions. This pattern of having few, if any, discussions with one's rater is virtually the same for all the rank subgroups. Over 75% of the captains have had two or less such discussions with their rater. This figure rises to 79% for lieutenant colonels and 82% for majors.

The reason that the results of this question need to be emphasized is because the present OER system was developed

TABLE XIV

DISCUSSIONS WITH RATER IN LAST 6 MONTHS

(FC)	
None	
1-2)
3-4 (28)	
(2) 5 - 6	
Greater than 6	

partially to overcome just such a lack of communication. The reader may wish to refer to the section of chapter two which discusses the DA Form 67-8 for a complete listing of the goals and purposes of the present system. The development and conscientious use of the Support Form (DA Form 67-8-1) was supposed to have bridged the communication gap of earlier OER forms, and kept both the rater and ratee in agreement concerning job description, goals, and performance standards. The results of this question seem to indicate that the Support Form is often not being utilized the way its designers intended, if at all. This position is further supported by many of the comments that the authors received for question 30 of the survey, as will be seen shortly.

Question 27 was taken verbatim from the survey conducted for the Dilworth thesis. The choices of answers available for this earlier question were either "No Discussions", "Once", "Twice", or "Three or more". Nearly 54% of the field grade officers (0-4 through 0-6) said they had not had any such discussions, while 81.4% indicated two or less discussions. The company grade officers (0-1 through 0-3) were just slightly better; 43% indicating "No Discussions" and 79.7% indicating two or less.

Although it is difficult to compare the specific subgroups from each of the above-mentioned surveys, the overall results of each of them are remarkably similar. Again it would seem that very little has changed concerning this topic in the eleven years since the Dilworth thesis was written.

12. OER Accuracy in Assessing Abilities

An officer's perceptions of how accurate the OERs he has received under the present system have estimated his abilities is the subject of question 28. Specifically it asks:

"I feel that the efficiency reports I have received under the present system have:

Greatly overrated my abilities 5
Slightly overrated my abilities 4
Accurately portrayed my abilities 3

Greatly underrated my abilities 1"

Slightly underrated my abilities

The overall mean for this item was 3.06. The three rank subgroup means were also very close to the median value of 3.0 (Accurately Portrayed My Abilities). The captains' mean was 3.06, the majors' 3.10, and the lieutenant colonels' 3.00. The distribution of responses was fairly even. Of 169 officers, 50 (29.6%) said their abilities were either greatly or slightly underrated, 57 (33.7%) said their abilities were greatly or slightly overrated, and 62 (36.7%) said their abilities were abilities were accurately portrayed.

This question was also extracted from the Dilworth thesis. As originally stated, the question asked, "How would you rate efficiency reports you have received?" Respondents could choose among the answers "Accurately portrayed my abilities", "Tended to underrate my abilities", or "Overrated my

abilities". The results of this question shows that 82 responses (44.6%) said "Accurately portrayed my abilities", 10 responses (5.4%) said "Tended to underrate my abilities", and 92 responses (50%) said "Overrated my abilities". Unfortunately, 21 officers checked more than one response on this earlier survey, so that meaningful comparisons with the present survey are not possible.

It is interesting to note, however, that the percentage of officers who indicated that their abilities have been underrated has increased substantially with the new OER from 5.4% to 29.6%. If this change of opinion could be substantiated by additional research, it might provide further support for the claim that the DA Form 67-8 has indeed curbed the inflationary scoring trend of past OER systems.

13. Evaluation Technique Preferences

In question 29 officers were presented with eight different evaluation techniques and asked to select the technique they would most prefer and the one they would least prefer. Following each technique was a paragraph describing how the technique could be used and its basic format. The entire question is too lengthy to present here; however, it can be examined in its entirety in Appendix M.

Tables XV and XVI present the results of question 29 broken down by rank. It should be noted that due to some apparent confusion in the wording of the question's instructions, only 100 of 180 officers provided usable input.

TABLE XV

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES MOST	PREFERI	RED BY OF	FICERS	SURVEYED
	CPTS	MAJS	LTCS	TOTAL
FORCED DISTRIBUTION	29	9	3	41
NARRATIVE REPORT	13	2	4	19
NOMINATION	8	3	1 .	12
WEIGHTED SCORES	3	3	2	8
RANKING	4	1	3	8
FORCED CHOICE	0	1	4	5
POINT ALLOCATION	1	1	2	4
GLOBAL SCORED REPORTS	2	1	0	3
	60	21	19	100

TABLE XVI

EVALUATION TECHNIQUES LEAST	PREFER	RED BY O	FFICERS	SURVEYED
	CPTS	MAJS	LTCS	TOTAL
RANKING	14	6	4	24
WEIGHTED SCORES	8	4	6	18
NOMINATION	8	4	2	14
POINT ALLOCATION	10	2	1	13
NARRATIVE REPORT	8	2	3	13
GLOBAL SCORED REPORTS	5	3	0	8
FORCED CHOICE	4	2	0	6
FORCED DISTRIBUTION	3	0	1	4
	60	21	19	100

From the tables it is apparent that the most popular evaluation technique is forced distribution; the current technique used by DA 67-8. The second most popular form is the one used on the previous OER, narration. Together these two techniques make up 60% of the total responses. There are two possible explanations for this. First the Army has been very good at selecting the "best" evaluation techniques for use in its OER system. Or, second, officers selected these two techniques over the others presented because they are familiar with them and, therefore, feel more comfortable with their formats.

