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# **Moral Standards for Military Enlistment: Screening Procedures and Impact**

**Barbara Means**

**HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH ORGANIZATION  
1100 South Washington Street • Alexandria, Virginia 22314-4499**

**November 1983**

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**Prepared for:  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense  
(Manpower, Reserve Affairs, & Logistics)**

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disqualifying conditions, histories requiring moral waivers, classification of offenses, waiver authority levels, and waiver decision criteria. The numbers and percentages of accessions entering each Service between FY 1977 and FY 1981 with each type of moral waiver are presented, and moral waiver accessions are compared to accessions without moral waivers in terms of education, aptitude, race, and sex. First-term attrition rates for accessions with each type of moral waiver are provided along with the corresponding rates for accessions who did not require waivers. Recommendations are made for the standardization and automation of moral character information and for a reconceptualization of the moral character screening process.



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## Foreword

The Directorate for Accession Policy, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics), has responsibility for policy oversight in the area of enlistment standards. Congress has urged DoD and the Services to develop a strong foundation of empirical research upon which enlistment standards can be based. The particulars of these standards may be an important issue in planning for a future when a dwindling supply of young people will be available as potential military accessions. At present, enlistees must meet minimum standards in terms of age, citizenship, physical and medical fitness, moral fitness, aptitude test scores, and educational level. While test scores and educational level have been shown to help predict military performance, current standards result in the acceptance of many persons who subsequently fail to complete their terms satisfactorily. As many as 15-20 percent of high school graduates and 30-40 percent of non-high school graduates are separated from the Services prior to completion of the first term because of failure to meet behavior or performance criteria.

At a time when the costs of selecting, classifying, training, and equipping new recruits are extremely high, it is important to try to minimize the enlistment of accessions who will fail to complete their first term. These concerns led the Directorate for Accession Policy, OASD(MRA&L), to contract with the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) for a study of existing enlistment criteria and the collection of data that could lead to improved criteria. That project, "Evaluation and Improvement of Educational and Moral Standards for Entry into the Armed Forces", began in March 1982 and will be completed in March 1984.

The moral standards portion of the project encompasses four tasks:

- Documentation of the procedures and practices used by each of the Services in processing moral waivers;
- Determination of the number and characteristics of accessions with offense histories;

- Validation of offender data as a predictor of subsequent military performance; and
- Development of a model of additional information and procedures for improvement of moral standards and waiver processes.

To complete these tasks, HumRRO has undertaken both analyses of existing data reflecting upon the predictive validity of current enlistment standards and the collection of more detailed background information on samples of FY 1983 applicants and recruits. Between February and June of 1983, over 34,000 military applicants and 40,000 recruits drawn from all four Services completed the Educational and Biographical Information Survey (EBIS), a HumRRO-designed instrument eliciting more extensive information concerning educational experiences and past behavior than is collected through current Service screening practices. As the individuals who took the EBIS move through their first terms of service, performance data will be collected and the predictive value of EBIS items will be analyzed. The full evaluation of moral standards and suggested recommendations for streamlining or modifying procedures and criteria will be made after analysis of the EBIS data. The present report provides a description of Service moral standards and procedures and analyses of existing data on the numbers, characteristics, and performance of moral waiver accessions. Thus, this report completes the first two tasks stipulated for the moral standards portion of the project and partially fulfills the third. A future report, using performance data for individuals who took the EBIS, will describe completion of the third and fourth tasks.

The data presented in this report were obtained from the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), directed by Mr. Kenneth C. Scheflen. Ms. Helen T. Hagen and Mr. Leslie W. Willis of DMDC West deserve special appreciation for their analytic and programming support.

The documentation of current Service policies and procedures would not have been possible without the generous assistance of Service policy representatives: Mr. Louis Ruberton and Colonel William T. Zaldo, Headquarters, Department of the Army; Mr. Charles R. Hoshaw, Captain G. E. O'Brien, and Commander D. M. Graves, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations;

Colonel Roger R. Campbell and Lt. Colonel James E. Watson, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force; and Colonel R. G. Leidich and Maj. L. R. Jurica, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. These individuals supplied HumRRO with needed information on Service regulations and reviewed the draft version of this report for factual accuracy.

Special thanks are extended to Dr. W. S. Sellman, Deputy Director, Accession Policy within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics). Dr. Sellman served as Technical Monitor for the Standards project, and in this role, developed the needed liaison relations with Service policy representatives and provided cogent advice and comments on this report as well as on the entire Standards project. Captain Louise C. Wilmot and Dr. Irving Wallach of the Directorate for Accession Policy (MRA&L) generously provided their comments and insights in response to the draft report.

Dr. Barbara Means, a Senior Scientist within HumRRO's Manpower Analysis Program, directed the Standards project and authored this report. Information on Service regulations and valuable comments on the draft report were provided by other members of the Manpower Analysis Program: Mr. Gus C. Lee, formerly HumRRO Vice President and Manager of the Manpower Analysis Program; Dr. Brian K. Waters, Manager of the Manpower Analysis Program; and Ms. Linda Perelman, Manpower Research Associate. Preparation of the manuscript and tables was facilitated by the excellent word processing skills of Ms. Emma King.

## Summary

All of the Services set moral character standards for enlistment. These deal primarily with commission of criminal offenses and substance abuse. Certain patterns of past behavior render an individual ineligible for service; other patterns, deemed less serious, do not eliminate an applicant, but require individual review and the granting of a moral waiver.

### Waiver Types

There are eight categories of moral waivers reported on a DoD-wide basis:

- minor traffic offenses,
- 1 or 2 minor nontraffic offenses,
- 3 or more minor nontraffic offenses,
- nonminor misdemeanors,
- juvenile felonies,
- adult felonies,
- preservice drug abuse, and
- preservice alcohol abuse.

Although moral waiver information for all Services are categorized into these eight types by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), the specific patterns of offenses for which each type of waiver may be given vary across Services. For example, a person with a record of six convictions for minor traffic offenses incurred over a period of more than one year requires a waiver to enter the Marine Corps, can enter the Army or Air Force without a waiver, and needs a waiver for the Navy only if four or more convictions occurred in a single year. In addition to variations in moral standards across Services, there are within-Service differences in standards applied to different types

of applicants. In the Air Force and Marine Corps, current operational procedures place stricter moral requirements on non-high school graduates and AFQT Category IV applicants.

The Services differ also in their bases for classifying an offense as a felony or a misdemeanor. The Marine Corps uses the size of the penalty actually imposed by the court for the particular offense; the Navy uses the classification of the offense (i.e., felony or misdemeanor) used by the state in which it was committed; and the Army and Air Force use a set of guide lists of typical offenses of each type, which was developed by a 1966 Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) study group.

Information about an applicant's past behavior needed for the Service's moral character determination is first obtained through the recruiter-applicant interview. Further information is provided on the enlistment application (DD Form 1966). If a criminal record or serious substance abuse is revealed or suspected, processing of the applicant is held in abeyance pending the execution of a police record check. The latter entails sending DD Form 369, Police Record Check, to courts and law enforcement officials in all communities in which offenses occurred or in which the applicant has lived. For applicants requesting moral waivers, the applicant writes a statement describing the circumstances and disposition of each offense, and the recruiter writes a statement explaining the justification for granting a moral waiver. Personal references are sought from responsible citizens and correctional facility, parole, and probation officers, if applicable.

## **Waiver Processing Procedures**

Moral waiver requests are then passed up from the recruiting station through the recruiting command of the relevant Service. (The Commanding Officer of the recruiting station may approve requests for traffic and minor misdemeanor waivers for the Marine Corps.) Waivers for more serious offenses (e.g., felonies) must be approved at higher levels of authority. Commanders at lower levels have approval authority for more minor offenses and may either disapprove requests for more serious waivers or transmit them to the next level up with a recommendation for approval. The Services vary in terms of the number of levels of waiver review and approval authority used in processing moral waiver requests.

## **Frequency and Characteristics of Waiver Accessions**

Over the last five years, between 12 and 18 percent of DoD non-prior service accessions have entered on moral waivers. Most of these moral waiver accessions have been in the Marine Corps and the Navy. In FY 1982, the percentage of moral waiver accessions was 52 percent for the Marine Corps, 26 percent for the Navy, 8 percent for the Army, and 5 percent for the Air Force. Most of the Marine Corps moral waiver accessions have waivers for multiple minor traffic offenses. Navy moral waiver accessions fall predominantly into the misdemeanor and drug abuse waiver categories. These percentages probably are more reflective of differences in the criteria various Services apply for these moral waiver categories than they are of differences in the behaviors of individuals.

Compared to accessions without moral waivers, moral waiver accessions are slightly less likely to be high school graduates, less likely to have AFQT

scores in the lowest acceptable category (AFQT Category IV), more likely to be male, more likely to be age 19 or older, and more likely to be white.

### **Performance of Waiver Accessions**

In terms of attrition, moral waiver accessions as a group perform very similarly to their counterparts who did not require waivers (30 versus 28 percent attrition over three years of service). For FY 1977, 1978, and 1979 cohorts of male non-prior service DoD accessions, there was never as much as a full month's difference in the average number of months served by waiver and nonwaiver accessions.

Analyses of attrition data for specific types of moral waivers did show some differences, however. The highest adverse attrition rates across the three cohorts, three education categories, and four Services analyzed were for multiple minor misdemeanors. These data suggest that a pattern of repeated infractions may be an indication of personality characteristics inversely related to military success.

### **Recommendations**

Major barriers to the validation of moral standards reside in the lack of adequate data on which to base policies. It is not known how those who are rejected on moral grounds would have performed if accepted for service. In addition, the data that are maintained on a DoD-wide basis--notably Defense Manpower Data Center records of moral waiver types granted, waiver approval levels, and separation codes--employ very general categories. Offense history information collected on DD Form 1966 and in the Entrance National Agency Check (ENTNAC) is maintained only in hard copy form. We recommend a Joint-Service Committee to consider:

- the development and adoption of a descriptive taxonomy of criminal offenses,
- standardization and automation of the information collected on DD Form 1966 and in the ENTNAC, and
- revision and revitalization of the inter-Service separation code system.

A second area of recommended modifications involves separating two goals that have become increasingly entangled:

- the application of minimum moral character standards for service entry and
- the use of offense history data--along with other types of information--to estimate an applicant's likelihood of successfully completing a term of service.

