



Return of the Air Traffic Services Warrant Officer

By CW5 Randall Gant

With the already busy airspace increasingly gaining activity and users, the air traffic services community will benefit from the re-establishment of the ATS warrant officer, MOS 150A, air traffic and airspace management technician.

The move to use the warrant officer as platoon leaders in ATS companies will lead to an increase in the institutional knowledge and experience at the platoon level.

The formal MOS qualifying Technical Phase Training course is 6-weeks long and is scheduled to begin in January 2008 at Fort Rucker, Ala.

A pilot course was initiated July 9 with five newly pinned WO1s selected as attendees in order to support an urgent need to fill division-level and below 150A positions. This first group of ATS warrant officers graduated Aug. 17. Another pilot course is scheduled this fall from Oct. 2 to Nov. 19 with an expected roster of eight WOs, six from the active and two from the reserve component.

The implementation of these two pilot courses was driven by the Aviation and ATS Transformation Unit redesigns in accordance with the Army Campaign Plan's E-date timelines for the divisional combat aviation brigades.

The number of WO1s to be trained should remain between 6 to 8 per class based on the Army's need of approximately 175 positions (CW2-CW5) in both the active and reserve components. We are proud to welcome the ATS warrant officer back to the Aviation Branch.

The ATS warrant officer update article which follows was authored by CW5 Ron Moody of the 164th Theater Airfield Operations Group, who is currently serving as the liaison officer to the Kuwait Air Operations Center at Udairi Army Airfield.



The re-established 150A air traffic and airspace management technician will help lead ATS Soldiers like these from the 82nd Airborne Division deployed to Udairi Army Airfield in Kuwait.

An Update on ATS Warrant Officers

By CW5 Ronald Moody

This is an exciting time in the world of Army air traffic services (ATS). In an effort to maintain and promote expertise in the many roles of modern ATS, the Army has resurrected the requirements and identified positions for the warrant officer military specialty 150A, air traffic and airspace management technician.

A total of 29 technician positions are now authorized for the active duty force. This has opened the door for some highly motivated, qualified and experienced ATS NCOs to make that step into the demanding and rewarding roles of the Army Aviation Warrant Officer Corps.

Background

During downsizing and redesigning roles and positions within the Army during the 1980s, the warrant officer air traffic control 150A posi-

tion was cut from the ranks. In 1986, these ATC professionals were gradually removed through attrition and retirement. Their duties and responsibilities were replaced by both commissioned and non-commissioned officers within ATS organizations.

A number of the duties were assumed by aviation lieutenants in the platoon leader and executive officer positions of the ATS companies. Although they were qualified Army aviators, their expertise and experience in the world of air traffic control remained limited. These assignments also pulled them farther away from working on the perishable aviator cockpit skills the Army had invested a vast amount of time, dollars and resources in.

Transforming ATS

The decision to replace the ATS platoon leaders with the new 150A warrant officers was an instant "win-win" situation. As the platoon leader, the reestablished 150A brings many years of proven ATS experience and

150A. Air Traffic and Air Space Management Technician

Duties: Supervises the effective use of ATC equipment and ATC personnel at all categories of Army ATC facilities; supervises fixed-base ATC training and rating programs, combat support training and certification programs, and combat support and fixed base facility operations procedures; and supervises airspace management functions and airspace processing procedures into the National Airspace System.

Minimum Prerequisites:

- Be a SGT (E5) or above in MOS 15Q.
- Last five years experience in MOS 15Q, hold facility ratings for both combat support tower or radar air traffic control facility
- Successfully pass a Class IV Flying Duty Medical Examination IAW AR 40-501 that has been approved by the Commander, U.S. Army Aeromedical Center.
- Two years experience in air traffic control leadership positions as tactical team leader or shift leader as defined in DA Pam 611-21. Leadership experience must be documented on the NCOER.

Note: If your last three years worth of NCOERs do not show enough leadership time, you will need to include additional NCOERs to total 24 full months worth of creditable leadership time. The Aviation Proponency Office will return any packet as not qualified that does not fully display creditable leadership time.

Preferred Qualifications (Minimum Plus):

- Two years of college credit from an accredited institution.
- Experience as a Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) air traffic controller



The new 150A ATS warrant officer position will give qualified NCOs, like these air traffic controllers working in a radar approach facility, an additional career opportunity and greater responsibility within the ATS community.