The technique least preferred by officers in the sample is ranking, followed by weighted scores and nomination. It seems that officers do not like the idea of being directly compared to their peers when they are being evaluated since both ranking and nomination require the rating official to rank his subordinates. It should be noted that only 4 of 80 officers said that the forced distribution system was the one they least prefer. This can be taken as a positive endorsement of the current system.

The earlier DA survey conducted prior to implementation of DA 67-8 also asked questions seeking to identify the most and least preferred evaluation techniques. This earlier study included all of the techniques listed previously except forced distribution. As in the case in this study officers preferred the technique being used at the time, narrative in the 67-7,

over all others presented. Ranking was named as the technique they least preferred, as is the case with this study. Although there has been some shift in preferences over the 6 year period, in general officers seem to feel now as they did then in regards to evaluation techniques. The most notable feature of the two studies is that whatever technique is currently being used is clearly identified as being the one most preferred. Also, officers' negative opinions of the ranking technique still persist.

14. Comments

The last question on the survey was an open-ended comment question which invited the survey respondents to provide any additional comments they might have relating to the question-naire itself or the Army's OER system. Out of 180 respondents, 55 officers (30.5%) provided such comments. Thirty-one percent of the captains responded, as well as 25% of the majors and 37% of the lieutenant colonels.

These comments covered a very broad spectrum of topics and ranged from emotion-laded statements venting the respondent's anger at the OER system in general, to very extensive, well-thought out alternatives or modifications to the present system. It would be impossible to do justice to all the comments that were received without listing them verbatim. However, in order to synthesize and bring some type of order to them, the authors have categorized these comments into broad areas of concern and classifications. Out of 14 categories of comments which became

apparent through the initial screening, this thesis will now discuss the five types of comments which were most often mentioned. Each of these five types of comments were, themselves, mentioned by five or more specific respondents to the survey. The authors have not concerned themselves with comments that were mentioned by less than five individuals. Although this cutoff level is arbitrary, there did seem to be a natural break at this point which made it expedient to establish this requirement.

a. Support of the Present System

One type of comment that was specifically mentioned five times was that the DA Form 67-8 and its supplemental forms constituted the "best" OER system that the Army has developed to date. Several of these statements went on to suggest slight modifications to the present system which could make it even better. Examples of this type of comment are:

"I think it is the best system we've had so far. I personally would prefer 2 or 3 modifications. 1. A performance profile for the rater similar to the potential profile for the senior rater. Some rules as in effect now to force a spread in performance assessments. 2. No blocks to check in conjuction with narrative comments on performance or potential."

"The current rating system is the best I have seen. Unfortunately, too many officers, including generals, cannot express themselves well in writing. Consequently, the narrative portion of an OER varies in accuracy according to the rater. The enlisted EER has one significant advantage over the OER. The most recent report is the most important, and reports older than 5 years are discarded. In the case of OER's, mistakes made 10 years earlier, since corrected, are carried before each selection board for prominent display."

"In my 14 years of continuous active duty I have seen numerous rating schemes used; the present one has been the most accurate one yet in portraying an individual's abilities."

b. Criticisms of the Present System

A second type of comment, which occurred six times, could only be classified as generally critical of the present OER system. Some of these went so far as to criticize any type of periodic OER system. Examples of this second type of comment follow:

"The current OER system is reflective of the entire selection system. There is no way that an OER or service record package can truly represent an officer before a promotion or schools selection board...The current system, like all previous forms, is inflatable and too many officers are glued to paper success rather than true job performance.

"(An) OER should be cut if a person does not perform, (and) set standards for releasing he or she to the civilian work force. Those who get the job done should not compete for which degree to doit. It's a kiss ass system used to promote (favorite sons) not evaluate our job. It's full of bull."

"We have not learned from the USAF experience - forced distribution will destroy the morale of the corps - force out many fine performers - future promotion and selection boards will use (the number) 2 and 3 boxes in (the) Senior Rater section as discriminators down the road - wait and see."

c. Unavoidable Inflation Problems

The third type of comment that was rated was also mentioned by six individuals. These comments essentially said that no matter what kind of OER system was developed, Army officers would figure out ways to inflate the scores. Examples of this kind of comment follow:

"No matter what system we employ, we mortals will figure a way to inflate it and remain nice guys. Also, there will be injustices on the way."

"Inflation will always be a problem with OER's because officers, like other people, generally desire to shy away from distasteful tasks, such as telling someone that he is mediocre."

"In three years the system will again be inflated and a new system to beat all systems will be revised."

d. Evaluation Preferences

The fourth type of comment that manifested itself involved specific preferences or dislikes concerning one or more of the evaluation techniques listed in question 29 of the survey. Evidently the officers who wrote these comments (nine in all) wanted to make explicit the reasoning they used in choosing a "most preferred" and "least preferred" evaluation technique. Since these techniques and the results of question 29 have already been dicussed, the authors see no need to include any more comments about them in this section.

e. Use or Misuse of the Support Form

The last general type of comment to be discussed is also probably the most important. The reason for this is not only because it was mentioned more often than any other type of comment (twelve times), but also because specific actions can probably be taken to rectify the situation if these comments are true.

