

Historical view of the Signal Warrant Officer Corps occupational specialties

By CW5 Todd M. Boudreau

Here is an historical look at our Signal warrant officer military occupational specialties.

While we might not be able to trace our Signal warrant officer MOS back to 1918, there are distinct warrant officer MOS functions associated with the Signal Corps that go back as far as October 1943 (i.e., MOS 4400, Signal Supply Officer and MOS 0145 Radar maintenance and repair officer).

The Earliest Years

The best point of entry is 1961 to chronicle the history of contiguous MOS adjustments which lead to the current Signal warrant officer MOS. For example, MOS 286A, communications-electronics repair technician, which had previously been MOS 4415, Signal equipment maintenance and repair officer (established in July of 1948) was created in June 1961. A number of related MOSs were also created in this action in 1961 to include MOS 281A, radio repair technician; MOS 282A, radar repair technician; and MOS 284A, television repair

technician. Most of these MOSs were eventually subsumed into MOS 286A in the 1970s which remained a stalwart Signal warrant officer MOS for many years.

MOS 250B

In October 1987, MOS 286A was converted to MOS 256A, communications-electronics repair technician, which also eventually subsumed MOS 257A, data processing systems repair technician two years later. MOS 257A had been converted from MOS 287A, data processing systems repair technician, (created 19 Sep 77) which had previously subsumed both MOS 301A, data processing equipment repair technician, (created 3 Jun 61) and MOS 361A, fire distribution systems repair technician, (created 11 Sep 62).

Some of our more senior Signaleers may remember MOS 256A, since it remained on our authorization documents for almost 10 years. However, MOS 256A succumbed to the push to move all repair MOSs to the Ordnance Corps. Thus, in June 1995, all but a few select 256A positions were re-coded 918B.

The small handful of positions that remained Signal was coded with the Additional Skill Identifier 3E, satellite communications. These positions and a few individuals holding them were re-coded/reclassified to MOS 250B ASI 3E. MOS 250B, Tactical automated network technician, was created in October 1988, initially subsuming personnel and positions of MOS 250A, telecommunications technician with ASI 3T. MOS 250B are best known for their depth and breadth of experience in Mobile Subscriber Equipment and the TRI-TAC switching suite of equipment. This is a great place to divert momentarily.

MOS 250A

MOS 250A was added in October 1987 as it subsumed MOS 290A, Telecommunications Technician, created September 1977 from MOS 341A, cryptographic equipment repair technician, (created 3 Jun 61) which was previously MOS 4418, cryptographic repair officer, (created 18 Nov 57) and MOS 721A, cryptographic technician, (created 3 Jun 61) which was previously MOS 0224, message center officer, cryptographic, (created 30 Oct 43). MOS 250A, best known for their depth and breadth in communications security and telecommunications message systems, is another of our more recent MOS which existed for over 10 years when it was ultimately subsumed, along with MOS 250B, into MOS 250N, network management technician in April 1999.

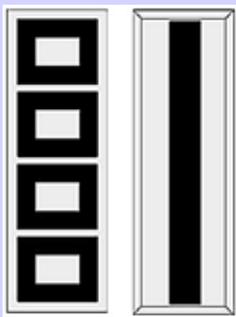
MOS 250N

MOS 250N remained relatively stable until September 2000 when all COMSEC functions were transferred to MOS 254A, (created in 2000 though not an effected MOS until April 2003) and all CW5 positions were transferred to MOS 255Z (also created in 2000 though not an effected MOS until April 2003). MOS 250N are best known for their depth and breadth of experience in transport and circuit switch equipment to include Internet Protocol routing. See the article entitled, "The Army's expert cyberspace network management technician - MOS 255N" for more information regarding the current 250N and its repurposing actions.

MOS 255N

This brings us to the current state and fate of MOS 250N. As of November 2009, MOS 250N has been in

Shown here on the left is the master warrant officer four (MW4) insignia authorized 1988-1991, which then became chief warrant officer five (CW5) insignia from 1991-2004. On the right is the CW5 insignia authorized 2004 to the present.





