

The restructuring of CMF 31

by MSgt. Harry Grindle

The new CMF 31 structure has functional groupings of MOSs that will enhance soldier utilization and professional development as well as better fill the manpower needs of a fully automated communication system.

The restructuring of Career Management Field (CMF) 31--Signal Operations--has been approved. Changes in The Army Authorization Documents System (TAADS) will occur in March of 1987, and subsequent personnel reclassification in September of 1987. It is important to note that this reorganization, affecting 52,000 Signal soldiers, is a realignment and force modernization effort that will require minimal retraining, though some reorientation at the staff sergeant through sergeant major levels will be necessary.

Because our current CMF make-up does not support force modernization efforts, restructuring is essential to prepare for the new communications systems being fielded during the next seven years, especially Mobile Subscriber Equipment (MSE). Commands are critically short of senior NCO supervision and expertise at a time when high-tech equipment demands an increased knowledge of systems planning, deployment, and management. Furthermore, actual grade levels for CMF 31 are not in accordance with the force structure model mandated by the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans (DCSPER). The new CMF 31 structure has functional groupings of MOSs that will enhance soldier utilization and professional development as well as better fill the manpower needs of a fully automated communication system.

MOS changes

In the maneuver MOS group, 31V SSgt./SFC positions will be converted to MOS 31G (Tactical Communications Chief). This MOS redesignation removes the electronic maintenance duties from the communications chief and clearly identifies 31V skill levels one and two as the unit level communications maintainers. The tactical communications chief, who will plan,

coordinate, supervise, and manage communications systems/networks for the combat arms, will be eligible for promotion to master sergeant in MOS 31Z. This realignment will also alleviate spot shortages in MOSs 31K/31V.

The communications operations MOS group will combine MOSs 31C, 31L, 31M, 31Q, 36L, and 36M into an operator subfield for non-MSE systems. MOS 36L will be transferred from CMF 29, providing an operator/maintainer for TRITAC automatic switches and eliminating training deficiencies that have occurred since the inception of this MOS. MOSs 36C and 26Q will be retitled 31L and 31Q, respectively, to reflect their CMF association. The 31Y (skill level 4) MOS will be established to provide sergeant first class expertise at section and platoon levels. The communications system supervisor position, which will change from MOS 31Z40 to 31Y40, will have no major role change until MSE is fielded.

The circuit/system control MOS group, established in preparation for the eventual merging of technical control functions in FY 88/89, will keep all tactical circuit controller expertise in a single MOS grouping. Joint basic non-commissioned officers course (BNCOC) training for MOS 31N/32D began in October 1986 to ensure that the 31N and 32D MOS holders are equally qualified. The current 32D promotion opportunity will be preserved by merging 31N/32D into 31X (Communications Systems/Circuit Control Supervisor) at the sergeant first class level.

There will be two changes to the telecommunications center MOS group. Standards of grade authorizations will be adjusted, and MOS 72E will be retitled Tactical Telecommunications Center Operator.

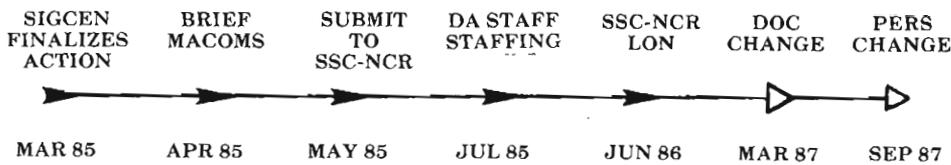


Figure 1. Restructure Milestones. We are on schedule. To overcome a systemic six-month delay for staffing, major commands were individually briefed during April and May of 1985. We received their written comments and included these in the restructure submission packet.