This particular type of comment had to do with the Support Form (DA Form 67-1) and its use (or non-use). Essentially, these comments said that the Support Form was not being used properly, if at all, by raters. Examples of this type of comment follow:

"Although the OER has its share of problems, its principal value lies in the support form (and accompanying required counselling) in which goals, responsibilities, and contributions are established clearly in the minds of the rated



officer and the rater. Again, this holds true only if the counselling is done, and done on a timely basis. I am sure that it is often neglected until the last minute."

"Speaking with fellow captains from other posts who have rated LT's, some raters/senior raters still do not understand the necessity of the 67-8-1 (Support Form). Without that form being filled out initially (30 days or so) and updated periodically, the strength of this system flounders."

"In my view, raters do not use the -1 as a good tool. I found the -1 was very effective in establishing goals. Most officers don't fill one out until they are rated - hence too late to establish objectives."

"Current support forms tend to be filled out not when a service member arrives at a unit, but a week or two prior to his being rated. This tends to destroy credibility in the goals section of the form."

"The present system is the best I feel. The individual being rated has input into his/her own report. If the system were followed by the raters (i.e. initial discussion within 30 days, periodic performance discussions, etc.) the system would be even better."

ceptions were evidenced in the comments received, the general concern shown for the proper use of the DA Form 67-8-1 was unmistakable. Nearly one quarter of all the officers who wrote comments specifically mentioned this topic. It might also be noted that these comments are fully reinforced by the results already presented for question 27 of the survey (having to do with the number of discussions the officer has had with his rater within the last six months). This thought should be clearly kept in mind as the reader moves on to the conclusions and recommendations of this thesis.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. GENERAL

The reader will recall from Chapter one that the main intent of this thesis is to examine the perceptions of U.S. Army officers regarding various aspects of the present OER system. The authors have purposely tried to avoid expressing any specific evaluative judgements about the "goodness" or "badness" of all, or part, of the DA Form 67-8 system. They have, instead, concentrated on trying to identify areas in which officer perceptions either support or refute the positions and statements previously espoused by Department of the Army. Additionally, the authors compared specific parts of their survey results to the findings of earlier research efforts to see if any changes of attitude have occurred with the new OER form.

As the reader may have already gathered from reading the previous chapter, the results of this thesis expose areas of both support for, and contradiction of, previous DA statements. Before discussing the particular conclusions for each of these areas, however, the authors must caution the reader on the generalizability of these results. The officer population which was sampled came from three different Army installations in the central California area. The 180 respondents from the total sample of 276 provided the authors a large enough sample

size from which to make meaningful conclusions about the officer population of these three installations. It must be remembered, though, that only officers in the grades of 0-3, 0-4, and 0-5 were sampled. It must not be automatically assumed that officers of other grades feel the same way as those sampled.

Furthermore, it would be presumptuous to infer that the results of this thesis can be extrapolated to include all the 0-3's, 0-4's, and 0-5's in the Army. The sample size of 180 is simply too small to be meaningful for all the Army 0-3's, 0-4's, and 0-5's. A further comment on the interpretation of the results is that survey responses are assumed to be interval level data. While it can be argued in the strictest sense that Likert scale responses are ordinal level data, the authors feel that due to the large number of responses they are justified in treating the data as interval. This assumption then allows for comparisons of means and tests of significance. On the other hand, there is no reason why the results of this study could not be validated for the entire Army officer population, if it was deemed appropriate, by taking a much larger sample across the entire Army. Therefore, the reader will have to use his own judgement in interpreting the pervasiveness of the following conclusions.

B. CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the survey results and analysis presented in chapter four, the authors feel the following conclusions are warranted:

(1)--Surveyed officers slightly agree that the Support Form (DA Form 67-8-1) has aided them in measuring the performance of rated officers, as well as their own performance. This support, however, is not strong enough to substantiate the DA statements that the Support Form appears to be making a significant contribution to the evaluation process and the goal of better officer performance.

A possible reason for this less than overwhelming support is brought out in the question concerning the number of discussions the respondents have had with their raters in the last six months. As the reader may remember, the response for this question indicated that the majority of respondents have had few, if any, discussions with their raters. The authors strongly suspect that these results indicate that the Support Form is not being used as its designers intended. Much of the form's potential value is being lost because its goal-setting, objective-setting, and continual feedback functions are often being ignored. This finding is further substantiated by the many comments received concerning this topic.

(2)--Results of Questions 10 and 11 indicate that officers would prefer an OER system that allows the rater to be responsible for both performance and potential assessments. While officers agreed the rater was in the best position to assess performance they disagreed that the senior rater was in a superior position to assess potential. This is in opposition to current DA policy which separates the two functions, allowing the rater

to assess performance and the senior rater to assess potential because of his broader experience base and perspective. An earlier study had also found disagreement on the above policy of splitting the performance and potential assessment.

