

3507 AIRMAN CLASSIFICATION SQUADRON



MISSION

3507 Airman Classification Squadron manages the post-enlistment classification system at BMT.

LINEAGE

3507 Airman Classification Squadron

STATIONS

Lackland AFB, TX, 1 Jan 1976

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATION

The military services have formal programs to screen enlisted applicants and accessions seeking high security risk or sensitive jobs. These jobs either require Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) and/or Top Secret access or require nuclear duties under the Personal Reliability Program. This prescreening reduces the probability of assigning unreliable or untrustworthy personnel to positions where they might become security risks.

It also saves the Department of Defense a considerable amount of money by eliminating high security risk individuals prior to requesting costly Defense Investigation Service background investigations and before incurring technical training costs. The procedures employed by each of the services have evolved over the years to accommodate their unique requirements for processing personnel. There has been no systematic evaluation of the instruments and methods employed during this prescreening to determine their effectiveness.

List of Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSCs) Screened for Personnel Security

Sensitive Compartmented Information

Defensive Aerial Gunner

Intelligence Operations Specialist

Target Intelligence Specialist

Radio Communications Analysis Security Specialist

Electronic Intelligence Operations Specialist

Imagery Interpreter Specialist

Morse Systems Operator

Printer Systems Operator

Cryptologic Linguist Specialist

Defensive Countermeasure Specialist

Electronic Communications and Cryptologic Equipment Systems Specialist

Telecommunications Systems Maintenance Specialist

Top Secret

In Flight Refueling Operator

Airborne Communication Systems Operator

Imagery Production Specialist

Communications and Control Specialist

Airborne Command Post Communications Equipment Specialist

Missile Trainer Specialist

Communications Computer Systems Operator

Communications Computer Systems Control Specialist

Systems Repair Technician

PRP (Critical)

Missile Systems Maintenance Specialist
Missile Maintenance Specialist
Missile Facilities Specialist
Missile Pneudralic Specialist
Missile Liquid Propellant Systems Maintenance Specialist
Nuclear Weapons Specialist
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist

PRP (Controlled)

Bomb Navigation Systems Specialist
Defensive Fire Control Systems Specialist
Missile Systems Maintenance Specialist
Tactical Aircraft Maintenance Specialist
Strategic Aircraft Maintenance Specialist
Offensive Avionics Systems Specialist
Aircraft Computer and Multiplexing Systems Specialist
Defensive Avionics Systems Specialist
Security Specialist

As is true in all the services, many applicants do not enter the Air Force immediately after being processed at the MEPS. They enter the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) where they are allowed a period of time (sometimes up to a year) prior to reporting for active duty. When applicants come out of the DEP, they come to the MEPS for final processing. At this time, the 2030 drug form is completed again and any drug usage during DEP would automatically disqualify the individual for sensitive jobs.

During FY-86 and FY-87, the distribution of SJC codes for enlisted accessions entering Lackland was approximately as follows: (B) ineligible -14 percent, (C) ineligible for some sensitive jobs - 5 percent, and (F) eligible for sensitive jobs -81 percent. The Air Force screening at the MEPS for sensitive jobs is very limited. Job counselors receive limited training in filling out the 1408, and any counselor can gather the 1408 information. given the more selected manpower pool the Air Force draws upon as well as the capability to classify recruits at Lackland into sensitive jobs, the Air Force system serves as a very cost effective and non-time consuming initial screening process. The thorough follow-up screening that occurs at Lackland compensates for the less intensive early screening.

The second stage of the security screening is performed by the 3507th Airman Classification Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base. This screening encompasses an evaluation on the sixth day of recruit training performed by enlisted job counselors and for any accession requiring a BI/SBI, an additional 10th day evaluation. The 10th day screen, which is the most in-depth interview, is conducted by personnel from the Sensitive Skills Support Section. As of mid-1988, this section had four junior officers

The job counselors who conduct the sixth day screen have not received any specific training in personnel security screening; they have conducted numerous interviews as part of the classification process at Lackland. Likewise, interviewers in the Sensitive Skills Support Section have only received on-job training. The screening process at Lackland can best be understood in terms of sequential stages occurring at various points in the 31 days of recruit training.

On day 4 of recruit training, all basic trainees come to the 3507th for processing. If they are non-school guarantees, they also see lists of jobs for that week's group and read written job descriptions and then indicate their assignment preferences. All recruits fill out the four-part ATC form 712, which is a biographical questionnaire

Page one of form 712 requests basic background information including educational, employment, and criminal data as well as any involvement with illegal drugs. Page two is used to record interview results from the 10th day evaluation. Page three consists of a two-part psychological questionnaire including a sentence completion test. Finally, page four is used for legal, privacy act, and other administrative concerns.

Day 6. On the sixth day, the trainees come back for additional processing. Job counselors verify information in personnel and medical records. These records are compared with information disclosed by the recruit on the front page of the ATC form 712 biographical questionnaire. Interviewers also look at ATC Form 722, PRP/in-Service Drug Use, which is filled out just prior to the interview. This form is very similar to the ATC form 1408 filled in at the MEPS except that it has more questions on drug usage.

The counselor also assesses emotional stability using information available in the recruit's personnel records. If the counselor spots a problem, the recruit will be referred to a psychologist for a more in-depth examination. Based on the above assessments, the interviewer determines whether or not the recruit is qualified for a sensitive job. This is done for both individuals with job guarantees and for other recruits before they state their choices. Thus, recruits are not permitted to state a choice for a job for which they do not qualify. Individuals who are being considered for classification into sensitive jobs will later participate in the 10th day screen along with individuals who pass this screen and who were previously guaranteed a sensitive job.