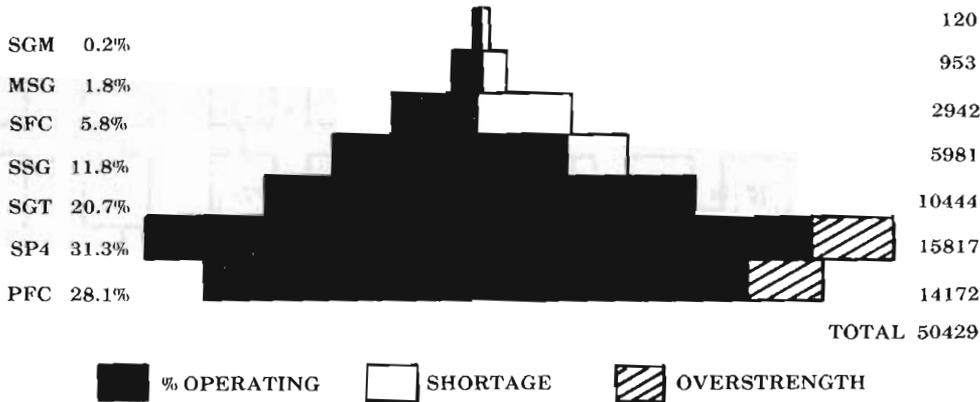


Figure 2. CMF 31 actual force structure (Aug 86). As Figure 2 shows, we are overstrength at skill level one, balanced at skill level two, and understrength in senior NCO authorizations.

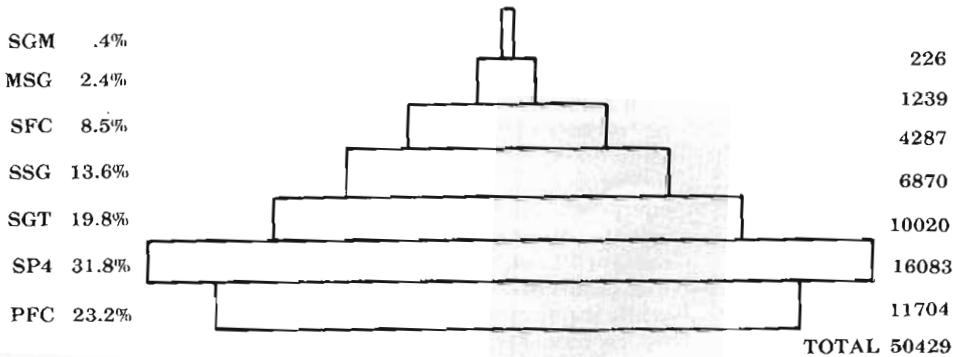


Figure 3. CMF 31 ideal force structure. The numbers in Figure 3 are based on the DA-mandated force structure model. We will not attain this ideal structure in 1987, but we will come much closer to achieving an optimum operating force. The force structure model, commonly referred to as the POSS-E (personnel objective support structure-enlisted), assumes that the sergeant major strength grade mix and ultimately promotion stagnation. On-going Army studies on the reduction of senior NCO authorizations may affect our master sergeant and sergeant major positions but not our projected changes in the lower grades. Staff sergeant and sergeant first class positions will increase; sergeant positions and below will decrease.