Variations among the Services in their standards regarding traffic offenses and minor misdemeanors and the increasing tendency to apply different moral standards to different groups (e.g., nongraduates, low-AFQT applicants, and women) make these enlistment policies difficult to defend as moral standards. Rather than trying to use the moral waiver process as a mechanism for reducing attrition, we recommend that more uniform moral standards be developed dealing with serious offense histories and that these standards be applied equally to all applicants. Information about minor legal infractions (e.g., traffic tickets, minor offenses) can still be used in the selection process; this information can be combined with information about the individual's education level, AFQT category, and other behavioral and background data to obtain the best available prediction of attrition rates.

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## Moral Standards for Military Enlistment

Moral standards for Service entry deal with criminal behavior, sexual conduct, and substance use. Service policies stipulate that certain patterns of involvement with law enforcement agencies, drug or alcohol abuse, or sexual misconduct render an individual ineligible for military service. Applicants with offense histories that are deemed less serious may be admitted, but only after individual review and the granting of a moral waiver.

The Marine Corps' description (Marine Corps, 1979) of the purpose behind screening for moral character is representative: An applicant's moral character is determined in order to (1) prevent the enlistment of persons whose social habits (e.g., thievery) would threaten unit morale; (2) screen out those who would be likely to become serious disciplinary problems; and (3) assure enlistees and their parents that recruits will not be thrown into close contact with chronic offenders or people who have committed serious crimes. It should be noted that attrition data are relevant to the first two of these purposes but not the third. Even if totally ineffective from the standpoint of screening out those likely to misbehave after accession, moral standards may be important in maintaining the Services' image and morale.

### Disqualifying Conditions

The Services specify a variety of circumstances under which an individual may not enlist:

- if the individual is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs any time during processing;
- as an alternative to prosecution, indictment, incarceration, probation, or parole;

- if under civil restraint (confinement, parole, probation, or suspended sentence) other than unconditional suspended sentence or unsupervised unconditional probation;
- if a civil suit is pending against the applicant. (Exceptions may be made.)

In addition, applicants with certain backgrounds are deemed ineligible:

- psychotic disorder;
- homosexuality;
- antisocial behavior;
- questionable moral character;
- alcoholism
- sexual perversion
- frequent difficulties with law enforcement agencies.

The Services also bar individuals with certain criminal history records and substance abuse patterns from enlisting, but these standards vary by Service, as discussed in the next section.

### **Histories Requiring Moral Waivers**

There are eight types of moral waivers reported on a DoD-wide basis:

- minor traffic offenses,
- 1 or 2 minor nontraffic offenses (e.g., disturbing peace, loitering),
- 3 or more minor nontraffic offenses,
- nonminor misdemeanors (e.g., unlawful entry, indecent exposure),
- juvenile felony,
- adult felony,
- preservice drug abuse,
- preservice alcohol abuse.

Despite the use of common waiver reporting categories, the Services' policies and procedures with regard to these categories differ. For example, the Air Force regards its drug and alcohol abuse policy as separate from the moral waiver process per se, and hence does not give "moral" waivers for preservice drug and alcohol abuse. In addition, the offense patterns for which each type of moral waiver may be given vary across Services. These differences are summarized in Table 1. Following Table 1 is a table for each Service showing whether an individual with a particular offense history or pattern of substance abuse can enter that Service without applying for a moral waiver, must have a waiver, or is ineligible (Tables 2 through 5).

### **Classification of Offenses**

A 1966 Department of Defense Study Group report on moral waiver procedures (OASD[Manpower], 1966) pointed out the inconsistent standards that resulted from the Services' use of differing legal codes as a basis for classifying offenses. At that time, the Navy and Marine Corps were using the offense classification imposed by the jurisdiction in which the offense occurred. This meant that the same act--for example, taking a "joy ride" in someone else's automobile--might be classified as a felony for one applicant and as a misdemeanor for another, depending on the state in which the act was committed. The Army and Air Force, in an attempt to avoid these inconsistencies, were basing their classifications on the maximum possible punishment for the act according to the Table of Maximum Punishments of the Manual for Courts-Martial.

The Study Group recommended that the Services adopt a common, uniform offense classification system. It provided lists of typical offenses classified as minor traffic offenses, minor nontraffic offenses, nonminor misdemeanors, and felonies. These guide lists appear as Tables A1 through A4 in

Table 1

Moral Waiver Categories and Service Waiver Criteria

S E R V I C E

Moral Waiver Category	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps
Traffic Offenses	6 or more in one year	4 or 5 in one year	6 or more in one year	6 or more in any period
Minor Nontraffic Offenses	2 or more	1 to 4	2 or more	1 to 10 <sup>a</sup>
Minor Misdeemeanors	1 or more	1 to 2	1 or more	1 to 10 <sup>a</sup>
Juvenile Felony <sup>b</sup>	1 or more	1 or more	1 or more <sup>c</sup>	1 or more
Adult Felony	1 or more	1 or more	1 or more <sup>c</sup>	1 or more
Drug Abuse	For marijuana: Conviction for possession	For marijuana: Conviction for possession	For marijuana: Use without conviction for possession in last 6 months, or conviction for possession	For marijuana: Use more than 10 times; conviction for possession or trafficking For narcotics and other drugs: Use or conviction for possession
	For narcotics: Use within last 12 months or conviction for possession	For narcotics: Use over 12 months ago or possession conviction	For amphetamines, or barbiturates: Use	
	For other drugs: Use 6-12 months ago or conviction for possession	For other drugs: Use 6-12 months ago or possession conviction	For other drugs: Not authorized	
Alcohol Abuse	Abuse leading to loss of job, arrest, or treatment	Alcohol-related convictions	Not authorized	Abuse leading to loss of job, arrest, or treatment.

<sup>a</sup> Nonfelony offenses of all types are now treated equally. The Marine Corps uses the total period of civil restraint and/or total fine for all nonfelony offenses combined as the criterion for determining waiver type.  
<sup>b</sup> Felony offense committed before age 18, regardless of whether it was tried in juvenile or adult court.  
<sup>c</sup> Effective July 1983, authorized only where conviction or adverse adjudication did not result in confinement, probation exceeding 6 months, or a fine or restitution over \$100.  
 Individual programs may have stricter standards.

Notes: Applicants with fewer offenses than are listed in the table may apply without waiver; those with more offenses are ineligible. Unless otherwise specified, standards refer to number of offenses committed in any period.

W - Waiver needed and may be granted  
 I - Ineligible, non-waivable

Table 2  
 Army Moral Standards

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Waiver Status</u>	<u>Level of Waiver Authority</u>
1. Traffic offenses <sup>a</sup>		
0-3 in a single year	N	NA
4 or 5 in a single year	N	NA
6 or more in a single year	W	Cdr, Recruiting Area
2. Minor non-traffic offenses (less than 4 month sentence)		
1	N	NA
2 or more	W	Cdr, Recruiting Area
3. Nonminor misdemeanors (4-12 month sentence)		
1 or more	W	Cdr, Recruiting District
4. Juvenile felony <sup>b</sup> 1 or more	W	CG, USAREC
5. Adult felony		
1 felony	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
2 or more	I	NA
6. Combinations of offenses		
1 adult + 1 juvenile felony	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
1 adult + 1 juvenile felony + 1 misdemeanor	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
1 adult, 1 juvenile felony + 2 or more misdemeanors	I	NA
1 adult + 1 juvenile felony + 3 or more minor nontraffic misdemeanors	I	NA
1 adult + 2 or more juvenile felonies	I	NA
1 adult felony + 1 nonminor misdemeanor	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
1 adult felony, 1 nonminor misdemeanor + 1-2 minor non-traffic misdemeanors	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
1 adult felony, 1 nonminor + 1-2 minor misdemeanors	I	NA
1 adult felony + 2 nonminor misdemeanors	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
1 adult felony + 3 or more nonminor misdemeanors	I	NA
7. Drug-abuse related offenses <sup>c</sup>	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
8. Alcohol abuse leading to loss of job, arrest, or treatment	W	CG, USAREC
9. Marijuana		
Use without arrest	N	NA
Possession conviction <sup>c</sup>	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
Trafficking conviction <sup>c</sup>	I	NA
10. Narcotics		
Use without arrest		
Over 12 months ago	N	NA
Within last 12 months	W	CG, USAREC
Possession conviction <sup>c</sup>	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
Trafficking conviction <sup>c</sup>	I	NA
11. Other drugs (hallucinogens, barbiturates, amphetamines)		
Use without conviction		
Over 12 months ago	N	NA
6-12 months ago	W	CG, USAREC
Within last 6 months	I	NA
Possession conviction <sup>c</sup>	W	Cdr, MILPERCEN
Trafficking conviction <sup>c</sup>	I	NA

SOURCE: AR 601-210, Oct 1980.

<sup>a</sup>Includes improper parking.

<sup>b</sup>Felony offense committed before age 18 for which a conviction or adverse adjudication was determined by a civil or juvenile court.

<sup>c</sup>All drug-related convictions are treated as felonies, regardless of their maximum penalty under state law.

Key: N - No waiver needed
W - Waiver needed and may be granted
I - Ineligible, non-waivable

Table 3  
Navy Moral Standards

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Waiver Status</u>	<u>Level of Waiver Authority</u>
1. Traffic offenses <sup>a</sup>		
0-3 in a single year	N	NA
4 or 5 in a single year	W	Cdr, Recruiting District
6 or more in a single year	I	NA
2. Minor (non-traffic) misdemeanors		
1-4 violations	W	Cdr, Recruiting District
5 or more	I	NA
3. Nonminor misdemeanors		
1 misdemeanor	W	Cdr, Recruiting District
2 misdemeanors	W	Cdr, Recruiting Area
3 misdemeanors	I	NA
4. Juvenile felony <sup>b</sup>		
1 or more	W	Cdr, Recruiting Command
5. Adult felony		
1 or more	W	Cdr, Recruiting Command
6. Combinations of offenses	W	Varies <sup>c</sup>
7. Drug-abuse related conviction	W	Varies <sup>d</sup>
8. Alcohol abuse leading to civil conviction	W	Varies <sup>d</sup>
9. Marijuana <sup>e</sup>		
Use without conviction or dependence	N	NA
Possession conviction	W	Varies <sup>d</sup>
Trafficking conviction	I	NA
10. Narcotics <sup>e</sup>		
Use without conviction or dependence		
Over 12 months ago	W	Cdr, Recruiting District
Within last 12 months	I	NA
Possession conviction	W	Varies <sup>d</sup>
Trafficking conviction	I	NA
11. Other drugs <sup>d</sup> (hallucinogens, barbiturates, amphetamines)		
Use without conviction or dependence		
Over 12 months ago	N	NA
6-12 months ago	W	Cdr, Recruiting District
Within last 6 months	I	NA
Possession conviction	W	Varies <sup>d</sup>
Trafficking conviction	I	NA

SOURCE: COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 11.3088 CH-18, 15 March.