From a personnel security standpoint, the interviewer is attempting to determine whether the individual will meet the reliability and trustworthiness criteria required for a successful SBI/IBI or for the PRP program. The orientation at this point is to qualify the individual rather than to emphasize disqualification. Only the most obvious cases are disqualified. Nonetheless, besides steering non-GTEP recruits away from sensitive jobs, some recruits guaranteed sensitive jobs are also disqualified. In most cases, these individuals are reclassified into nonsensitive jobs rather than discharged from the Air Force.

For individuals who have been classified into PRP (Controlled) jobs, day six is the final screening

prior to an assessment at their new assignment. Individuals in the other three categories (PRP (Critical), Top Secret, and SCI) now proceed on to a more thorough 10th day screen.

Day 10. On the 10th day, all trainees who have potential sensitive job assignments (either as a GTEP or as a result of the sixth day classification) report back to the 3507th for additional screening. Prior to reporting, these trainees have completed a rough draft of their DD Form 398-2, which will provide the interviewer with additional information for consistency checks. The 398-2 form is the basic document used by the services to request either an IBI or an SBI. The interviewers, called Sensitive Skills Adjudicators, also have personnel and medical records available for background information as well as the biographical questionnaire.

The interview is conducted face-to-face and takes approximately 15 to 25 minutes. Each interviewer uses a similar structured format; styles vary in terms of techniques used for probing potential problem areas. The interview covers criminal, citizenship, financial, reliability, trustworthiness, and drug and alcohol abuse areas. One assessment, unique to the Air Force, is the use of the psychological data provided in the biographical questionnaire. These psychological tests are not keyed to provide an overall adjustment score. Rather, the interviewer focuses on certain critical items that could indicate potential problem areas and that require follow-up in the interview, e.g., "It is usually true that I am unable to control my temper."

According to 3507th personnel, the orientation of the 10th day interview, unlike the sixth day interview, is to disqualify rather than qualify. It is interesting to note that the screening process does not differ as a function of access level. Interviewers conduct similar interviews independent of whether the individual is in the SCI, Top Secret, or PRP (Critical) group. One minor difference is that former Peace Corps members are not allowed to enter SCI billets but may go to PRP jobs.

This Peace Corps restriction is also the case for SCI billets in the other military services. It resulted from a concern when the Peace Corps was established that it not be perceived as an intelligence gathering agency of the U. S. government. As such, participation in the Peace Corps followed by subsequent service in military intelligence billets might be seen by foreign governments as linking the Peace Corps with our intelligence agencies.

During FY-87, 8505 interviews were conducted by the 3507th on the 10th day. A total of 914 or 10.7 percent of the trainees are disqualified at this stage. The disqualification rates were 14.7 percent for recruits on open contracts who were classified into sensitive jobs on the 6th day of training and 5 percent for GTEPs. Again, unless the disqualification resulted from fraudulent entry, an attempt is made to place these personnel in other nonsensitive ratings.

After trainees successfully pass the 10th day screen, a formal request is initiated to DIS for a SBI or IBI depending on the job clearance requirement. The 3507th now initiates another phase of screening that is again unique to the Air Force program. For each trainee for whom a SBI or IBI is being requested, at least three letters are sent to request character references (see Appendix C, pages C-6 and C-7 for a copy of the form). Also, at least one law enforcement inquiry is initiated

(see Appendix C, pages C-8 and C-9). Finally, a credit, employment, and/or education inquiry is sent if there are any doubts in these areas (see Appendix C, pages C-10 to C-15).

If replies from these inquiries uncover any new derogatory information, the trainee is brought back to discuss the issue. If the trainee has left Lackland, the derogatory information is forwarded to his or her new training command for action. While these inquiries very seldom uncover new derogatory information, 3507th personnel feel they are still important because a few potential security risks are identified. Also, it allows them to cancel some requests for formal DIS investigations that may prove to be too negative to grant a clearance.

The 3507th unit performs one final screen that is again unique to the Air Force. For every trainee who successfully passes the 10th day screen, peer evaluations are obtained from other individuals in his or her flight squadron (see Appendix C, page C-16). These evaluations are then scanned by the adjudicator who conducted the original interview. If the evaluations warrant follow-up, the trainee is called back in for additional consultation. Again, this process leads to only a few disqualifications, but 3507th personnel feel it has merit because it taps a source of information not covered in other parts of the screening and usually not assessed in the DIS SBI/IBI.

While the 3507th performs a screening and adjudication function, it does not perform the final adjudication. As mentioned earlier, this function is performed by AFSCO. AFSCO has access to all the information gathered by the 3507th as well as new data generated by the formal DIS investigation. There are no data available giving clearance denial rates for enlisted accessions receiving SBIs or IBIs; it has been estimated by adjudicators to be less than one percent. Also, in some cases, this is the result of activities by the new accession that occurred after training at Lackland. Overall, this low denial rate suggests that the Air Force screening program is doing an effective job of screening out individuals who would not successfully pass final adjudication.

Effective 1 March 1979, ATC reassigned the 3507th Airman Classification Squadron from Recruiting Service to HQ ATC.

The command activated the 3300th Training Support Group at Randolph AFB, Texas, on 1 October and assigned it to HQ ATC. At the same time, ATC reassigned 3507th Airman Classification Squadron to the 3300th 1990.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.