(3)--The results of Questions 12, 13, 22 and 23 indicate officers feel they must receive the maximum rating on Part IV, Part Va and Part Vb or their promotion chances will be significantly reduced. The intensity of this feeling varies depending whether the officer is the ratee or rater, with ratee responses being significantly higher (at the .05 level) than rater responses. In either case, however, these perceptions are strong enough to account for DA findings which have found scores in these parts of the 67-8 to be skewed toward the high end. Although DA states that some less-than-maximum scores in these blocks are not career threatening, field perceptions of this sample proved otherwise. Unless DA can cause this perception to be changed, these sections of the OER are likely to become meaningless due to a self-fulfilling prophecy of inflation.

From questions 14 and 25 it can be concluded that officers do not feel it necessary to receive the maximum rating in Part VIIa of the OER. No group of officers felt their promotion opportunities were significantly reduced if the senior rater did not place them in the top block of his potential assessment. This finding is in agreement with recent DA reports which said selection boards were promoting officers as low as the fifth block.

Also, question 24 illustrates senior raters feel that their credibility as a rating official will be reduced if they topblock their officers. Taken together with the findings from questions 14 and 25, this is strong support for recent DA reports which have emphasized this aspect of the OER system.

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(4)--Surveyed officers feel that the senior rater's assessment of potential should not compare them with all other officers of the same grade. This general feeling was manifested by each of the three ranks of officers surveyed and is exactly oppossite from the guidance promulgated by DA.

Comments indicated that some officers feel that this assessment of potential should only compare officers of the same branch, or general job category (i.e. combat, combat support, combat service support). Furthermore, several officers with highly specialized backgrounds (doctors, lawyers, etc.) indicated that there is no realistic way that they could be compared to other officers of the same rank in different branches.

(5)--Officers feel that selection toards place more emphasis on the senior rater's input than the rater's input when screening officers for promotion. This conclusion is based on the results of question 16, which found that a majority of the officers supported this view. This finding is not supported by published DA reports which have repeatedly stressed that selection boards are not biased towards the input of the senior rater.

Despite DA's attempt to educate officers about the relative importance of the senior rater's input, there still exists a gap between official guidance and field perceptions.

In conjunction with the aforementioned conclusion, officers do not show strong support for the statement that the rater's input is the single most important part of the OER. The results provide a mixed response with CPT's and MAJ's marginally supporting the statement while LTC's were in disagreement. Recent DA publications have indicated that the rater's performance narrative is the single most important section of the OER. While results of this study cannot say conclusively how the officers in the sample feel about the statement, it can be inferred from the data that there is not strong support for the statement as DA has indicated.

(6)--Rating inflation is still viewed as a problem with the current OER by the vast majority of Army officers. The mean for the question dealing with this topic was the most negative of all the questions asked (1.97). Survey results showed that 78.2% of the respondents felt this way. The results from the Dilworth thesis done in 1971 showed that 78.8% of the officers surveyed felt inflation was a problem with the OER then in effect (DA Form 67-6). Thus, this negative perception has shown little change in the intervening eleven years, even with the DA Form 67-8.

There exist mixed feelings concerning whether or not the current OER has helped to reduce the inflation problem of past OER systems. Respondents generally expressed either strong support or disdain for the value of the current system in this regard. Relatively few respondents lacked a clear opinion on

this subject. The results, therefore, are inconclusive as to their degree of support for or against the optimistic statements previously made by DA officials.

- (7)--The current OER is perceived as an effective tool for identifying officers of little potential to the Army. On the other hand, the survey results are inconclusive as to whether or not the OER is a good tool for identifying officers with the greatest future potential. Stated differently, the DA Form 67-8 is seen as effective in weeding out incompetent officers, but not effective in isolating the really promising officers.
- (8)--By a margin of nearly three to one, officers feel that the current OER, DA Form 67-8, should not be replaced with a new report. This very strong degree of support three years after this OER first came out is a strong indication of its acceptance within the officer corps. This result is even more striking when one considers that in 1976, three years after the DA Form 67-7 made its debut, just under half the respondents of an earlier officer survey wanted it replaced.
- (9)--When officers were asked if the evaluation reports they have received under the current system have overrated, underrated, or accurately portrayed their abilities, the results showed a fairly symmetric distribution of opinions. When compared with the earlier Dilworth thesis, a much larger percentage of respondents indicated that the current OER underrated their abilities (29.6% vs 5.4%). Thus, although respondents earlier stated that inflation was still a problem with the current OER,

the fact that many more officers feel underrated seems to support the official DA statements which say that the DA Form 67-8 has actually curbed the inflation problem.

(10)--The current OER format is the type most preferred by officers in the sample. When presented with a list of the most common evaluation techniques, officers chose forced distribution above all others. This finding supports DA statements which have said the 67-8 is the best, most effective evaluation technique adopted by the Army. A caution is needed here because of the phenomena of familiarity; that is, selecting a system because it is the one currently being used and thereby posing less uncertainty. Even allowing for this possibility, there were enough officers electing forced distribution and providing written comments about its usefulness to support DA reports.