<sup>a</sup>Includes improper parking.

<sup>b</sup>Handled as though offense committed by an adult.

<sup>c</sup>Applicants with offenses in more than one category (whose number of offenses in any one category does not exceed the maximum for that category) require a waiver at the level stipulated for the most serious offense type committed.

<sup>d</sup>Treated as civil conviction, felony or misdemeanor, as stipulated by state law.

<sup>e</sup>Stricter standards apply for Nuclear Field, submarine duty, and sensitive nuclear weapons programs.

Key: N - No waiver needed  
 W - Waiver needed and may be granted  
 I - Ineligible, non-waivable

Table 4  
 Air Force Moral Standards

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Waiver Status<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Level of Waiver Authority</u>
1. Traffic offenses <sup>b</sup>		
0-3 in a single year	N	NA
4 or 5 in a single year	N	NA
6 or more in a single year	W	Cdr, Recruiting Group
2. Minor non-traffic offenses (<4 month sentence)		
1	N	NA
2 or more	W	Cdr, Recruiting Group
3. Nonminor misdemeanors (4-12 month sentence)		
1 or more	W	Cdr, Recruiting Service
4. Juvenile felony <sup>c</sup>		
1 or more	Wd	Cdr, Recruiting Service
5. Adult felony		
1 or more	Wd	Cdr, Recruiting Service
6. Combinations of offenses		
6 or more traffic/minor nontraffic misdemeanors in any 1 year	W	Cdr, Recruiting Group
10 or more offenses	W	Cdr, Recruiting Service
7. Drug-abuse related conviction	I	NA
8. Alcohol abuse leading to loss of job, arrest, or treatment <sup>d</sup>	I	NA
9. Marijuana		
Use without conviction <sup>e</sup>	N	NA
Possession conviction	Wf	Cdr, Recruiting Service
Trafficking conviction	I	NA
10. Narcotics		
Use without conviction <sup>e</sup>	Wf	HQ USAF/MPXOA
Possession conviction	Wf	HQ USAF/MPXOA
Trafficking conviction	I	NA
11. Other drugs		
Barbiturate or amphetamine use <sup>f</sup>	Wf	Cdr, Recruiting Service
Hallucinogen use <sup>g</sup>	I	NA
Possession conviction	I	NA
Trafficking conviction	I	NA

Source: ACR 33-2 Aug 1982 & personal communication with Air Force Recruiting Service.

<sup>a</sup>Waiver status for high school graduate applicants. Nongraduates are not normally accessed if they require moral waivers.

<sup>b</sup>Does not include paid overtime parking tickets.

<sup>c</sup>Felony committed before age 18 for which a conviction or adverse adjudication was made in civil or juvenile court. Treated same as adult felony.

<sup>d</sup>As of 1 July 1983, felony waivers will be authorized only in cases where conviction or adverse adjudication did not result in confinement, probation exceeding 6 months, or a fine or restitution over \$100.

<sup>e</sup>The Air Force considers these behaviors as part of its drug and alcohol abuse policy rather than as moral standards per se.

<sup>f</sup>Waivers granted "only in the case of unusual and deserving applicants otherwise fully qualified." Some specialties have stricter standards; AFQT Category IV applicants may not receive drug waivers.

Key: N - No waiver needed  
 W - Waiver needed and may be granted  
 I - Ineligible, non-waivable

Table 5  
 Marine Corps Moral Standards

Behavior	Waiver Status	Level of Waiver Authority <sup>1</sup>
1. Traffic offenses <sup>2</sup> 1 - 3 not treated as felony or misdemeanor 4 or more <sup>3</sup>	N W	NA Cdr, Recruiting Station
2. Minor non-traffic offenses (60 month sentence) 1 - 6 involving civil restraint totaling less than 6 months and/or fines totaling less than \$500 7 - 10 involving civil restraint totaling 6 months but less than a year and/or fines totaling \$500 but less than \$1,000	W W	Cdr, Recruiting Station Cdr, Recruiting District
3. Misdemeanor misdemeanors 1 or more with civil restraint totaling 1 or more years and/or fines totaling \$1,000 or more	W	CG, Recruit Depot
4. Juvenile felony <sup>4</sup> 1 or more	W	CG, Recruit Depot
5. Adult felony 1 or more	W	CG, Recruit Depot
6. Combinations of offenses 1 - 6 involving civil restraint totaling less than 6 months and/or fines totaling less than \$500 7 - 10 involving civil restraint totaling 6 months but less than a year and/or fines totaling \$500 but less than \$1,000	W W	Cdr, Recruiting Station Cdr, Recruiting District
7. Drug-chase related felony	I	NA
8. Alcohol abuse leading to loss of job, arrest, or treatment	W	Cdr, Recruiting Station
9. Marijuana Use without arrest Fewer than 10 times over 90 days ago <sup>5</sup> 10 times or more and/or within last 90 days Possession conviction Trafficking conviction	N W W W	NA CG, Recruit Depot CG, Recruit Depot CG, Recruit Depot
10. Narcotics Use without conviction <sup>6</sup> Possession conviction <sup>6</sup> Trafficking conviction	W W I	CG, Recruit Depot CG, Recruit Depot NA
11. Other drugs (hallucinogens, barbiturates, amphetamines) Use without conviction <sup>6</sup> Possession conviction <sup>6</sup> Trafficking conviction	W W I	CG, Recruit Depot CG, Recruit Depot NA

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<sup>1</sup>Authority levels apply to male high school graduate applicants in AFQT Categories I - III. Male Category IV high school graduate applicants are ineligible for waivers granted at District or CG Recruit Depot level. All waivers for female applicants must be approved at HQ Marine Corps. For nongraduate applicants, waivers that are not authorized for approval at the Recruiting Station level can only be granted at HQ Marine Corps.

<sup>2</sup>Includes improper parking.

<sup>3</sup>Provided none of the offenses involved hit and run, driving while intoxicated, or resulted in confinement, probation, or suspension/revocation of driving privileges.

<sup>4</sup>Applicants in AFQT Category IV or without a high school diploma or GED certificate are ineligible for waivers granted at District or Recruit Depot level.

<sup>5</sup>Felony committed before age 18 for which a conviction or adverse adjudication was made in civil or juvenile court.

<sup>6</sup>Provided marijuana use did not involve trafficking or result in arrest, conviction, or adverse adjudication; medical or psychological treatment; loss of employment; or failure, dismissal, or expulsion from an educational institution.

<sup>7</sup>Requires a one-year delay in enlistment.

<sup>8</sup>Those who have used hallucinogens are not eligible for Personnel Reliability Program or other nuclear-related programs.

Appendix A. The Study Group report also offered the suggested rule that offenses not listed on one of the guide lists be classified (1) as felonies if the maximum confinement under local law exceeds one year, (2) as nonminor misdemeanors if it exceeds four months but is less than a year, and (3) as minor misdemeanors if it is four months or less.

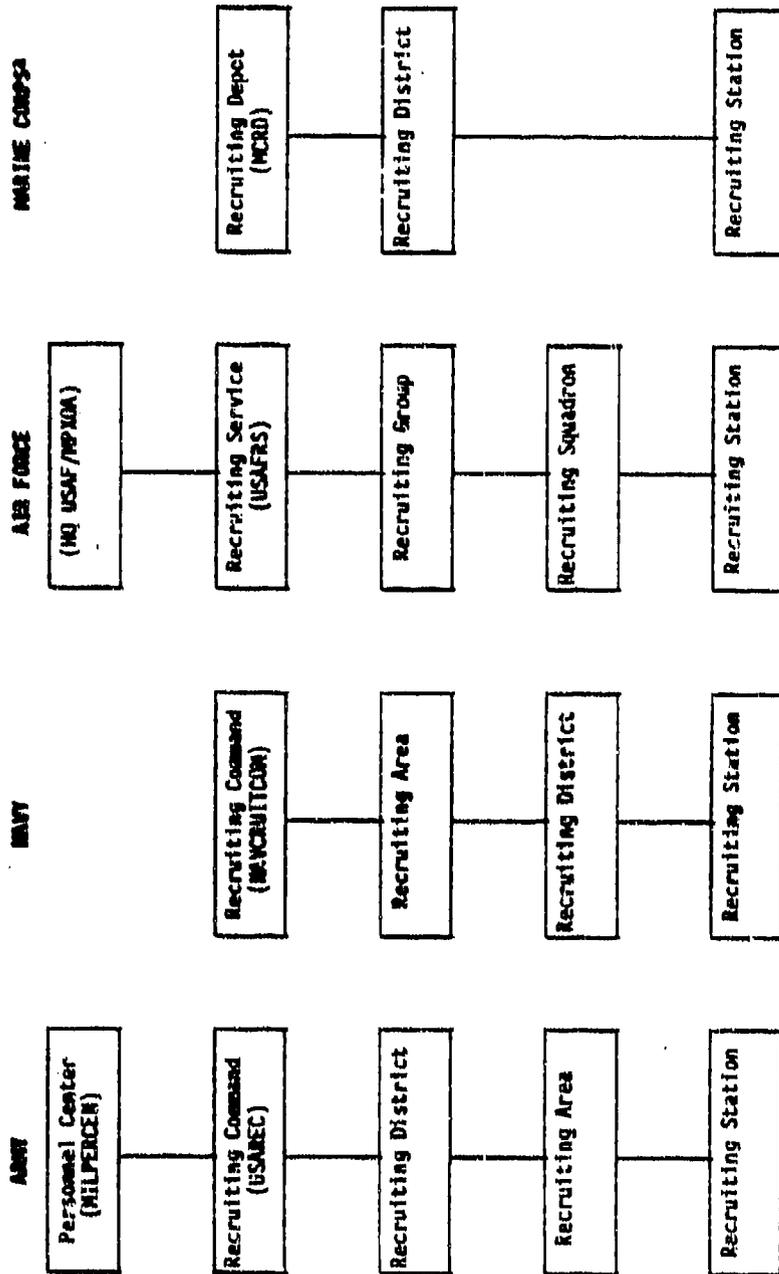
Currently, the Army and Air Force use the Study Group recommendations in classifying offenses. For offenses not included in the Study Group guide lists, the Air Force uses the maximum possible penalty under local law. The Navy uses the classification used by the state in which the violation occurred (except for minor traffic offenses); the Marine Corps uses the penalty imposed by the court (see Table 5).