Robert H. Lee was an early Signal warrant officer.

transition to MOS 255N which will be effective October 2012. The training currently offered under the 250N Warrant Officer Basic and Advance Courses (WOBC and WOAC respectively) was refined on 1 October 2009 to meet most of the training requirements of MOS 255N. Position recoding from 250N to 255N will be effective 1 October 2012. Those graduating from either the 250N WOBC or WOAC as of fiscal year 2010 may be awarded

MOS 255N at the discretion of HRC. All others holding MOS 250N will be reclassified to MOS 255N during the 6 June – 30 September 2012 reclassification window. Note that there is an entire article dedicated to MOS 255N within this edition of the Army Communicator.

MOS 251A

Going back to 1961, MOS 741C, Data Processing Technician, ADPS, was created from combining MOS 2403, ADPS operations technician, (created 6 Nov 58) and MOS 2404, ADPS Programmer, (created 6 Nov 58). In December 1970 it split into MOS 741B, 741C, 741D, & 741E and was eventually deleted in April 1976 when it and its family of MOS consolidated into 741A.

MOS 741A, data processing technician, continued to exist for over 10 years until it was converted to MOS 251A, Data Processing Technician, in October 1987. Like MOS 250N, MOS 251A too transferred all COMSEC functions to MOS 254A and all CW5 positions to MOS 255Z in September 2000. MOS 251A are best known for their depth and breadth of experience in server operations and information systems and assurance programs. See the article entitled, “The Army’s expert cyberspace content technician – MOS 255A” for more information regarding the current 251A and its repurposing actions.

MOS 255A

This leads up to the current state and prospects of MOS 251A. As of November 2009, MOS 251A has been in transition with MOS 254A to MOS 255A which will be effective October 2012. The training currently offered under the 251A (and 254A as noted below) WOBC and WOAC was refined on 1 October 2009 to meet most of the training requirements of MOS 255A. Position recoding from 251A to 255A will be effective 1 October 2012. Those graduating from either the 251A/254A WOBC or WOAC as of FY10 may be awarded MOS 255A at the discretion of HRC. All others holding MOS 251A will be reclassified to

MOS 255A during the 6 June – 30 September 2012 reclassification window. Note that there is an entire article dedicated to MOS 255A within this edition of the Army Communicator.

What remains to close out is MOS 254A, Signal Systems Support Technician and MOS 255Z, Senior Signal Systems Technician; both created in 2000 though not effected MOS until April 2003.

MOS 254A and 255Z

In concert with the recent changes to MOS 250N and MOS 251A, as of November 2009, MOS 254A has been in transition with MOS 251A to MOS 255A which will be effective October 2012. MOS 254A was created to provide a Signal technical expert in non-Signal, maneuver formations. MOS 254A are best known for their depth and breadth of experience in maneuver Signal operations, Combat Net Radios, COMSEC, and Signal support to tactical operation centers. Since their inception, however, several significant shifts have incurred. First, the bandwidth and computing power of today’s Digital TOC has increased to equal (and in some cases surpass) that of the nominal center in which MOS 251A is found. Second, Army transformation and modularity has negated the terminology “non-Signal maneuver formation.” The brigade combat team today has organic Signal support unlike ever before. Therefore, MOS 254A has shifted to overlap MOS 251A in more than 80 percent of all critical tasks. See the article entitled, “The Army’s expert cyberspace content technician – MOS 255A” for more information regarding the current 254A and its repurposing actions.

Finally, MOS 255Z will only see a slight shift to include renaming to senior network operations technician. Note also that there is an entire article dedicated to MOS 255Z within this edition of the Army Communicator.

This provides a brief synopsis of our Signal warrant officer MOS from the 1940s through today. For additional information on either the implementation of changes to MOS 255A, N, S, and Z please refer to the article posted by CW4 William Winkler entitled, “Warrant officer 255 series implementation” on page 53. Also included in this edition are in-depth articles on each of these new MOSs.



ACRONYM QuickScan

- COMSEC** – Communications Security
- FY** – Fiscal Year
- IP** – Internet Protocol
- MOS** – Military Occupational Specialty
- MSE** – Mobile Subscriber Equipment
- TOC** – Tactical Operation Center
- WO** – Warrant Officer