The technique least preferred is ranking. Officers do not like the idea of having an evaluation system that incorporates a direct comparison of their performance with that of their peers. Dilworth's earlier thesis also identified ranking as the least preferred method of evaluation. It appears that there exists strong negative feelings about this technique that have persisted through time.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

(1)--Due to the lackluster results of survey questions concerning the Support Form and the many individual comments directed at this subject, it is felt that DA officials need to take a closer look at this form's usage. It is suggested

that a monitoring system be developed which would more reliably ensure that the rater and ratee conduct periodic and timely discussions and preformance reviews as dictated by existing regulations. The authors presume no access to a magical persuasion tactic, but hope that the Department of the Army will be able to devise a mechanism that might enhance the Support Form to be seen as the powerful tool it was intended to be.

- (2)--In view of the limited resources available to conduct this study it is recommended that similar research be carried out to determine whether the problem areas brought out in this thesis exist Army-wide.
- (3)--The authors would like to suggest that measures of two additional factors be included in any similar research done in the future. The first of these measures revolves around an individual's self-esteem and his perceived importance of the ratings received on the OER. The hypothesis to be tested by this measure is that individuals with high self-esteem place less importance on absolute scores and more importance on actual job accomplishment.

The second measure to be included in this future research concerns how an individual's perception of organizational effectiveness is influenced by forced rating systems. The hypothesis is that officers believe that any type of forced rating system will disrupt organizational performance because many will place their own goals of excelling above the goals of increased organizational effectiveness.

(4)--In conjunction with number three above, it is recommended that research be done to determine the nature and results of such officer competition upon the total organizational climate and performance.

APPENDIX A

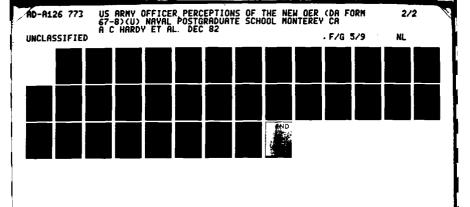
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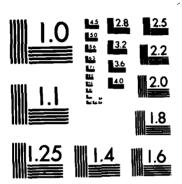
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APPENDIX B

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INSTRUCTIONS (SEE AR 600-185)

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Escallesh Performance of the particular duty reported upon in a very efficient manner. Personal characteristics, professional qualifications, or efficiency above very satisfactory but below fuportor.

Separion Outstanding and exceptional performance of the particular duty reported upon. Personal characteristics, professional qualifications, or efficiency above that considered escallant.

Unknown: To be used in all cases in which the reporting officer has had insufficient apportunity during the period covered by this report to observe the officer reported upon to pursuit a rating as to the performance of the personal artify, his personal characteristics, or professional qualifications.

U. S. GOVERNUENT PRINTING OPPICS

APPENDIX C

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APPENDIX D

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9. NAME, GRADE, SERVICE NUMBER AND ORBANIZATION OR UNIT OF RATING OFFICER	10.	MAME, GRADE, DRS LINE OFFICER	SER	VICE HUMBER AN	O ORGANII	ZATION O	901	OF.
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12.								
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B. COMMENTS OF INDORSING OFFICER I I OD NOT KNOW THE RATES I DO NOT KNOW THE RATED OFFICER VERY WELL BUT							ENT	
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		\Box	RATER INCORSER	
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C. WORK AS A SPECIALIST, PROFESSIONAL PERSON, OR TECHNI	CIAN			_
D. TEACH IN A CLASSROOM SITUATION		-		닏
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A. PERFORMANCE OF DUTY - CONSIDERING ONLY OFFICERS		3		
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APPENDIX E

DA FORM 67-3

OFFICER EFFICE						
SECT		·				
T NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL	2. SERVICE	NO.	4 BRANCH	5	COMPONENT	
A. UNIT, ORGANIZATION, AND STATION OF RATED OFFICER	7.		PERIOD OF	LOCKON		
and the first of t	FROM(Des	- To (De	PERIOD (I	DUTY DAYS	1	THER DAYS
B. REASON FOR REPORT Annual PCS rated officer	9. BASIS FOI	RATING C	FFICER'S E	NTRIES		
Change duty reted efficer PCS reted efficer PCS reted efficer	Close 4	hily contact	• (Infroquen	d about	price
Other (Speedy)	-	☐ Frequent	observation		□ Rope	rts and records
10. DUTIES ACTUALLY PERFORMED ON PRESENT JOB ASSIGNMENT (Codditional diction).	live hie daty l	008	, job cou	gement, and i	brieffy de	seetho major
11. OFFICER CHARACTERISTICS		RATER			INDORS	
		UNSATIS- FACTORY	SATIS- FACTORY	UNKHOWN	FACTO	AT PACTORY
a. How offective is this officer in the maintenance of supply discipline?						
b. How affective is this officer in utilization of personnel?			0			
e. FOR RATER ONLY - Does this officer possess the physical, meetal, and moral qualities capacited for his grade, branch, and longth of commissioned service?	UN K NOWN	**		if unkm detail in		10 espieia in L
A. FOR RATER ONLY - Could this officer be expected to serve edequate- ly in any normal breach assignment commensurate with his grade?				If UNICH		ro explain in
or obility to perform other types of easignments.	ree side of this	s report.		,		
13. RAYING OFFICER'S NAME, GRADE, SERVICE NUMBER, BRANCH, ORGANIZATION, AND DUTY ASSIGNMENT	ORGANIZ	EATION, AN	ID DUTY ASS	ii Ghmènt		MBER, BRANCH,
I CERTIFY THAT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BÉLIEF ALL ENTRIES MADE MEREON SY ME ARE TRUE AND IMPARTIAL AND ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH AR 800-185 AND SR 800-185-1.	ALL ENTRE	CROANCE	EREON BY M	E ARE TRU	-	
SIGNATURE	DATE		ATURE			
15. THIS REPORT HAS INCLOSURES. (Insert "O" If appropriate).	16. DATE E		I DA FORM (ER'S INITIA			