#### **Waiver Authority Levels**

Moral waiver requests are initiated at the recruiting station and then proceed up through various levels of the recruiting hierarchy, as specified by the particular Service. The levels through which moral waiver requests are reviewed can be seen in Figure 1. The authority to actually approve moral waiver requests is delegated to varying levels in the Service hierarchy, depending upon the seriousness of the offense(s). The approval level for each moral waiver type is shown in the third column in Tables 2 through 5. (Note that waiver requests must pass through levels that do not have approval authority, as shown in Figure 1. At these levels the request is either turned down or a recommendation is made to grant the waiver.) Currently, the Army approves moral waivers at four different levels while the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps each employ three levels. (The Marine Corps uses a fourth level of review for waivers requested by females and by applicants who are not high school graduates.)

Figure 1

Moral Waiver Review Levels for Each Service



Abbreviations - MILPERCEN: Military Personnel Center  
 USAREC: U.S. Army Recruiting Center  
 NAVCRUITCOM: Navy Recruiting Command  
 AFRS: Air Force Recruiting Service  
 MCRD: Marine Corps Recruit Depot  
 MPXDA: Military Personnel Plans Policy Accession

<sup>a</sup>Levels apply to male high school graduate applicants only. All moral waivers for nongraduates and for females must be approved at HQ Marine Corps. For nongraduates, waiver requests that are not authorized for approval at the recruiting station level must be reviewed and granted at Headquarters Marine Corps.

In general, higher levels of authority are required to grant waivers for more serious offenses or for frequent offenders. These waivers are accordingly more expensive to process, but they are also less frequently requested.

Army applicants' moral waiver requests go first to the recruiting area commander, who makes the final decision on minor traffic or nontraffic offense waivers and passes other waiver requests deemed meritorious on to the recruiting district commander. The recruiting district commander makes final decisions concerning nonminor misdemeanors. Other waiver requests are either denied or are forwarded to HQ U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) with a recommendation for approval. The USAREC commander approves or disapproves juvenile felony waivers and either disapproves or forwards waivers for adult felonies or drug abuse. The latter two types of waivers may be approved only by the commander of the Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN).

The Navy system is similar to that used by the Army. Waivers need to be reviewed by each intervening level and a recommendation written for the relevant approving authority. The U.S. Navy Recruiting Command (NAVCRUITCOM) approves or disapproves all felony waiver requests (adult or juvenile). The recruiting area commander deals with waiver requests for two nonminor misdemeanors. All other moral waiver requests are dealt with at the recruiting district level.

In dealing with male high school graduate applicants requiring moral waivers, the Marine Corps uses three approval levels. The commander of the recruiting station has approval authority for traffic offenses not treated as a felony or misdemeanor and for other offenses for which the total period of civil restraint was under 6 months and the total fine less than \$500.

Individuals with offense records involving civil restraint for more than 6 months but less than a year or fines totaling over \$500 but less than \$1,000 must have their waiver requests approved by the commander of the recruiting district. The commanding general of the appropriate Marine Corps recruit depot (either Parris Island or San Diego) must approve all other waiver requests (those dealing with felonies, nonminor misdemeanors, or drugs). Moral waiver requests for female applicants and for male non-graduates are treated differently. All types of moral waivers for females must be approved at HQ Marine Corps. For male nongraduates, waivers for offenses involving 6 months or more of civil restraint or fines totaling \$500 or more, nonminor misdemeanors, felonies, or preservice drug use must be approved at the HQ Marine Corps level.

Currently, the Air Force approves moral and drug waiver requests at either the recruiting group or the HQ USAF/MPXOA (Military Personnel Plans Policy Accession) level. The commander of the recruiting squadron or group may disapprove requests for any type of waiver; waiver requests for two or more minor nontraffic offenses or for six or more minor offenses (traffic and/or nontraffic) in one year may be approved at the recruiting group level. Approval of the recruiting command at the United States Air Force Recruiting Service (USAFRS) or HQ USAF/MPXOA is required for all other types of moral waivers. The Air Force raised the level required for waiver approvals in 1982. Formerly, less serious waiver requests were dealt with at the squadron level, and USAFRS approval was needed only for applicants who had a conviction for a felony or 10 or more offenses of some type.

The authority level at which each type of waiver may be granted for each Service, is shown in the third column of Tables 2 through 5.

## Decision Criteria

While regulations state that waivers may be granted for the behaviors listed in Table 1, the actual decision to grant the waiver is left to the commanding officer at the specified level of the recruiting hierarchy. (Waivers may be disapproved at lower levels.)

In making waiver decisions, the Marine Corps instructs recruiting service personnel to take into account "aggravating and mitigating circumstances, education, and mental/physical qualifications, and the basic moral character of the individual" (Marine Corps, 1979, pp. 2-28). Air Force recruiting personnel are instructed to "deny enlistment when the applicant is not the type of individual we want" (Department of the Air Force, 1982). The doctrine for all four Services urges use of the "whole person concept" (Department of the Air Force, 1982; Department of the Army, 1980; Department of the Navy, 1983; Marine Corps, 1979). Factors considered can include education level, aptitude, experience, age, activities other than school work, school record, letters of reference, and personal interviews. Two generalizations can be made concerning these stated decision criteria: They are vague enough to give the decision maker room for subjective evaluations, and they encompass both the value of the applicant to the Service (education and aptitude level) and the likelihood that the individual will misbehave after accession. Types of information used in assessing the probability of full rehabilitation include the nature of the offenses committed, length of court sentences imposed, age at commission of the offenses, and time since last offense. Character assessments may be obtained from employers, school officials, doctors, ministers, and parole officers.

## Procedures

The following description is, for the most part, a general one; detailed procedures vary somewhat among the Services.

The first step in determining moral eligibility is the recruiter-applicant interview. Recruiters advise applicants that all arrests, convictions, or adverse juvenile adjudications must be revealed regardless of the disposition of the case and of whether or not a waiver is required. Applicants are told that they will be the subject of an Entrance National Agency Check (ENTNAC) and that any type of involvement with law enforcement officials is likely to be disclosed.

Subsequent to the recruiter's interview with the applicant, one of the following actions is taken depending on the circumstances:

- If the applicant's background makes him or her ineligible for service, processing terminates.
- If the applicant admits to a record, verbally or on the enlistment application (DD Form 1966) but no further judicial action is pending (which would make him or her ineligible automatically) or if the recruiter suspects that the applicant is concealing a record, further enlistment processing is held in abeyance pending inquiry and a moral eligibility determination.
- If the applicant states and certifies on DD Form 1966 that there is no record of arrests, charges, adverse juvenile adjudications, or convictions, and no charges pending, processing continues prior to the initiation of police record checks.

During the interview with the applicant, the recruiter determines whether a moral waiver is required for enlistment, and the applicant and recruiter decide whether to request the waiver. Generally, waivers are not required on the basis of arrest or questioning not resulting in preferral of charges or when charges are dismissed without adjudication. Waivers are required for convictions, regardless of whether the court record was expunged or sealed, or whether the individual was later pardoned. Exceptions to the conviction criterion are use of certain illicit drugs, for which all Services require waivers regardless of whether there are any convictions; alcohol abuse, for which the Army and Marine Corps may require waivers; and the Air Force practice of requiring a moral eligibility determination for anyone who admits to committing two or more misdemeanors or one or more felonies (even if no arrests or convictions resulted).

Recruiters are instructed to request waivers only for individuals whom they judge as fully rehabilitated. During good recruiting periods, the Services tend to stress the principle that waivers should be requested only for applicants who are otherwise highly qualified for Service. The Marine Corps, for instance, instructs recruiters to request a moral waiver for an applicant only if he/she finds "highly favorable traits or mitigating circumstances which would outweigh the reason for rejection and render the applicant an asset to the Marine Corps" (p. 2-31). At present, Marine Corps recruiters are authorized to request misdemeanor, felony, and drug waivers only for individuals with above-average AFQT scores. Air Force recruiters normally may request moral or drug use waivers for high school graduate applicants only, and drug use waivers only for those in AFQT Category IIIB or above. (Nongraduates may be considered if they are exceptional applicants.)

## Required Documentation

Once the decision has been made to request a moral waiver, the applicant writes a statement describing the circumstances and disposition of each offense. The recruiter writes a statement explaining the justification for requesting the waiver and assessing the individual's potential contribution to the Service. Three personal references from "responsible citizens" (e.g., educators, ministers, doctors) must be furnished on DD Form 370, Request for Report from Employer-School-Personal References. In addition, the Army and Navy require a report from the last school attended, and the Army requires a report from all employers during the year prior to enlistment application as well as an explanation for any periods of unemployment lasting three months or more. If applicable, favorable reports from correctional facilities and parole or probation officers are required. A police record check (DD Form 369) is requested for Marine Corps applicants with juvenile or adult felony convictions; for Army applicants with convictions other than minor traffic convictions for which no waiver is required; and for all Navy and Air Force applicants (except where release of data from official records is prohibited by statute or by local law enforcement policy). DD Form 369 is sent to municipal, county, or state law enforcement officials, including courts, probation officers, and parole officers for each community in which commission of an offense was revealed (regardless of its disposition) and for each community in which the applicant has lived during the preceding five years. The check is conducted to show the existence of the charge; its final disposition; dates of probation, confinement, commitment, or parole; and degree of rehabilitation.

The Navy and the Air Force have additional forms which must be completed by applicants requesting waivers for incidents involving drug use.

## Numbers of Moral Waiver Accessions

Over the last five years, accessions with moral waivers have comprised from 12 to 18 percent of non-prior service (NPS) accessions DoD-wide. Table 6 shows the percentage of non-prior service accessions admitted with each type of moral waiver for FY 1980 through FY 1982.

These figures show considerable variation across years and across Services, reflecting differences in the recruiting market and in the stringency of moral standards policies and practices. Many of these differences can be understood by referring to the differences in standards shown in Table 1. In FY 1982, for example, 39 percent of Marine Corps accessions entered the Corps on traffic offense waivers while less than 1 percent of Army accessions had this type of waiver. The Marine Corps figure reflects its policy of requiring a moral waiver of any individual who has had six traffic violations, including parking tickets, in his or her life. The other Services require traffic offense waivers only in the case of applicants with over six (Army, Air Force) or four (Navy) traffic offenses in one year.

