

1 March 2004

Military Awards and Decorations

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for establishing administrative requirements for submission of recommendations for awards.

1. Purpose. This SOP establishes policies and procedures for submission of recommendations for awards.
2. Applicability. This SOP applies to all elements of the US Army Transportation Center, Fort Eustis, Fort Story, and Tenant Activities. It does not apply to tenant, satellite activities, or Reserve Components. This SOP implements the use of the DA Form 638, Nov 94 (Recommendation for Award) that will be used for all award recommendations. Previous editions of the DA Form 638 are obsolete.
3. Authority. Lieutenant Colonel Commanders have approval authority for the Army Achievement Medal (AAM). Colonel Commanders have approval authority for both the Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM) and the Army Achievement Medal (AAM). Colonels can disapprove Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) and Lieutenant Colonels can disapprove ARCOMs if they have approval authority for the lesser award. EXCEPTION: For Soldiers assigned to the Command Group Staff, i.e. Chaplain, IG, SJA, OCOT, and TSM, the Brigade/Battalion Commanders may not disapprove an award, but may only recommend disapproval or approval. The Commanding General approves/disapproves the MSM and recommends approval/disapproval for all valor awards. The Commanding Generals of CASCOM, FORSCOM, and TRADOC have the authority to approve the Legion of Merit (LOM) award and recommend approval/disapproval to the Department of the Army for all other awards.
4. Reference: AR 600-8-22, 25 February 1995, (Military Awards)
5. Award Submissions:
 - a. Awards, other than the AAM, are not normally awarded before termination of assignment from the command, and Soldiers are not automatically entitled to an award upon departure. Usually, the period covered for a service award is the entire period assigned to the command. Recommendations for deserving Soldiers, who are reassigned within the command before tour completion, will be forwarded through command channels to the gaining commander, Director or Assistant Commandant, for consideration when the Soldier departs the command. Colonel commanders can make exceptions to the end of tour award policy for Soldiers serving in positions of great responsibility and trust whose award recommendations clearly merit such action, including Soldiers whose MOS (88H, K, L) may have caused them to remain on station for many years, so that an award may have been earned without incurring a PCS to initiate

consideration. The Colonel Commander may award the ARCOM, or lower, or forward the request for the MSM with a complete justification.

- b. The required form for the AAM, ARCOM, and MSM is DA Form 638 (See Attachment 1), Recommendation for Award, Nov 94 (for other than Valor). A narrative description of meritorious service or achievement will be in a bullet format using short and concise statements, listing only major achievements. (Example: He/She scored 300 on the AFPT) Each achievement block will not exceed the maximum of four (4) bullet comments. Block 12a – Enter the reason for the award, i.e., RET, ETS/PCS, ACH, etc. To the right of the reason, enter the proposed presentation date in parenthesis. (Example: PCS (31 Mar 96) Citations should include words like “him/his” and are limited to the number of lines specified in AR 600-8-22. Recommenders should strive to produce a DA Form 638 that is 100% free of any spelling or grammatical errors. However, if an error is discovered after the recommender has finalized the award request, pen and ink corrections are permissible.
- c. Comments should include significant contributions made throughout the Soldier’s assignment or tenure in the military. For Soldiers retiring, period is limited to the last ten (10) years of service. Also, achievement(s) cannot be used from a previously approved award. Therefore, an extended period of service should only be used when the length or nature of the Soldier’s present assignment would not qualify him/her for an appropriate award.
- d. The required form for the Soldiers Medal (SM), LOM, and higher award is as indicated in Para. 5.b., with one exception. Block #20 (Achievements 1 thru 4) is left blank. The Citation Summary will be typed on a separate sheet of (8 ½ x 11) plain bond paper, double-spaced, with a maximum of nine lines. The type style is Courier New with font of 10 or equivalent. The opening sentence in the “Narrative” and “Proposed Citation” should read “for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding service/achievement”. Do not use “for exceptionally meritorious service”. The Narrative Summary will be typed on a separate sheet of (8 ½ x 11) plain bond paper, double-spaced, not to exceed one page.
- e. Soldiers reassigned from USATCFE to a student status with the US Army Transportation School (USATSCH), US Army Aviation Logistics School (USAALS), the 7th Transportation Group, or a tenant activity are eligible for service award consideration as their assignment to their current command is terminated.
- f. Forward all approved awards, other than for retirees participating in the Installation Retirement Ceremony, through channels to the appropriate presenter. Units will forward approved awards to recipients if awards were not submitted within the required time lines.
- g. Approved awards for retiring Soldiers will be presented in a retirement ceremony during the bimonthly Installation Retirement Ceremony.
- h. If an award is disapproved, the disapproval authority will return the original award recommendation through command channels to the originator. A copy is filed in the battalion (unit) awards file and two copies forwarded to ATZF-AGPR; one for filing in the Official

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Military Personnel Fiche (OMPF) and one for filing in the Military Personnel Record Jacket (MPRJ).