DA 1 OCT 53 6 7-3

REPLACES DA AGO FORM 87-2, 1 SEP 50, WHICH WILL BE OBSOLETE 31 OCT 38.

RATED OFFICER'S NAME AND SERVICE NUMBER					
			ILITY IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES you in each type of duty described below. Place on X to th		
son Hom in terme appropriate to reted afficer's grade an Headle for you to make an estimate of his probable upofulness	i branc	h. Ue	e the ENEROSSY calumn only if the nature of your contests or gapiement. Marking ENENOSSY does not penalize the o	a makes it is rated officer.	-
AC			ingon		٠
Serve as a staff officer					
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Metro destinions and tel	o esti		our name during your obsesses . H		
		67 106	airing forceful leadership.		
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Comment on and/or clarify above ratings if necessary					1
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*Per technical and administrative nervices, or staff, interpret t	Me 10		SECTION V OVER-ALL VALUE		{
SECTION III PERFORMANCE OF DUTY C' I Iring only officers of his grade, breach, and about		E	What is your estimate of the reted officer's over-oil value		- 1
C' Ling only officers of his grade, branch, and about the time time in grade, rate the officer on performance of his duty assignment. Read all descriptions and place a	ATE	8	the service? Compare him with officers of the same gra branch, and object the same time in grade. Place a heavy	y X	SER
heavy X in the best apposite best description.] RATER] INDORSE		y X	MOORSER
heavy X in the best appealte best description. 7. Essels any other afficer I knew in performance of this duty. 6. Outstanding performance of this duty found in very few] [] RATE!	ā	branch, and about the same time in grade. Place a heav in the ben appaste best description.		INDORSER
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APPENDIX F

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sec	TION IV - ESTI	MATED PE	FORMANCE OF O	THER PUTIES						
e the level at which the rated officer would p	ortoon in each	type of duty	described below by	indicating for each stem the m	ppropin	ate number	okayara is			
ate to rated officer's grade and breach. Use the UNI	HOWN (UNK) a	aly if the se	ture of your contact	a maises it impracticable (or yo	m to a	abo en esti	nate of his			
probable performance in a particular acaigment. Me	MAL UNKNOW	N does not p	enalize the rated off	icer.						
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SECTION V - TRAITS, QUALITIES AND C			F	SECTION VII - PROMOTION P	OTEN	Tial				
Study carefully the listed attributes which apply in							1179 10			
Designate in order of priority, as MI, M2 and M3 the are the MOST PRONOUNCED in the rated officer.	three attribute	sa which	grade, what is you	discuss of his grade, branch, we appared of this officer's promi	otion ;	otenti ul?	Tace a			
merimum of low syditions year LKOAOUNCED %	tributes may be	1861C466	transfer requires a	i opposite best description. A i comparison with other officers	naceus	: Brieff & Clu htosiotion o	T S OF MICH			
as M: Attributes which are considered to be LEAS; rated officer may, if considered appropriate, or indi-		D in the	of Balcas							
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SECTION VI - PERFORMANCE OF PR	ESENT DUTY		SEC	TION VIII - OVERALL VALU	E TO	SERVICE				
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grade, rate the officer on performance of his duty us scriptions and place a heavy X in the bux opposite	aignment. Year	ail de-	grade, what is you	r estimate of the rated officer's X in the box opposite best do	s uver:	al value to	the serv-			
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APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX J

DA FORM 67-8

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APPENDIX K

DA FORM 67-8-1

OFFICER EVALUATION REPORT SUPPORT FORM For use of this form, see AR 623-105: proponent agency is US Army Military Personnel Center. Read Privacy Act Statement and Instructions on Reverse before Completing this form.												
		ART I - RATED OFFI			, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,							
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DA FORM 67 - 8 - 1

PART IV - RATER AND/OR INTERMEDIATE RATER (Review and comment on Part III a, b, and a above.