Similarly, 11 percent of Navy FY 1982 accessions entered with a waiver for prior drug use compared to less than 0.01 percent of Army accessions in that year. It is unlikely that the appeal of a Navy career is strongly correlated with drug use or that no drug users were accessed into the Army. Rather, these figures reflect (1) the Army's emphasis on drug use convictions and (2) the Navy's policy of urging applicants to detail any previous involvement with drugs with the assurance that, except in serious cases, past drug use per se would not render the individual ineligible for Navy service.

Table 6  
Percent of FY 1960-62 MPS Accessions in Each Moral Waiver Category,  
by Service and Year

MORAL WAIVER CATEGORY	1960						1961						1962					
	Army	Navy	AF	MC	Sub	DDP	Army	Navy	AF	MC	Sub	DDP	Army	Navy	AF	MC	Sub	DDP
Minor Traffic	0.34	0.41	0.21	35.76	4.37	0.28	0.27	0.12	39.78	5.08	0.29	0.28	--	39.41	4.94			
1-2 Minor Non- traffic	0.62	0.67	0.51	3.60	0.95	0.53	0.69	0.56	3.32	0.92	0.59	1.03	0.39	0.40	1.07			
3 or More Minor Nontraffic	0.34	0.33	--	0.31	0.27	0.32	0.29	--	0.36	0.25	0.28	0.43	--	0.68	0.30			
Nonminor Misde- meanor	7.15	9.88	5.07	4.91	7.14	6.33	11.59	5.18	5.38	7.43	6.29	12.57	3.71	5.41	7.25			
Adult Felony	0.06	0.34	0.39	0.48	0.24	--	0.40	0.28	0.42	0.24	--	0.33	0.23	0.34	0.19			
Juvenile Felony	0.19	0.71	0.53	0.86	0.46	0.05	0.76	0.33	0.93	0.42	--	0.61	--	9.21	0.29			
Drug Abuse	--	10.08	0.58	0.55	2.65	--	10.33	0.35	0.37	3.05	--	10.73	--	0.61	2.93			
Alcohol Abuse	--	0.40	--	0.32	0.13	--	0.41	--	0.24	0.15	--	0.35	--	0.32	9.13			
Total Moral Waivers	8.72	22.81	7.31	46.79	16.21	7.56	24.72	6.86	50.79	17.54	7.50	26.32	4.51	51.69	17.07			
Total Accessions n =	157,211	87,347	72,497	40,788	357,843	116,904	92,100	76,903	39,941	325,848	118,202	75,572	67,319	36,099	300,192			

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

dashases appear in cells with fewer than 50 cases.

## Characteristics of Moral Waiver Accessions

In light of the somewhat subjective nature of the moral character screening process, it is useful to look at the effect of the screen on the enlistment of individuals with various types of backgrounds. The numbers of individuals with combinations of various demographic and offense history characteristics who originally seek to enlist and are turned away either informally by recruiters prior to application or more formally after applying (either with or without processing of a moral waiver request) are not known. However, Defense Manpower Data Center data provide information on the characteristics of accessions admitted with moral waivers, and these individuals may be compared to accessions without waivers.

Table 7 shows the percentage of high school graduates among moral waiver and nonwaiver accessions, and Table 8 shows the comparable breakout for AFQT categories. Guidance instructs commanding officers to grant moral waivers only when the individual's other qualities (education and aptitude) indicate a high probability of success in military service. Accordingly, one would expect to find a higher percentage of high school graduates among moral waiver accessions than among accessions as a whole and, similarly, a higher proportion of high-aptitude individuals. As Table 7 shows, this has not been the case for education status. However, this picture may change. Recently the Air Force determined that only exceptional nongraduate applicants may enter with moral waivers, and the Marine Corps requires nongraduate applicants requesting waivers not approvable at the recruiting station level to get HQ Marine Corps approval.

The data in Table 8 suggest that AFQT scores are modestly related to granting of moral waivers. A somewhat higher proportion of moral waiver

**Table 7**  
**Percentage of High School Graduates Among NPS Accessions**  
**With and Without Moral Waivers, by Service and Year, FY 1977-81**

	Fiscal Year of Accession				
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
<b>Army</b>					
Waiver	55	70	54	43	74
Nonwaiver	61	73	65	56	81
<b>Navy</b>					
Waiver	71	69	67	65	67
Nonwaiver	75	73	76	77	78
<b>Air Force</b>					
Waiver	87	75	73	73	82
Nonwaiver	93	86	85	85	90
<b>Marine Corps</b>					
Waiver	70	71	73	76	78
Nonwaiver	72	70	72	78	81
<b>DoD</b>					
Waiver	68	71	67	64	73
Nonwaiver	72	76	73	69	83

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

Table 8

AFQT Category Distribution for NPS Accessions, FY 1979-81,  
by Moral Waiver Status, Service, and Year of Accession (in percent)<sup>a</sup>

	FY1979		FY1980		FY1981	
	Waiver	Nonwaiver	Waiver	Nonwaiver	Waiver	Nonwaiver
<b>Army</b>						
AFQT I/II	19	16	17	15	28	23
AFQT IIIA	15	13	15	12	20	16
AFQT IIIB	25	23	24	22	31	29
AFQT IV	41	47	44	50	22	32
<b>Navy</b>						
AFQT I/II	39	37	42	35	44	37
AFQT IIIA	22	21	25	22	24	23
AFQT IIIB	23	22	21	24	24	26
AFQT IV	16	19	12	19	8	14
<b>AF</b>						
AFQT I/II	42	39	42	39	48	43
AFQT IIIA	25	24	25	25	25	25
AFQT IIIB	25	27	24	27	21	25
AFQT IV	8	10	9	10	6	8
<b>MC</b>						
AFQT I/II	29	21	31	22	37	28
AFQT IIIA	21	20	21	20	24	24
AFQT IIIB	27	28	25	27	28	32
AFQT IV	24	31	22	31	10	16
<b>DoD</b>						
AFQT I/II	32	26	33	25	39	32
AFQT IIIA	20	18	21	18	24	21
AFQT IIIB	25	24	24	24	26	27
AFQT IV	23	31	22	33	11	20

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

<sup>a</sup>May not sum to 100 percent because of rounding.

accessions have above-average AFQT scores (39 percent in FY 1981 compared to 32 percent for nonwaiver accessions). This trend may increase as well. The Marine Corps now limits the types of moral waivers for which AFQT Category IV applicants may apply (Marine Corps, 1981).

Tables 9 through 11 compare the sex, age, and racial composition, respectively, for moral waiver and nonwaiver accessions. A higher proportion of waiver accessions than of nonwaiver accessions is male. This finding is hardly surprising since the Services' low female enlistment quotas allow them to be quite selective in dealing with female applicants and since the drug use and criminal activity patterns requiring moral waivers are more common among males.

Moral waiver accessions tend to be somewhat older than nonwaiver accessions. As shown in Table 10, approximately 55 percent of the non-prior service accessions admitted on moral waivers in FY 1979 were age 19 or older while only 49 percent of nonwaiver accessions fell into this age group.

Table 11 shows that, at least for the Marine Corps and the Army, a considerably higher proportion of moral waiver accessions than of nonwaiver accessions is white (all non-black accessions are coded as white). Since the behavior patterns requiring moral waivers are not more common among whites than among blacks, the data suggest that the moral waiver review process has a negative impact on blacks' prospects for entering service.

**Table 9**  
**Percentage of Females Among NPS Accessions With and Without**  
**Moral Waivers, by Service and Year, FY 1977-81**

	Fiscal Year of Accession				
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
<b>Army</b>					
Waiver	09	14	12	05	07
Nonwaiver	09	14	14	15	16
<b>Navy</b>					
Waiver	02	03	05	05	05
Nonwaiver	05	08	13	14	13
<b>Air Force</b>					
Waiver	07	08	12	09	07
Nonwaiver	14	19	21	20	14
<b>Marine Corps</b>					
Waiver	02	04	03	03	04
Nonwaiver	04	07	07	08	08
<b>DoD</b>					
Waiver	04	06	07	04	05
Nonwaiver	08	13	14	15	14

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

Table 10

Age Distribution for FY1979 NPS  
Accessions by Moral Waiver Status and Service

	Age at Entry						
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23+
<b>Army</b>							
Waiver	5	29	21	14	9	6	15
Nonwaiver	10	39	21	11	6	4	10
<b>Navy</b>							
Waiver	15	31	21	12	7	5	10
Nonwaiver	17	38	20	9	5	3	7
<b>Air Force</b>							
Waiver	9	24	21	15	10	7	15
Nonwaiver	12	35	19	10	7	5	11
<b>Marine Corps</b>							
Waiver	16	39	22	10	5	3	5
Nonwaiver	23	42	18	7	4	2	4
<b>DoD</b>							
Waiver	12	32	21	12	7	5	10
Nonwaiver	13	38	20	10	6	4	9

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

**Table 11**  
**Percentage of Blacks Among NPS Accessions With and Without**  
**Moral Waivers, by Service and Year, FY 1977-81**

	Fiscal Year of Accession				
	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
<b>Army</b>					
Waiver	20	27	27	19	16
Nonwaiver	30	35	38	31	28
<b>Navy</b>					
Waiver	09	10	12	09	09
Nonwaiver	12	14	16	15	14
<b>USAF</b>					
Waiver	10	13	15	10	09
Nonwaiver	11	14	16	15	14
<b>USMC</b>					
Waiver	14	17	19	13	10
Nonwaiver	22	28	34	32	25
<b>DoD</b>					
Waiver	13	16	18	13	10
Nonwaiver	21	24	27	24	21

**Source:** Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

## Attrition Among Moral Waiver Accessions

When an individual leaves one of the Services, the reason for leaving is coded by the particular Service and subsequently translated into one of the Service-wide Inter-Service Separation Codes (ISCs). There are 64 two-digit codes representing the reason for separation, and these are grouped by their first digit into seven more global categories (0 Release, 1 Medical, 2 Dependency/Hardship, 3 Death, 4 Officer Program, 5 Retirement, 6-8 Failure to Meet Minimum Behavioral/Performance Criteria, 9 Other). Most analyses have simply used attrition (ISCs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6-8, and 9) or adverse attrition (ISC 6-8) as performance measures. Since the two-digit codes are more specific than these categories, and in some cases are quite descriptive (e.g., drug use, financial irresponsibility, alcoholism), we reasoned that they might provide better criterion measures for evaluating the moral waiver process. Certain types of waivers could be expected to relate more closely to specific kinds of separations than to attrition generally (e.g., accessions on preservice alcohol abuse waivers might be particularly likely to be separated for alcoholism).