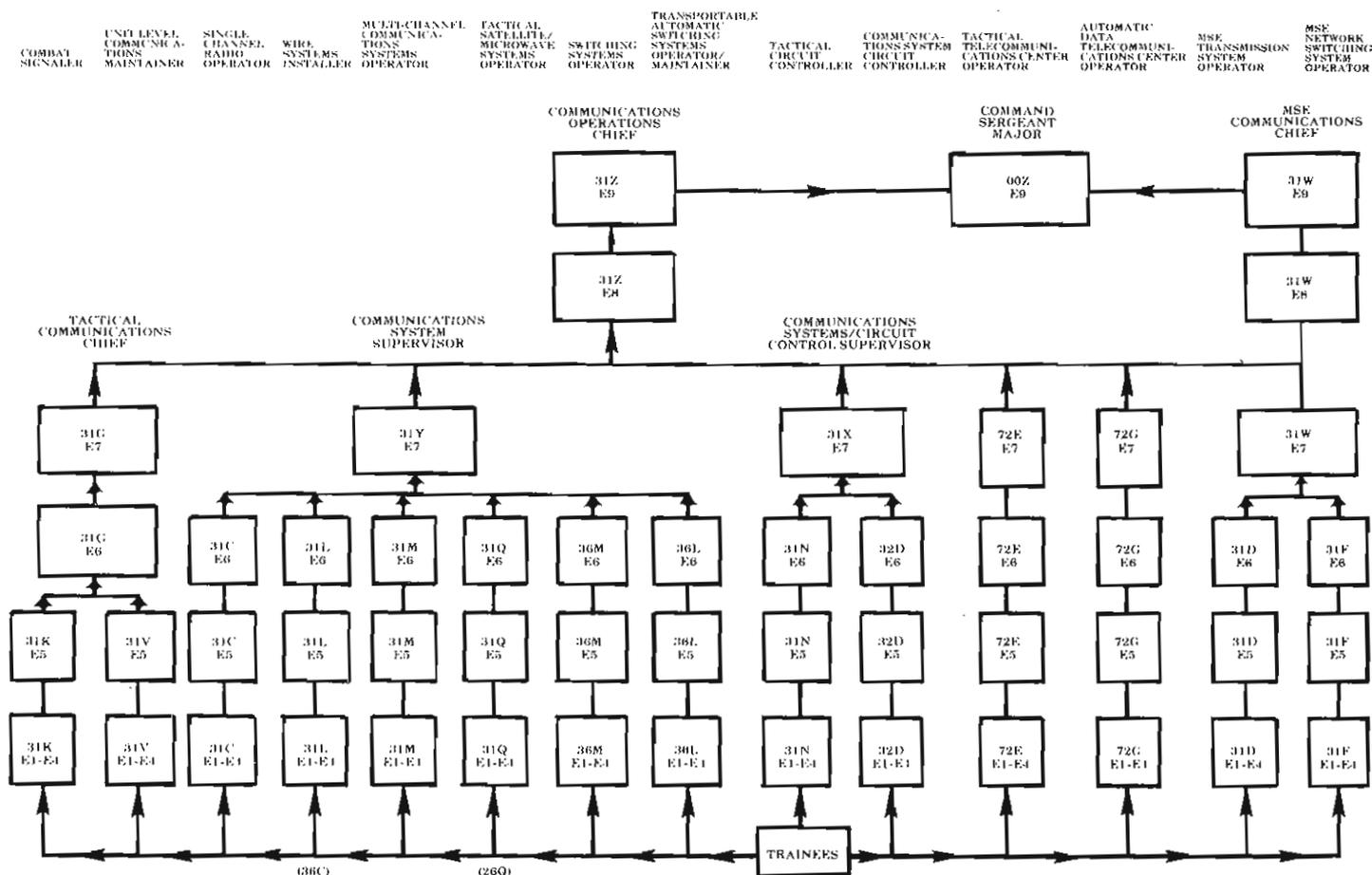


Figure 4. CMF 32 restructure. By adjusting the standards of grade authorization (SGA), the CMF 31 restructuring will enhance career progression and professional development, and provide the battlefield commander with an experienced and well-qualified soldier. As our use of the automated communications grows, further restructuring may be necessary to enable the Signal Corps to modernize its forces.

The MSE MOS group has been approved by the DA DCSPER and will be effective in FY 88. MOS 31D holders will install, operate, supervise and perform unit level maintenance on MSE radio transmission equipment, radio access units, and COMSEC devices. MOS 31F holders will install, operate, supervise, and perform unit level maintenance on node control centrals, extension switches, net radio interface equipment, and associated multiplexing and COMSEC devices. The MSE communications chief (MOS 31W) will plan, coordinate, supervise, and provide technical assistance in the installation, operation, and management of MSE communications systems and networks. Because of the

technical expertise requirement for MSE, MOS 31W holders will progress to sergeant major.

In summary, the CMF 31 restructure is within the DCSPER guidelines, supports force modernization efforts, and meets new equipment fielding needs. Subgroupings of MOSs have been designed to enhance soldier utilization and career progression, while intermediate level supervisory MOSs have been established to reduce the technical span of control and bolster sergeant first class MOS qualifications. Adjustment of the standards of the grade authorizations will ensure equitable promotion opportunities across the CMF.

MSgt. Grindle is a 24-year veteran who has served in a variety of assignments with tactical Signal units in Germany, Italy, Korea, and Vietnam. He has been a drill sergeant, Signal School instructor, operations sergeant, and first sergeant. Currently, MSgt. Grindle is assigned as CMF 31 life cycle manager with the Office Chief of Signal. He has also been inducted into the Sergeant Morales Club in the U.S. Army, Europe.