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DATA REQUIRED BY THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a)

- 1. AUTHORITY: Sec ??! Title 5 USC; Sec 3012 Title 10 USC.
- 2. PURPOSE: DA Form 67-8, Officer Evaluation Report, serves as the primary source of information for officer personnel management decisions. DA Form 67-8-1, Officer Evaluation Support Form, serves as a guide for the rated officer's performance, development of the rated officer, enhances the accomplishment of the organization mission, and provides additional performance information to the rating chain.
- 3, ROUTINE USE: DA Form 67—8 will be maintained in the rated officer's official military Personnel File (OMPP) and Career Management Individual File (CMIF). A copy will be provided to the rated officer either directly or sent to the forwarding address shown in Part I, DA Form 67—8. DA Form 67—8—1 is for organizational use only and will be returned to the rated officer after review by the rating chain.
- 4. DISCLOSURE: Disclosure of the rated officer's SSAN (Part I, DA Form 67—8) is voluntary. However, failure to verify the SSAN may result in a delayed or erroneous processing of the officer's OER. Disclosure of the information in Part IIIc, DA Form 67—8—1 is voluntary. However, failure to provide the information requested will result in an evaluation of the rated officer without the benefits of that officer's comments. Should be rated officer use the Privacy Act as a basis not to provide the information requested in Part IIIc, the Support Form will contain the rated officer's statement to that effect and be forwarded through the rating chain in accordance with AR 623—105.

INSTRUCTIONS

PART 1: Identification - Self explanatory.

PART II: Rating Chain — The personnel officer or appropriate administrative office will fill in information based on the commander's designated rating scheme.

PART IIIa: Rated Officer Significant Duties and Responsibilities — State the normal requirements met in your specific position as well as any important additional duties. Address the type of work required, rather than frequently changing specific tasks.

PART IIIb: Rated Officer Major Performance Objectives — List the most important tasks, priorities, and major areas of concern and responsibility assigned. This is an explanation of how you set out to accomplish the duties described in IIIa. Ideally these are planned goals that you will work toward in an effort to make a contribution to the accomplishment of the organization mission; however, they may be in reaction to unpredictable changes. The objectives come from the following four categories.

ROUTINE — Objectives that address the repetitive and commonplace duties that must be carried out. These are duties that will produce less visible results, but will have serious consequences if not properly executed.

PROBLEM SOLVING — Objectives that provide for dealing with problem situations. The objective should plan for or address potential problems so that time is available to deal with them without disrupting other objectives.

INNOVATIVE - Objectives that create new or improved methods of operation in the organization.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT — Objectives that further professional growth of an individual or his/her subordinates.

PART IIIc: Rated Officer Significant Contributions — Describe the most significant contributions you made during the rating period. These may have been in support of the objectives established or may highlight other accomplishments that you feel are important.

PART IV: Reter and/or Intermediate Rater Review and Comment — Insure any remarks are consistent with your performance and potential evaluation on DA Form 67—8. Signature does not show concurrence with Part III but indicates that you have reviewed the rated officer's portion of the form.

APPENDIX L

DA FORM 67-8-2

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DA FORM 67 - 8 - 2

APPENDIX M

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY. CALIFORNIA - 93940

IN REPLY SEFER TO

NC4(54Ah)/abh22 June 1982

Department of Administrative Sciences

Dr. John W. Creighton CPT Allan Hardy From:

CPT Keith Harker

To: All Questionnaire Recipients

Subj: Explanation of Officer Evaluation Report (OER)

Questionnaire

- The purpose of this memorandum is to request your assistance in a research project being conducted at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. are interested in determining the perceptions of U.S. Army officers in the field concerning the value and effectiveness of the current Army Officer Evaluation Report (DA Form 67-8). The enclosed questionnaire is intended to gain the individual input of experienced officers in order to determine whether or not the current OER is a more accurate and practical evaluative tool than its predecessors. The survey will compare the responses of mid-level Army officers with the recent findings of the Department of the Army, as well as the results of earlier surveys.
- The questionnaire asks you for your personal feelings concerning various aspects of the current OER. Your responses will provide invaluable data for this research, and may ultimately prove very useful to DA. We assure you that your individual responses will remain confidential. Only summary information will be used in this study.

This entire questionnaire can be completed in less than 30 minutes. The success or failure of this project is totally dependent upon your response. Thank you for your cooperation.