- i. Submit recommendations for the MSM, SM, LOM, or higher award to Headquarters, USATCFE, (ATZF-AGPR), within the time frames listed in paragraph 6a, b, and c. For MSMs, a completed (original) DA Form 638 must be submitted. Recommendation for SMs, LOMs, or higher awards, a DA Form 638 and a double-spaced narrative are required.
 - j. Once approved, forward a copy of the DA Form 638 to the Personnel Service Center (PSC) (AGPR) for filing in the Soldier's Military Personnel Record Jacket (MPRJ) and a copy of the certificate for the OMPF. Approved awards for Commissioned/Warrant Officers will be forwarded to Headquarters, US Army Human Resources Command, (TAPC-MSR), 200 Stovall Street, Alexandria, VA 22332-0400. Approved awards for Enlisted Personnel will be forwarded to Commander, USAEREC, (PCRE-FF), 8899 E. 56th St., Indianapolis, IN 46249-5301.
6. Award Submission Time Line: Ensure recommendations are expeditiously processed, recorded in orders within 60 days of initiation, and that recipients receive presentation before leaving an assignment. The following time lines are required for awards processing:
- a. LOM – 120(150 for IMA) days prior to the Soldier's departure or desired presentation date.
 - b. SM – as soon as practical after the act.
 - c. MSM – 60(90 days for IMA) days prior to the Soldier's departure or desired presentation date.
 - d. Approved AAMs or ARCOMs for retiring Soldiers – Forward the original certificate, a copy of the completed DA Form 638 and the medal set to (ATZF-AG) (Ms. Elie) NLT the 10th day of the month the Soldiers is scheduled to participate in the Installation Retirement Ceremony.
7. Instructions for completing the DA Form 638: See Attachment 1
8. Common Errors:
- a. Missing Assumption of Command orders (For DA 638s signed by an Acting Commander).
 - b. No ERBs or ORBs attached to LOM requests.
 - c. Part III - Item 21: Missing Soldier's Job Title in First Line of Proposed Citation.
 - d. Block 11:
 - (1) "From" and "To" dates do not coincide with service member's record.
 - (2) For retirement LOMs, the period of time cannot exceed 10 years.
 - e. Block 12a: Missing presentation date. Example: 21 Jan 02
 - f. Part IV - For MSMs and below:

(1) Block 26a: Missing “To: ORDERS ISSUING AUTHORITY, FORT EUSTIS, VA 23604”.

(2) Block 26e-g: Missing Commanding General’s Name, Rank, and Title.

9. Actions that Prohibit Awards:

- a. No preconditions will be established in recognizing Soldiers in advance for an award, especially when Soldiers are informed in advance that attainment of a particular goal will result in the automatic award of a given decoration. Furthermore, decorations will not normally be used as prizes in contests such as Soldier of the Quarter, Noncommissioned Officer/Drill Sergeant of the Year, etc. However, this does not preclude the mentioning of these acts in other award recommendations.
- b. IAW AR 600-8-2, paragraph 1-14(e), a Bar or Flag action prohibits a Soldier from receiving any type of award until such unfavorable status has been removed or satisfied. Retirement awards for Soldiers who are flagged for overweight are authorized provided the Commanding General approves a waiver. This waiver must be approved prior to the submission of the award.