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ARMY PHOTO

expertise back to the position. And the lieutenant aviator positions move back into the normal aviation communities where they can learn and hone their critical pilot skills.

Now the first time these commissioned officers are introduced to the ATS community, it will be as captain company commanders when they will have a broader base of aviation experience, which will easily cross into the ATS realm of duties and responsibilities.

This decision will also save valuable aviation training time and dollars that would have been associated with the re-training process for integrating aviators from the ATS community back into the traditional aviation formations.

Requirements

The competition for the newly formed 150A positions has been fierce. Like all warrant officer technician appointments, the tough requirements to even apply for the 150A positions guarantees that all applicants already possess the technical skill sets being sought out by the warrant officer selection board (WOSB).

The outstanding quality of the motivated applicants has made the initial selection process both difficult and rewarding. With such a large group of extremely qualified Soldiers, the WOSB members have had the luxury of selecting candidates from an excellent pool of candidates and the more difficult task of not being able to select all for induction into the program.

Education

To date there have been two 150A WOSBs with a third board in progress at this time.

As a result from these boards, the first class of 150As has completed the Warrant Officer Candidate School.

These new warrant officers are continuing their core training with attendance in the Aviation Warrant Officer Basic Course, the Joint Firepower Control and the Joint Airspace Command and Control courses.

The scheduled implementation of the Air Traffic and Airspace Management Course is this January.

While being tracked as an Aviation warrant officer, the 150A will continue their professional education through future ATS related schooling and branch related Aviation Warrant Officer Advance Course, Warrant Officer Staff Course and the Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course.

An interesting aspect of the professional development for members of this new MOS is the adaptation of assignment oriented training (AOT). The concept of this training is to keep the 150A technically proficient in the mission set associated with his or her assignment throughout their career path.

AOT will be used to identify training requirements to fulfill the technical missions associated with the continuous development of future combat systems and emerging technologies.

The end result is a fully trained 150A assigned to a unit as a combat multiplier within their respective functional mission set and area.

Not only does AOT enhance the 150A warrant officer's professional skills and core competencies, it also allows for advanced schooling and training requirements that will be left flexible and focused on unit mission requirements.

Assignments

There are a variety of ATS positions that can be held by the ATS warrant officer that will progressively provide the 150A the opportunity to climb the promotion ladder. One of the greatest impacts will be at the junior warrant officer levels for WO1 and CW2. The majority of these positions will be within the ATS companies of the divisional general support aviation battalion.

These companies have the bulk of the junior enlisted 15Q ATC Soldiers, who are in a very impressionable stage of their career. Having the experienced 150A as their mentor will certainly be a distinct advantage.

Normal career progression will include positions as:

- Terminal and Enroute ATC platoon leaders.
- CW3/4 airfield management element within the airfield operations battalion.
- CW3/4 airfield assistant standardization officer.



The members of the first class of the Air Traffic and Airspace Management Training Course at Fort Rucker are (left to right): CW2 R.J. Harris, WO1 Alison Hagar, WO1 Daryl Hamel, WO1 Raphael Lopez, WO1 Jeremy Drage and WO1 Amparo Sherrill.

- CW5 airfield standardization officer in the Theater Airfield Operations Group.

All levels of Army aviation emerge as winners in this latest transformation within the ATS community.

Presently the enlisted air traffic controller MOS 15Q is merged with the 15P (aviation operations) at the Master Sgt. and 1st Sgt. (E8) level. Actual ATC duties end for most controllers at this time as they transition

into their new positions within the organization.

The prior ATS NCO would now be assigned to any 15P position in the combat aviation brigades (CAB) and some flight operations NCOs end up as ATS 1SGs.

15Q Soldiers that meet all of the pre-requisites can apply for the 150A warrant officer field where they have the opportunity to continue with their

critical ATC/ATS expertise for as much as an additional 30 years of warrant officer service.

The 150A will provide the continuity required throughout the Army for professional ATS operations in support of the combatant commander.

Conclusion

The 150A will fulfill the Army's goal of maintaining professional ATS expertise within the aviation community in support of ATC/ATS within the ranks of the ATS community.

It will also fulfill the career goals of many solid, die-hard 15Q air traffic controllers to continue providing the Army their critical skills and assuming the demanding responsibilities and technical and tactical leadership qualities required of the 150A.

The 150A aviation warrant officer will be the perfect example of a Soldier becoming "Army Strong."



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