Ollan C. Harde ALLAN C. HARDY

CPT, CM

USA

KEITH B. HARKER

eith D. Hacker

CPT, SC

USA

JOHN W. CRELCHTON

Professor

Naval Postgraduate

School

*** NOTE: Questions 1-7 are to be answered by circling or filling in your response.

1. What is your sex?

Male

Female

2. What is your rank/rate?

0-3

0-4

0-5

3. What is your branch?

4. What is your race?

Caucasian Black Hispanic Asian-American Other

5. What is your source of commission?

Academy ROTC OCS Direct Commission Other

6. Approximately how many OER's have you received under the current system (DA Form 67-8)?

Less than 4

4-6 7-9

Greater than 9

7. Approximately how many OER's have you completed as a rater or senior rater under the current system (DA Form 67-8)?

Less than 5 6-10 11-15 16-20 More than 20

гои	E: Questions 8-26 are to be answered by circling the number to the right of the question that most accurately describes how you feel about the subject.	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Strong Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8.	The development of the OER Support Form (DA67-8-1) has significantly aided me in measuring the rated officer's performance	5	4	3	2	1
9.	I feel the OER Support Form (DA67-8-1) has helped to improve my performance through the objective and responsibility setting process.	5	4	3	2	1
10.	In most cases the rater is in a better position to evaluate officer's performance than is the senior rater.	5	4	3	2	1
11.	By virtue of his experience and broader organizational perseptive the senior rater is in a better position than the rater to accurately assess an officer's potential.	S	4	3	2	1
12.	I feel that if I do not receive all "l's" in the rater's numerical professionalism section of the DA67-8 (Part IV), it will greatly reduce my promotion opportunity.	5	4	3	2	1
13.	If I do not receive checks in the blocks "always exceeds requirements" and "promote ahead of contemporaries" in the rater's performance and potential section of DA67-8 (Part V), it will greatly reduce my promotion opportunity.	5	4	3	2	1
14.	If I am not placed in the top box of the senior rater's potential evaluation scale, I feel my chances for promotion are greatly reduced.	5	4	3	2	1
15.	Senior rater assessments of potential should compare the rated officer's abilities with those of all other officers of the same grade, regardless of branch, specialty or other considerations.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Strong Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16.	I feel that selection boards viewing the current OER form place more emphasis on the senior rater's evaluation than the rater's input.	5	4	3	2	1
17.	I feel that the rater's performance narrative is the single most important part of the OER.	5	4	3	2	1
18.	I feel that inflation is not a problem with the current OER.	5	4	3	2	1
19.	I feel that the current OER has helped to reduce the inflation problem of past OER systems.	5	4	3	2	1
20.	I feel the present OER system is effective in identifying officers of little potential value to the Army.	5	4	3	2	1
21.	I feel the present OER system effectively identifies those officers having the greatest future potential.	5	4	3	2	1
22.	When acting as a rater, I feel that if I do not give the rated officer all "1's" in the rater's numerical professionalism section of the OER (Part IV), it will greatly reduce his promotion opportunity.	S	4	3	2	1
23.	When acting as a rater, I feel that if I do not check the blocks "always exceeded requirements" and "promote ahead of contemporaries" in the rater's performance and potential section of the OER (Block V), it will greatly reduce the rated officer's promotion opportunity.	5	4	3	2	1

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Strong Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
***	NOTE: Questions 24 and 25 are to answered only if you have been a senior rater. Otherwise go directly to question 26.					
24.	I feel that by rating officers predominantly in the top box on the senior rater's potential evaluation scale, I am in danger of losing my credibility as a rating official.	5	4	3	2	1
25.	When acting as a senior rater, I feel that if I do not place the rater officer in the top block of the potential evaluation scale, it will greatly reduce his promotion opportunity.	5	4	3	2	1
26.	I feel that the current OER, DA 67-8, should be replaced with a new report.	5	4	3	ئ	1
***	NOTE: Questions 27 and 28 are to be answered by circling your response.					
27.	In the last six months, how many times have you had discussions with your rater about how well you were doing in your job.					
	None 1-2 3-4 5-6 Greater than 6					
28.	I feel that the efficiency reports I have received under the current system have:					
	Greatly overrated my abilities 5					
	Slightly overrated my abilities 4					
	Accurately portrayed my abilities 3					
	Slightly underrated my abilities 2					
	Greatly underrated my abilities 1					

29. From the following list of evaluation techniques select the one you would most prefer (Coded 1) and the one you would least prefer (Coded 2)	Most Prefer	Least_Prefer
Ranking. This technique requires the listing of subordinate officers of equal grade, in order from highest to lowest, according to relative quality of performance.	1	2
Nomination. This technique requires the rater to identify the best and worst group of performers from among all rated subordinate officers of equal grade. For example, a rater with 10 subordinate officers could be required to identify the top 20% or 2 officers and bottom 20% or 2 officers, leaving the middle 60% unidentified.	1	2
Point Allocation. This technique requires the rater to allocate a fixed number of points among all of his subordinate officers of equal grade with the best performer receiving the most points. For example, with 1000 points to allocate among 10 subordinate officers, the rater could give the best performer 250 points, the next best 200 points and so or until he has exhausted the 100 points, or he may give all 10 subordinate officers 100 points each.	1	2
Forced Choice. This technique requires the rater to choose a specified number of criteria that best describe the rated officer. For example, a rated officer must be evaluated on managerial style and manner by selecting one of the following: Constructive, Supportive, or Creative.	1	2
Narrative Reports. This method could take several forms. The report could be completely unstructured with the rater providing his evaluation of a rater officer in free essay form. In another adaptation, an unrestricted narrative addendum could be attached to a standard evaluation form such as was done on DA Form 67-7	1	2
Weighted Scores or Weighted Check List. This technique presents the rater with a large number of statements describing various types and levels of behavior relating to job success. Each of these statements has a different relative value or is weighted. These relative values are unknown to the rater but are known to DA Boards and Managers. The rater selects those statements which best describe the rated officer.	1	2
Global Scored Reports. This technique utilizes a form on which the rater and indorser record their overall assessment of performance and/or potential in terms of a single global score as was done on DA Form 67-7.	1	2
Forced Bistribution. Current system.	1	2
30. Please use the back of this page for any additional comments you may have relating to this questionnaire or the Army's OER system.		

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