10. Award Routing:

- a. Soldiers assigned to Headquarters, USATCFE. Originator to Director, Company Commander, and Battalion Commander for approval of AAM; to Brigade Commander for approval of ARCOM; through PSC, ATZF-AGPR, to Commanding General for approval of MSM; to CASCOM Commander for approval of LOM (Ret) and TRADOC Commander for approval of LOM (PCS). This includes Soldiers assigned to the Command Group Staff, Chaplain, IG, SJA, OCOT, & TSM, whether or not the Brigade Commander has disapproval authority.
- b. Soldiers assigned to USATSCH & USAALS. Originator to Assistant Commandant, Company Commander, and Battalion Commander for approval of AAM; to Brigade Commander for approval of ARCOM; through PSC, ATZF-AGPR, to Commanding General for approval of MSM; to CASCOM Commander for approval of LOM (Ret) and TRADOC Commander for approval of LOM (PCS).
- c. Soldiers assigned to 8th Transportation Brigade. Originator to Company Commander, and Battalion Commander for approval of AAM; to Brigade Commander for approval of ARCOM; through PSC, ATZF-AGPR, to Commanding General for approval of MSM; to CASCOM Commander for approval of LOM (Ret) and TRADOC Commander for approval of LOM (PCS).
- d. Soldiers assigned to 7th Transportation Group (Composite). Originator, Company Commander, and Battalion Commander for approval of AAM; to Group Commander for approval of ARCOM; through PSC, ATZF-AGPR, to Commanding General for approval of MSM, to FORSCOM Commander for approval of LOM.

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- e. Soldiers assigned to 765th Transportation Battalion (IMA Soldiers): for any award equal to or higher than the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) or Superior Civilian Service Award (ASCSA), the Region Director (RD) must endorse the award to the IMA Director, who will then endorse, with recommendation, to the appropriate approval authority. Where appropriate, the packet should contain an endorsement from the Senior Mission Commander (SMC) as outlined in NETCALL #17 (para 2); if the SMC non-concurs, this information must also be provided in the awards packet. The region office will forward the award recommendation packet, with all necessary endorsements, citations, and justifications to HQ, IMA, ATTN: HR Awards Mailbox.
- f. The Soldier's Medal and awards above the LOM are approved at the Department of the Army level. These awards require the same routing as above.

11. Awards to Personnel of Other Services:

- a. The required form for awards for service members who are not US Army is the DA Form 638, Recommendation for Award. Narrative descriptions of meritorious service or achievement will use a bullet style format – short and concise statements, listing only major achievements. Each achievement block will not exceed the maximum of four (4) bullet comments. Enter the appropriate service in block 9 (i.e., Navy, Air Force, etc.). In block 12a, enter the reason for the award (i.e., PCS, ETS, RET, etc.) followed by the proposed presentation date in parentheses. (Example: PCS (31 Mar 96))
- b. Chain of command for routing this award is the assigned or attached unit's Company Commander, Battalion Commander, and Brigade/ Group Commander through PSC, ATZF-AGPR, to Commanding General for approval. There is currently a military services reciprocal agreement of concurrence in place that precludes the need for concurrence from the Parent Sister Service.
- c. The following references are used to process a US award for foreign personnel: DOD 1348.33, AR 600-8-22, para 1-37, and AR 672-7 para (c). The time requirement to process a foreign award is three (3) to six (6) months. For Australian and British Army Soldiers, the DA Form 638 will look the same except BLOCK 9 will indicate which ARMY. These awards are approved by TRADOC if the Soldier is assigned to 8th Brigade, or FORSCOM if the Soldier is assigned to the 7th Group. The Battalion Commander signs in Block 23, the Brigade/Group Commander signs Block 24, and the Commanding General will sign Block 25. The following documents are required for processing foreign awards: narrative, biography or resume, a memo from Brigade or Group Commanders addressed to Attaché Office stating the reason for receiving the award, and copy of the response from the Attaché office to Group or the Brigade.

12. Certificates of Achievement: There are three certificates of achievement that are available for Commanders, Directors, and Chiefs of Staff Offices to recognize outstanding achievements: The Department of the Army Certificate of Achievement, the USATCFE Certificate of Achievement, and the US Army Transportation Regimental Certificate of Achievement.

- a. Commanders, Directors, and Chiefs of Staff Offices are authorized to approve and present Department of the Army Certificate of Achievement and the USATCFE Certificate of

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Achievement. These certificates are normally awarded for outstanding acts that warrant greater recognition than a letter of appreciation but less than the AAM.

- b. Only the Regimental Commander is authorized to approve and sign the U.S. Army Transportation Regimental Certificate of Achievement. It must be staffed through the Office of the Chief of Transportation (OCOT).

13. Awards for Heroism: All awards for heroism must include statements of eyewitnesses, preferably in the form of certificates, affidavits, or sworn statements. Extracts from official records, sketches, maps, diagrams, newspaper articles, photographs, etc. will be attached to records, sketches, maps, diagrams, newspaper articles, photographs, etc. will be attached to support and amplify the stated facts.