Our preparatory work included requesting Defense Manpower Data Center tabulations of the frequency with which each two-digit code was used for accession cohorts from 1977 through 1981. Table 12 contains a listing for all codes used for at least 0.5 percent of the male non-prior service force in their first year of service, from FY 1977 through FY 1981. (One-year attrition rates were used instead of three-year rates to permit comparisons across years up through FY 1981, a year when separation policies could be expected to be more similar to the policies which will affect our study sample than those affecting the FY 1979 cohort.) As inspection of Table 12

Table 12

**Inter-Service Separation Codes Used for at Least 0.5 Percent of  
NPS Males in their First Year of Service, FY 1977-81**

<u>Code</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Year of Accession</u>				
		1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>Release from Active Service</u></b>					
<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>Medical Disqualifications</u></b>					
10	Conditions existing prior to Service	X	X			
16	Unqualified for Active Duty-Other	X	X	X	X	X
<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>Dependency or Hardship</u></b>					
<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>Death</u></b>					
<b><u>4</u></b>	<b><u>Entry into Officer Programs</u></b>					
40	Officer Commissioning Program			X	X	
<b><u>5</u></b>	<b><u>Retirement</u></b>					
<b><u>6 - 8</u></b>	<b><u>Failure to Meet Minimum Behavioral or Performance Standards</u></b>					
60	Character or Behavior Disorder	X	X	X	X	
61	Motivational Problems	X	X	X	X	
63	Inaptitude	X				
73	Court Martial				X	
74	Fraudulent Entry	X	X	X	X	
78	Good of the Service	X	X	X		
86	Expeditious Discharge		X	X	X	X
87	Trainee Discharge	X	X	X	X	X
<b><u>9</u></b>	<b><u>Other Separations or Discharges</u></b>					
91	Erroneous Enlistment or Induction	X	X	X	X	X

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

reveals, two-digit ISCs are not likely to prove particularly revealing. The Services do not use the more descriptive ISCs, and they have been using fewer and fewer different codes, dropping from 9 codes meeting the criterion for inclusion in our table for the 1977 cohort to only 4 for the 1981 cohort. Moreover, the two-digit codes that are employed are so nondescript (e.g., trainee discharge, expeditious discharge) that analyses of two-digit codes would add little to the information obtained from measures of adverse and total attrition. Further attrition analyses concentrated on these two variables.

The effect of existing moral character screening procedures on attrition rates cannot be measured in a theoretically ideal manner because data on what would have been the military performance of those screened out are absent. The only data available are the attrition rates for those who are let in, either with or without a moral waiver.

Comparing DoD accessions with moral waivers to those without waivers shows that, on the whole, the former are only slightly more likely (30 versus 28 percent) to be separated from service before completing a full three years. It is unclear from the aggregated data whether the lack of any sizable difference in attrition and perseverance should be attributed to a successful screening process that filters out individuals who have not been rehabilitated or to the irrelevancy of offense history information for predicting military performance.

We attempted to obtain a more sensitive measure of perseverance in military service by computing the number of months served (from 0 to 36 with longer terms coded as 36) for males entering a first term of service between

FY 1977 and FY 1979. Mean values for each Service's accessions for FY 1977, FY 1978, and FY 1979 are shown in Tables 13, 14, and 15, respectively. Analyses of variance were run for each Service cohort with moral waiver status (waiver, nonwaiver), education level (nongraduate, GED, high school graduate), and race (black, white) as factors. Even with the statistical power afforded by extremely large sample sizes, the moral waiver variable attained significance in only 2 of the 12 ANOVAs. (Education level was significant in all analyses and race in 8 analyses.) Moral waiver accessions served approximately 1.5 months less than nonwaiver accessions in the Army's FY 1977 ( $F=7.65$ ) and FY 1978 ( $F=9.13$ ) cohorts. The percentage of variance accounted for by moral waiver status in these analyses is paltry (less than 1 percent in all cases).

After failing to find meaningful differences between waiver and nonwaiver accession groups, we looked at performance by moral waiver type. Tables 16 through 18 show the 36-month adverse attrition rates for male non-prior service accessions entering from FY 1977 through FY 1979 with each type of moral waiver as well as that for male accessions without moral waivers. Too few females entered service with moral waivers to permit reliable computations of attrition rates for them by waiver type; consequently, adverse attrition rates for female non-prior service accessions with any type of moral waiver are compared to those for female accessions without moral waivers in Table 19.

Table 20 shows average male adverse attrition rates for each type of moral waiver over this three-year period by education level. Attrition rates which are significantly different from the attrition rate for accessions in the same education category without a moral waiver are shown in boldface type.

Table 13

Average Number of Months Served by FY 1977 Male MPS Accessions,  
by Moral Waiver Status, Education, Race, and Service

	MHS		GED		NSS		Ed Total	
	MW	NMW	MW	NMW	MW	NMW	MW	NMW
<b>Army</b>								
Black	22.75	23.92	24.61	24.56	27.69	29.48	25.88	27.58
White	21.20	22.06	23.28	23.06	27.68	28.69	24.54	25.76
Total	21.45	22.53	23.48	23.44	27.66	28.96	24.81	26.32
<b>Navy</b>								
Black	21.38	21.47	23.97	22.61	28.12	28.60	26.64	27.10
White	21.60	21.42	23.56	23.60	28.56	29.43	26.61	27.42
Total	21.58	21.42	23.59	23.50	28.51	29.33	26.62	27.38
<b>Air Force</b>								
Black	--a	23.99	--	24.95	29.19	29.99	28.65	29.74
White	24.58	22.71	24.88	23.73	28.87	29.67	28.33	29.15
Total	24.71	22.79	24.51	23.82	28.90	29.70	28.36	29.22
<b>Marine Corps</b>								
Black	21.59	22.74	22.29	24.66	26.57	27.47	25.37	26.34
White	23.68	23.17	23.53	22.78	29.33	29.94	27.55	27.93
Total	23.44	23.08	23.41	23.06	28.91	29.34	27.25	27.57
<b>DoD</b>								
Black	22.15	23.58	23.66	24.22	27.56	29.19	26.09	27.60
White	22.07	22.05	23.58	23.36	28.66	29.31	26.54	27.16
Total	22.08	22.37	23.58	23.50	28.51	29.28	26.49	27.26

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

Dashes appear in cells with fewer than 25 cases.

Key: MHS - Non-high school graduate  
 GED - GED certificate holder  
 HSS - High school graduate  
 MW - Moral waiver accession  
 NMW - Non-moral waiver accession

Table 14

Average Number of Months Served by FY 1978 Male MPS Accessions,  
by Moral Waiver Status, Education, Race, and Service

	MHS		GED		HSG		Ed Total	
	MW	MW						
<b>Army</b>								
Black	24.90	26.23	25.34	25.83	28.82	30.33	27.93	29.35
White	24.33	24.44	23.22	24.17	28.06	29.48	26.53	27.76
Total	24.45	24.95	23.52	24.54	28.25	29.81	26.91	28.32
<b>Navy</b>								
Black	24.32	25.68	28.11	25.64	29.10	29.08	28.21	28.39
White	23.53	24.34	24.26	25.28	29.30	29.85	27.52	28.28
Total	23.59	24.48	24.47	25.31	29.28	29.73	27.58	28.30
<b>Air Force</b>								
Black	--a	26.93	26.27	22.93	30.24	30.59	29.82	30.12
White	22.54	24.53	24.06	22.67	28.94	29.78	27.50	28.88
Total	22.91	24.69	24.25	22.70	29.14	29.90	27.81	29.05
<b>Marine Corps</b>								
Black	23.99	24.03	21.86	22.93	27.27	27.93	26.57	26.90
White	25.12	24.46	25.86	24.12	29.65	29.65	28.25	27.90
Total	24.98	24.35	25.44	23.92	29.18	29.12	27.96	27.61
<b>DoD</b>								
Black	24.48	25.84	25.81	24.96	28.42	29.93	27.64	29.03
White	24.23	24.42	24.30	23.99	29.21	29.69	27.62	28.21
Total	24.26	24.73	24.42	24.11	29.07	29.75	27.62	28.41

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

<sup>a</sup>Dashes appear in cells with fewer than 25 cases.

Key: MHS - Non-high school graduate  
 GED - GED certificate holder  
 HSG - High school graduate  
 MW - Moral waiver accession  
 M<sup>a</sup>M - Non-moral waiver accession

Table 15

Average Number of Months Served by FY 1979 Male MPS Accessions,  
by Moral Waiver Status, Education, Race, and Service<sup>a</sup>

	MIS		GED		HSG		Total	
	MW	NMW	MW	NMW	MW	NMW	MW	NMW
<b>Army</b>								
Black	21.67	21.72	21.86	22.08	23.95	24.70	22.99	23.70
White	20.11	20.60	20.14	20.37	23.70	24.18	21.74	22.60
Total	20.46	20.96	20.41	20.78	23.78	24.39	22.06	23.06
<b>Navy</b>								
Black	23.33	22.35	24.86	22.02	23.28	23.45	23.36	23.27
White	20.78	20.75	21.21	21.78	24.11	23.94	22.97	23.10
Total	20.97	20.91	21.46	21.80	23.99	23.85	23.02	23.13
<b>Air Force</b>								
Black	22.66	22.51	22.63	21.31	25.27	25.18	24.71	24.89
White	21.05	21.09	20.06	19.75	24.32	24.02	23.25	23.43
Total	21.16	21.19	20.11	19.92	24.47	24.22	23.46	23.67
<b>Marine Corps</b>								
Black	20.94	21.53	22.08	20.20	22.95	22.94	22.59	22.61
White	21.40	21.70	20.58	19.92	23.93	23.85	23.16	23.08
Total	21.34	21.65	20.74	19.98	23.73	23.50	23.05	22.92
<b>DoD</b>								
Black	21.74	21.77	22.47	21.82	23.47	24.35	23.06	23.66
White	20.80	20.79	20.62	20.46	24.01	24.04	22.84	22.99
Total	20.94	21.04	20.81	20.68	23.90	24.12	22.88	23.17

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

Key: MIS - Non-high school graduate  
 GED - GED certificate holder  
 HSG - High school graduate  
 MW - Moral waiver accession  
 NMW - Non-moral waiver accession

<sup>a</sup> DMDC analyses run on January 1983.

