

096446

3.15.30

43.0311



UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

3

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND
COMPENSATION DIVISION

FEB 28 1973

B-177952



Dear Mr. Secretary: *jc*

We conducted a survey in the 2d Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas, to see how well the division was meeting the Modern Volunteer Army (MVA) objective to return soldiers to soldiering. We applied work sampling to determine how the men were spending their time and we issued a questionnaire to determine the attitudes of the men toward their jobs. 25

The MVA program stated that in order to build a better Army--while, at the same time, reducing its reliance upon the draft--the Army must (1) strengthen professionalism by building positive incentives toward the service and (2) improve Army life by reducing sources of dissatisfaction. Toward this end, actions are to be directed toward improving professional competence and building among Army men and women of all ranks a strong sense of accomplishment and achievement in performing an important job well. These, according to the MVA program, were the real sources of motivation and pride which sustain a fine Army.

Results of Work Sampling Study

Work sampling is a method of study utilized to obtain detailed information about an activity in the most economical manner possible. It is the recording of a series of instantaneous observations made at randomly selected times. We have used this method to quantify the activities of enlisted men in the 2d Armored Division to determine what they do during their normal 40-hour work week.

We randomly selected 600 enlisted men, about 5 percent of the operating strength of the division, for observation. The study plan called for each man to be observed at randomly selected times for 5 consecutive work days. We made over 14,000 observations on the activities of the selected men during the period September 18, 1972, through October 16, 1972. We were unable to make many of the planned observations because the wide dispersion of those to be observed made it impossible to get from one location to another within prescribed

~~701444~~ 096446

B-177952

time limits. In those instances where we were unable to actually observe the activities, we attempted to determine through other means what the men were doing at these times. Overall, we were able to account for the activities of those included in our sample during 85 percent of the time they were to be observed.

The enlisted men included in our sample were engaged in the following activities during the observation period.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Working/Training	42
Personal time (personal needs, official breaks or otherwise released from duty)	18
Compensatory time (time off for after-duty-hours worked)	9
Details	4
Inspections	2
Other	10 ^{1/}
Unaccounted for	<u>15</u>
	<u>100</u>

^{1/} Includes such activities as marching to and from duty posts, waiting for some type of work or training activity, appointments at finance and personnel offices, and Project Transition.

The results of our sample cannot be immediately evaluated because no standards are available for comparison. If similar studies were conducted by the Army, comparisons among the studies at different dates and/or units appear to have future benefits. (See page 3)

Questionnaire regarding
job satisfaction

The Army's MVA program recognized that an essential ingredient in the achievement and maintenance of an all-volunteer Armed Force is job satisfaction. In connection with our work sampling study, we asked 592 of the enlisted men in our sample to complete a short questionnaire on their attitudes toward their jobs. The sample included 330 E-1's through E-4's, 244 E-5's and E-6's, and 18 E-7's through E-9's. Of these, 229 had less than 2 years service, 142 had from 2 to 4 years service, and 221 had more than 4 years service.

Responses to the questionnaire showed that 53 percent of the men felt their job was satisfying; 36 percent felt their job was not satisfying; and the remaining 11 percent were undecided.

The following responses were received when asked how much of the time they felt they were doing useful, meaningful tasks.

	<u>Percent</u>
Almost all of the time	19
Most of the time	29
About half of the time	19
Little of the time	18
Almost none of the time	<u>15</u>
	<u>100</u>

We believe the respondents' feelings toward their jobs were partly reflected in their attitude toward staying in the Army. Fifty percent indicated they would not reenlist and another 10 percent said they probably would not reenlist. Of the remainder, 25 percent indicated they would or probably would reenlist and 15 percent said they were undecided.

The effect that job satisfaction may have on the attitudes toward reenlistment shown above is indicated by the fact that 339 men (57 percent of men sampled) stated they desired to change their primary Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), of which 222, or 66 percent said retraining in an MOS of their choice would effect their attitude toward reenlisting.

We also asked what activities were most disliked. The most frequently cited activities are shown below:

1. Details and extra duties (16 percent).
2. Specific activities required by an individual's duty MOS or by his rank (14 percent).
3. Unnecessary, dull and unchallenging training (12 percent).
4. Activities related to vehicle maintenance (10 percent).

Comments of Fort Hood Officials

Fort Hood officials generally indicated that, in the absence of guidelines or standards which could be applied to the Army, they could not draw any meaningful conclusions from the results of our work sampling study.

Conclusions

Our review at Fort Hood showed that there can be certain limitations to work sampling studies in a military environment. We believe, however, the technique could be used meaningfully by commanders at all levels. The technique seems a practical aid in developing installation and, ultimately, Army standards for the use of soldiers' time. Until such standards are developed, commanders could use work sampling to determine whether the proportion of working/training effort had been increased.