14. Responsibilities:

- a. Colonel Commanders will:

- (1) Enforce discipline in the awards program and ensure that only deserving Soldiers are recognized for genuine meritorious service and achievement.

- (2) Monitor the submission of award recommendations for compliance with established time frames.

- (3) Not be required to convene award boards. However, they have the option to appoint such boards.

- (4) Ensure that a sufficient supply of certificates, ribbons, and medals are requisitioned through normal supply channels to meet the needs of the awards program.

- b. The Office of the Adjutant General will:

- (1) Serve as the focal point for the installation awards program.

- (2) Coordinate with the Chief of Staff to arrange for posthumous presentation of awards to the next of kin.

- (3) Before presentation of awards originating at this installation, Commanders, Directors, and Staff Office Chiefs will verify that the Soldier's service continued to be honorable and deserving from the date recommended to the presentation date.

- (4) Review comments or recommendations forwarded to the Awards Sections (ATZF-AGPR).

15. Good Conduct Medal Procedures:

- a. IAW AR 600-8-105, 1-22(b), the Installation Adjutant General has authorized the battalions to generate and process Good Conduct Medal orders for all eligible Soldiers in their command.

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- b. Battalions (S-1) are responsible for publishing a Good Conduct Medal (GCMDL) Suspense Roster from the e-MILPO database and internal suspension of the roster to subordinate units.
- c. Once received by the unit, the Company Commander/First Sergeant will ensure eligibility of each Soldier and ensure any noted discrepancies are resolved. Prior to the authentication by the unit Cdr, each unit will send a representative to the PSC, Bldg 662 (Records Section), Room 100, to pull each 201 file to ensure the number of awards and dates are correct. The GCMDL Suspense Roster will then be taken to the Awards Section, Room 316, to be approved prior to publishing the actual Permanent Orders.
- d. If a Commander does not recommend a Soldier for the AGCM, he/she must initiate and finalize a disqualification memorandum giving specific rationale for his/her decision. Once completed the memo is forwarded to the battalion and a copy given to the PSC (Records Section) so the disqualification can be annotated to the Soldier's DA Form 2-1 (Item #27) and a copy of memo placed in the MPRJ; subsequently forwarding the same to Soldier's OMPF.

OFFICIAL:

MONICA G. LEE
Adjutant General

AWARD CITATION EXAMPLES

REASON FOR AWARD: **SERVICE**

meritorious service while assigned as the (DUTY POSITION), (ACTIVITY). His selfless dedication to duty, technical expertise, and genuine concern for Soldiers were directly responsible for (COMMENT). His attitude and technical proficiency were instrumental in developing junior Soldiers of the Transportation Corps. This reflects great credit upon himself, the Transportation Corps, and the United States Army.

exceptionally meritorious service while serving as the (DUTY POSITION), (ACTIVITY). The communication of his in-depth knowledge of doctrine, equipment, and protocol kept Soldiers safe, trained, and vigilant. His unparalleled professionalism, mentoring, and dedication to your Soldiers, reflect distinct credit upon himself, this command, and the United States Army.

REASON FOR AWARD: **RETIREMENT**

exceptionally meritorious service and outstanding achievements throughout a dedicated military career culminating as (DUTY POSITION), (ACTIVITY). He distinguished himself by providing keen leadership and demonstrating the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, moral character. His performance of duty and devotion to service reflect distinct credit upon himself, the Transportation Corps, and the United States Army.

exceptionally meritorious service over the duration of his career in the United States Army. His professionalism, dedication to duty, sincere concern for the well-being of Soldiers, and loyalty to the units in which he served, underscore the great contributions that you have made. These actions, along with his life-long dedication to serving others, reflect great credit upon himself, this command, and the United States Army.

REASON FOR AWARD: **ACHIEVEMENT**

meritorious achievement while serving as (DUTY POSITION), (ACTIVITY). His untiring dedication to excellence in training, devotion to duty, and sound leadership are without parallel. His depth of technical knowledge and commitment to training Soldiers reflect great upon himself, the Transportation Corps, and the United States Army.

meritorious achievement by competing for and being selected as the (FORT EUSTIS/MONROE/STORY SOLDIER OF THE YEAR, (YEAR)). He achieved this milestone by knowledge of military subjects, superb military appearance, leadership abilities, and awareness of world events, duty performance, and overall professionalism. His performance reflects great credit upon himself, the unit, and the United States Army.

meritorious achievement as (DUTY POSITION), (ACTIVITY). His outstanding performance and tremendous dedication to duty resulted in (COMMENT). His exceptional performance is in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflects great credit upon himself, the Transportation Corps, and the United States Army.