Table 16

Percentage 0-36 Month Adverse Attrition for FY 1977 MPS  
Male Accessions by Moral Waiver Category, Education, and Service

MORAL WAIVER CATEGORY	ARMY			NAVY			AIR FORCE			MARINE CORPS		
	MHS	GED	HSG	MHS	GED	HSG	MHS	GED	HSG	MHS	GED	HSG
None	38.99	36.29	17.46	36.86	32.44	14.88	36.32	33.58	16.22	30.98	32.39	13.38
Traffic	46.39	-- <sup>a</sup>	21.13	36.09	33.56	17.63	--	--	19.58	26.92	27.38	13.24
1-2 Minor	50.89	--	23.93	41.96	51.86	22.82	--	--	29.22	36.04	40.22	18.27
3 or More Minor	46.20	--	18.29	49.41	--	19.70	--	--	21.60	34.25	--	18.43
Nonminor Misdemeanors	42.56	34.98	23.65	40.90	39.87	20.05	35.81	31.34	19.10	36.72	41.80	18.56
Adult Felony	--	--	13.70	--	--	15.23	--	--	32.36	--	--	--
Juvenile Felony	35.98	--	23.89	35.97	44.59	24.59	--	--	17.06	--	--	20.70
Drug	--	--	--	37.17	30.86	16.57	--	--	22.34	31.56	--	15.73
Alcohol	45.84	35.10	21.18	34.51	37.15	17.60	--	--	18.98	37.64	--	15.60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39.28</b>	<b>36.23</b>	<b>17.76</b>	<b>37.08</b>	<b>33.42</b>	<b>15.45</b>	<b>36.61</b>	<b>33.39</b>	<b>16.40</b>	<b>34.76</b>	<b>32.59</b>	<b>13.74</b>

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

<sup>a</sup>Dashes appear in cells with fewer than 50 cases.

Table 17

Percentage 0-36 Month Adverse Attrition for FY 1978 MPS  
Male Accessions by Moral Waiver Category, Education, and Service

MORAL WAIVER CATEGORY	ARMY			NAVY			AIR FORCE			MARINE CORPS		
	MHS	GED	HSG									
None	34.09	34.64	16.22	28.32	28.48	13.53	35.39	40.23	19.96	29.06	31.72	15.18
Traffic	36.63	--a	27.01	25.75	26.98	13.45	--	--	22.32	26.28	29.24	12.95
1-2 Minor	30.84	--	25.12	39.55	37.75	17.89	--	50.89	24.54	31.39	--	20.64
3 or More Minor	38.90	--	25.18	42.38	--	24.05	--	--	--	--	--	19.60
Nonminor Misde- meanors	39.06	44.77	22.57	32.99	32.97	18.62	44.34	36.05	22.19	33.09	39.60	17.95
Adult Felony	--	--	8.34	--	--	17.00	--	--	15.52	--	--	--
Juvenile Felony	--	--	16.92	32.87	36.93	22.00	--	--	26.37	--	--	24.15
Drug	--	--	--	30.10	28.77	14.73	49.07	34.49	22.97	24.79	--	18.21
Alcohol	37.31	--	18.92	36.74	30.24	14.84	--	--	22.74	35.91	--	17.32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34.35</b>	<b>35.37</b>	<b>16.57</b>	<b>29.18</b>	<b>29.17</b>	<b>14.04</b>	<b>36.12</b>	<b>39.89</b>	<b>16.51</b>	<b>28.61</b>	<b>31.66</b>	<b>15.03</b>

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

aDashes appear in cells with fewer than 50 cases.

Table 18

Percentage 0-36 Month Adverse Attrition for FY 1979 MPS  
Male Accessions by Moral Waiver Category, Education, and Service

MORAL WAIVER CATEGORY	ARMY			NAVY			AIR FORCE			MARINE CORPS		
	MHS	GED	HSG	MHS	GED	HSG	MHS	GED	HSG	MHS	GED	HSG
None	36.80	35.97	16.44	31.96	28.54	14.96	37.13	39.56	16.01	34.43	36.98	16.73
Traffic	42.31	-- <sup>a</sup>	22.87	52.90	--	20.52	--	--	22.79	32.02	30.01	18.39
1-2 Minor	43.55	44.45	22.44	32.64	--	18.16	--	--	27.66	35.86	50.01	21.58
3 or More Minor	44.65	--	22.98	30.51	--	25.18	--	--	--	--	--	24.50
Nonminor Misde- meanors	41.04	46.49	23.84	36.27	33.05	21.33	42.08	45.12	22.72	30.43	33.78	13.08
Adult Felony	--	--	18.88	--	--	18.43	--	--	14.98	--	--	21.75
Juvenile Felony	31.67	--	17.22	40.81	29.69	26.38	--	53.13	26.67	--	--	28.00
Drug	--	--	--	30.51	37.41	16.55	40.00	47.30	21.57	38.36	29.58	18.03
Alcohol	41.68	--	14.71	34.29	32.83	16.23	--	--	17.95	29.08	--	18.58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37.20</b>	<b>37.23</b>	<b>16.83</b>	<b>32.51</b>	<b>30.25</b>	<b>15.72</b>	<b>37.71</b>	<b>40.44</b>	<b>16.57</b>	<b>33.84</b>	<b>35.40</b>	<b>16.67</b>

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

<sup>a</sup>Dashes appear in cells with fewer than 50 cases.

Table 19

Average Percentage 0-36 Month Adverse Attrition for Female  
 FY1977-79 NPS Accessions, by Moral Waiver Status, Education, and Service

	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps
<b>MHS</b>				
Waiver	22.00 (50) <sup>a</sup>	19.40 (67)	25.26 (95)	6.90 (29)
Nonwaiver	24.97 (877)	16.63 (523)	25.96 (1,595)	21.26 (127)
<b>GED</b>				
Waiver	32.99 (197)	32.58 (264)	14.48 (442)	11.56 (346)
Nonwaiver	32.86 (2,173)	23.42 (1,644)	22.98 (2,964)	38.05 (226)
<b>HSG</b>				
Waiver	18.45 (3,182)	28.26 (1,525)	15.20 (855)	16.27 (1,211)
Nonwaiver	18.16 (46,951)	11.34 (16,324)	10.31 (32,241)	18.21 (4,437)
<b>Total</b>				
Waiver	19.34 (3,429)	28.56 (1,856)	15.66 (1,392)	15.07 (1,586)
Nonwaiver	18.92 (50,001)	12.56 (18,491)	12.01 (36,800)	19.23 (4,790)

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

<sup>a</sup>Total number of accessions FY77-79 appears in parentheses.

Table 20

Average Percentage 0-36 Month Adverse Attrition for MFS  
Male Accessions, FY 1977-79, by Naval Waiver Category, Education, and Service

NAVAL WAIVER CATEGORY	ARMY		NAVY		AIR FORCE		MARINE CORPS	
	MFS	GED NSG	MFS	GED NSG	MFS	GED NSG	MFS	GED NSG
None	37.64 (126,655) <sup>a</sup>	35.77 (13,852) 16.94 (238,790)	33.19 (46,785)	30.19 (9,518) 14.54 (157,128)	36.27 (10,506)	37.82 (5,961) 17.22 (156,311)	31.29 (23,238)	33.38 (1,774) 14.68 (59,653)
Traffic	42.75 (339)	31.25 (64) 23.48 (473)	37.32 (628)	30.69 (502) 16.88 (3,557)	--	41.08 (56) 22.29 (6,497)	28.52 (7,279)	29.57 (739) 15.07 (21,058)
1-2 Minor	44.44 (637)	42.48 (113) 23.86 (742)	38.75 (506)	41.19 (153) 20.87 (1,074)	37.06 (112)	43.91 (123) 27.13 (778)	34.81 (1,141)	40.52 (138) 19.95 (2,423)
3 or More Minor	44.64 (419)	37.26 (87) 21.92 (470)	41.80 (201)	28.79 (66) 22.23 (444)	--	-- (608) 21.23 (608)	38.01 (150)	-- (347) 20.47 (347)
Nonminor Mis- deemeanors	41.45 (8,033)	42.36 (1,509) 23.38 (10,944)	36.95 (4,086)	35.94 (1,436) 20.12 (9,389)	41.95 (546)	40.21 (709) 21.50 (4,793)	34.35 (1,232)	39.10 (307) 17.05 (3,092)
Adult Felony	35.86 (53)	-- (186) 13.45 (186)	36.34 (60)	24.07 (64) 19.30 (306)	--	52.00 (52) 18.62 (344)	--	-- (127) 21.34 (127)
Juvenile Felony	34.36 (192)	35.81 (81) 19.87 (438)	36.94 (547)	37.74 (212) 27.83 (990)	43.66 (71)	46.62 (118) 24.35 (378)	--	-- (241) 25.32 (241)
Drug	--	-- (59) 26.73 (59)	33.29 (4,741)	31.75 (1,547) 16.02 (16,659)	44.76 (143)	38.67 (194) 22.35 (1,213)	32.09 (963)	28.60 (150) 17.63 (2,564)
Alcohol	43.43 (714)	35.14 (111) 19.29 (1,525)	35.03 (1,779)	34.10 (575) 16.52 (5,453)	47.18 (53)	30.78 (52) 19.76 (481)	34.47 (296)	36.77 (68) 17.39 (1,145)
TOTAL	37.75	36.42 17.18	33.65	31.23 15.14	36.81	38.73 16.48	32.68	33.18 14.94

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center, special analyses.

<sup>a</sup>Dashes appear in cells with fewer than 50 cases.

<sup>b</sup>Number of cases appears in parentheses.

<sup>c</sup>Rates differing from corresponding adverse attrition rate for nonwaiver accessions with  $p < .05$  are in bold type.

Generally, adverse attrition rates for male moral waiver accessions are similar to those of nonwaiver accessions drawn from the same education group. This holds even for the most serious waiver category--adult felonies--but it should be noted that very few individuals with such records are admitted (0.2 percent of DoD accessions), and that the screening of those who are admitted can be assumed to be quite stringent. The highest adverse attrition rate among moral waiver categories is that for multiple minor misdemeanors. The loss rate for accessions with waivers for one or two minor misdemeanors was significantly higher than that for their counterparts without moral waivers in 9 of the 12 education/Service categories. Although many of the offenses falling into this category appear trivial--damaging road signs, violating curfew, trespassing, and the like--individuals with records of multiple minor misdemeanors are nearly 7 percent more likely than their counterparts without moral waivers to be separated from service because of behavioral or performance deficiencies.<sup>1</sup>

These data suggest that a pattern of repeated infractions may be an indicator of personal characteristics inversely related to military success. Taking this line of logic one step further, it would seem reasonable to suppose that histories of discipline or adjustment problems not resulting in criminal convictions (e.g., in school or on the job) might prove similarly predictive of military attrition.