16. GLOSSARY ABBREVIATIONS:

AAM	Army Achievement Medal
ARCOM	Army Commendation Medal
CASCOM	U.S. Army Combined Arms Support Command
FORSCOM	U.S. Army Forces Command
LOM	Legion of Merit
MPRJ	Military Personnel Records Jacket
MSM	Meritorious Service Medal
OCOT	Office of the Chief of Transportation
OMPF	Official Military Personnel File
PSC	Personnel Service Center
SM	Soldier's Medal
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
USAALS	U.S. Army Aviation Logistics School
USATCFE	U.S. Army Transportation Center and Fort Eustis
USATSCH	U.S. Army Transportation School

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DA FORM 638 (See Attachment 1)

1. BLOCK 1: Address –
LOM: For 8TH BDE: CG at CASCOM
7TH GRP: CG at FORSCOM
MSM: CDR, USATC
2. BLOCK 2: Soldier's assigned unit
3. BLOCKS 3-6: Self - Explanatory
4. BLOCK 7: Can also be Soldier's Company or the Battalion
5. BLOCK 8: Previous awards (include # of clusters)
6. BLOCK 9: Soldier's Branch of Service (if other than US Army). Also list officer's basic branch (i.e., AG, TC, QM, etc.)
7. BLOCK 10: Recommended award (include # of clusters)
8. BLOCK 11: Period of award (cannot not exceed 10 years for retirement)
9. BLOCK 12: PCS, ETS, ACH, SVC, or RET (for retirement) & desired presentation date
10. BLOCK 12b: Mark whether or not the Soldier received an interim award for the purpose of presentation while this higher award was being processed
11. BLOCK 13: Applicable in the event of a Soldier's death
12. BLOCK 14 - 19: Recommender's Name, Rank, Title, address, and signature
13. BLOCK 20:
LOM - Leave blank. There will be an attached narrative that will be doubled spaced and no more than 2 pages in length.
MSM - **Bullet style** achievement explanations (**not to exceed 4 bullet comments per achievement**)
14. BLOCK 21:
LOM –“SEE ATTACHED” (A citation is included consisting no more than 9 lines.)
15. BLOCK 22: Verified by PAC Representative
16. BLOCK 23: Addressed from the Commander of the Company to the Commander of the Battalion, except for LOMs. For LOM and Above, BLOCKS 23 – Addressed from Battalion Commander to the Brigade or Group Commander to the Commander, USATC to MACOM, Commanding General *

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17. BLOCK 24: Addressed from the Commander of the Battalion to the Commander of the Group or Brigade, except LOMs (See Item 16) *

18. BLOCK 25: Addressed from the Brigade or Group Commander to the Commander, USATC, except LOMs (See Item 16) *

19. BLOCK 26: Addressed from the Commander USATC to the Orders Issuing Authority, except LOMs (See Item 16)

*** NOTE: In the case of IMA personnel, all references to the Brigade or Group Commander have the same connotation as Garrison Commander.**

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD					
For use of this form, see AR 600-8-22; the proponent agency is ODCSPER					
For valor/heroism/wartime and all awards higher than MSM, refer to special instructions in Chapter 3, AR 600-8-22.					
1. TO		2. FROM		3. DATE	
PART I - SOLDIER DATA					
4. NAME		5. RANK		6. SSN	
7. ORGANIZATION		8. PREVIOUS AWARDS			
9. BRANCH OF SERVICE		10. RECOMMENDED AWARD		11. PERIOD OF AWARD	
				a. FROM	b. TO
12. REASON FOR AWARD				13. POSTHUMOUS	
12a. INDICATE ACH, SVC, PCS, ETS, OR RET		12b. INTERIM AWARD		YES	NO
		IF YES, STATE AWARD GIVEN		YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
PART II - RECOMMENDER DATA					
14. NAME		15. ADDRESS			
16. TITLE/POSITION		17. RANK			
18. RELATIONSHIP TO AWARDEE		19. SIGNATURE			
PART III - JUSTIFICATION AND CITATION DATA <i>(Use specific bullet examples of meritorious acts or service)</i>					
20. ACHIEVEMENTS					
ACHIEVEMENT #1					
ACHIEVEMENT #2					
ACHIEVEMENT #3					
ACHIEVEMENT #4					
21. PROPOSED CITATION					