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<sup>1</sup>It should be noted that the attrition data analyzed here are for FY1977-79 accessions while the moral standards described earlier in this report are those in effect in 1983. While the definitions of particular waiver types have changed somewhat since 1977, the types of offenses classified as felonies on the one hand and as minor misdemeanors on the other and the percentage of accessions with these backgrounds has remained relatively constant.

One purpose of the Standards project is to investigate this hypothesis and to determine whether individuals who have had problems adjusting to the rules and social environment of schools or jobs can be adequately identified from their responses to items on the Educational and Biographical Information Survey (EBIS). Performance data collected on individuals who took the EBIS in the spring of 1983 will be used to formulate a delinquent behavior scale that can be used to predict adverse attrition. In a later report, HumRRO will analyze and describe the feasibility of incorporating this kind of behavioral data into the Services' moral character screening process.

## Discussion and Recommendations

Although we realize that policy decisions concerning enlistment standards are not made on the basis of performance data alone, we feel that the presentation of the data in this report would be incomplete without some discussion of its implications.

Overall, accessions on moral waivers are not much more likely than non-waiver accessions to be separated from service for failure to meet behavioral or performance standards. However, there are significant differences for some types of moral waivers, typically those for more minor offenses.

Education status continues to be the best predictor of satisfactory military performance. None of the adverse attrition rates for high school graduate accessions with various types of moral waivers (Tables 16 through 19) was as high as the rates for nongraduates and GED holders who did not require waivers. Hence, a high school graduate who requires a moral waiver is a better risk (from an attrition viewpoint) than a nongraduate who does not need a waiver. From this viewpoint, streamlined procedures for processing moral waiver requests for high school graduate applicants seem appropriate.

However, the Services still may want to perform a very careful review before admitting any applicant who has committed serious offenses. The image and morale of the Armed Forces have to be considered. Accordingly, there are really two separate issues here:

- the need for minimum moral character standards that ensure recruits that they will not be thrown into close contact with persons who have committed serious crimes; and
- the use of criminal record data to predict attrition.

Multiple minor offenses (such as traffic tickets or minor misdemeanors) are associated with somewhat heightened adverse attrition rates. While high school graduates with such backgrounds still display acceptable performance levels, nongraduates who have committed the same relatively minor offenses show adverse attrition rates above the already high levels for nongraduates without moral waivers.

The problems caused by intertwining the issues of acceptable moral character and attrition prediction become apparent when one tries to draw policy implications from these data. On the basis of attrition data, it would appear reasonable to minimize the acceptance of nongraduates with minor offense histories while facilitating acceptance of high school graduates with the same kinds of offense histories. However, it would seem ludicrous to label the first group "morally unfit" and the second group "morally acceptable". We recommend instead that minimum moral character standards be set, dealing only with serious offense histories or other unacceptably deviant behavior. These standards would be applied equally to applicants of all education backgrounds, AFQT categories, and both sexes. A second process, without the value-laden label of "moral standards" would involve a comprehensive evaluation of the individual's likelihood of serving successfully. This determination would consider education level, test scores, and frequency of law violations as well as other background information with proven predictive value. It is our hypothesis that adding other indications of poor adjustment--school discipline problems, quitting or being fired from jobs, running away--to criminal history records will produce a more predictive scale. Avoidance of the costs associated with extensive processing of waiver requests for minor offenses could be achieved at the same time.

## Steps Toward Validating Specific Criteria

There are two major stumbling blocks obstructing a real validation of moral enlistment standards:

- There are no data on how individuals rejected on moral character grounds would have performed if allowed to enlist.
- Detailed automated criminal history data are not maintained.

While the Services are unlikely to perform a validation "experiment," admitting groups of moral ineligible, the lack of data on such individuals could be ameliorated if more detailed automated records were maintained. In cases where linear relationships between offense frequency and military performance are uncovered, statistical estimations of the performance of individuals with more offenses (now ineligible) could be based on the performance of those accessed with fewer offenses.

Further, variations in Service standards could be exploited for validation purposes. For example, the Navy requires a waiver for individuals who have had four traffic offenses in one year and rules those with six offenses in one year ineligible; the Army and Air Force do not require a waiver unless there were six or more traffic offenses in one year; the Marine Corps requires a waiver for individuals with six traffic offenses in a lifetime. If number of traffic offenses (annual high and total) were coded for each accession, the number of offenses declared unacceptable could be based on factual data. For example, such records would allow checking whether sailors with four traffic offenses (on waivers) perform any differently from sailors with three (no waivers) or recruits in other Services with six offenses (now ineligible for the Navy).

Such analyses require a uniform, detailed system of coding offense history data and automated offense records for all accessions. (Such a system would not require uniform enlistment standards.) We would suggest the establishment of an inter-Service task force to study the criminal history data issue and to make recommendations concerning the content and format of automated criminal history records. This effort would include the development of a taxonomy of criminal offenses at a more descriptive level than the current moral waiver categories. The applicability of work done by the Department of Justice and criminal justice researchers should be explored. Once offense types have been developed, individual records could be designed to include:

- number of each type of offense committed by each accession,
- date of each offense,
- age at commission for each offense, and
- disposition of each case (fine, sentence, probation, arrest without conviction, etc.).

Such records could be incorporated into the kind of automated Joint-Service data entry system for military applicants recommended in a recent Rand Corporation report (Berryman, Bell, & Lisowski, 1983). Because of the sensitivity of these data, Privacy Act implications and political constraints would have to be considered.

We recognize the serious problem the Services have faced in obtaining complete, accurate criminal history information from state and local authorities. Some jurisdictions refuse to release such data, particularly for juveniles. Some records are "expunged" or "sealed". Other agencies are

willing to supply criminal history records but charge fees for furnishing DD Form 369 data. Even when full records are available, states differ widely in their classification and treatment of the same offense.

These problems fall outside the scope of the present project. While we recognize the limitations of the data available from applicant interviews and ENTNACs, we would argue that preserving the information that is available in a usable form is an important first step.

Validation efforts would be enhanced further if the system of separation codes were revamped. As noted earlier, a complex system of separation codes exists in theory, but most of the codes, particularly the more descriptive codes, are not used. This is another area where inter-Service cooperation in setting up a usable system seems appropriate. While reasons for involuntary separation are often mixed, it should be possible for researchers to identify which cases involved particular types of criminal offense, drugs, or alcohol use.

If detailed offense and separation data were maintained on all accessions, regardless of whether they needed moral waivers, validation studies would be facilitated. It would be possible to get attrition rates for specific numbers and types of offenses, rather than just the current broad categories. Attrition is such a broad problem, encompassing both voluntary and involuntary separations, that preservice offenses or substance abuse may have little correlation with attrition generally, while still being good predictors of specific types of separations for unacceptable behavior.

In general, our review of moral enlistment standards indicated that major problems revolve around the lack of adequate data on which to base

policies. The data that are maintained on a Joint-Service basis--notably, Defense Manpower Data Center records of moral waiver types granted and waiver approval levels--are quite general and often aggregated in such a way that some Services find them difficult to use. (The difference between Joint-Service moral waiver types tabulated by DMDC and the waiver classifications used by the Air Force and Marine Corps is a case in point.) Inter-Service actions to improve the collection, automation, and sharing of data would produce major benefits in allowing better analyses on which individual Service enlistment policies could be based.

### Conclusion

Our recommendations to date fall into two areas:

- the improvement of Joint-Service automated data bases, including the development of a descriptive taxonomy of criminal offenses, automation of much of the data now maintained only in hard copy (notably DD Form 1966), and the revamping of the inter-Service separation code system.
- the separation of the moral fitness determination from the estimation of probability of successful performance.

While minimum moral standards for enlistment, dealing with serious crimes or patterns of antisocial behavior, should apply equally to all applicants, the issue of moral character is really separate from that of military performance prediction. We would argue that traffic violations and other minor nontraffic offenses should not by themselves call an applicant's moral character into question. However, such behaviors do indicate something about the individual's attitude toward rules and regulations and have value in

predicting attrition. Such information can be utilized most effectively if combined with other types of biodata, such as education level, aptitude, school expulsions, and so on. The EBIS data collected as part of this project will be used to assess the feasibility of such a performance prediction model. By separating this analysis from the issue of moral standards per se, greater clarity and economy may be brought to both endeavors.

## References

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Table A1

Guide List of Typical Minor Traffic Offenses

Blocking or retarding traffic	Faulty equipment (defective exhaust, horn, lights, mirror, muffler, signal device, steering device, tailpipe, or windshield wipers)
Careless driving	
Crossing yellow line; driving left of center	Following too closely
Disobeying traffic lights, signs, or signals	Improper backing; backing into intersection or highway; backing on expressway; backing over crosswalk
Driving uninsured vehicle	Improper blowing of horn
Driving with expired plates or without plates	Improper parking (restricted area, fire hydrant, double parking)
Driving without license or with suspended or revoked license	Improper passing; passing on right, in no-passing zone; passing parked school bus; pedestrian in crosswalk (when not treated as reckless driving)
Driving without registration or with improper registration	
Driving wrong way on one-way street	Improper turn
Failure to comply with officer's directives	Invalid or unofficial inspection sticker; failure to display inspection sticker
Failure to have vehicle under control	Leaving key in ignition
Failure to keep to right or in line	License plates improperly displayed or not displayed
Failure to signal	Operating overloaded vehicle
Failure to stop for or yield to pedestrian	Racing, dragging, contest for speed (when not treated as reckless driving)
Failure to submit report following accident	Speeding (when not treated as reckless driving)
Failure to yield right-of-way	Spinning wheels; improper start; zigzagging or weaving in traffic (when not treated as reckless driving)

Note: It would be impractical to prepare an all-inclusive list of minor traffic offenses valid for all states. The above list is intended as a guide. Offenses of a similar nature and traffic offenses treated as minor by local law enforcement agencies should be treated as minor.

Source: Findings and Recommendations of the Study Group on Moral Standards. Washington, D.C.: OASD (Manpower), 1966.

Table A2

Guide List of Minor Nontraffic Offenses

Abusive language under circumstances to provoke breach of peace	Malicious mischief: painting water tower, throwing water-filled balloons, throwing rocks on highway, throwing missiles at athletic contests, or throwing objects at vehicle
Carrying concealed weapon (other than firearm); possession of brass knuckles	Nuisance, committing
Curfew violation	Poaching
Discharging firearm through carelessness	Possession of cigarettes by minor
Discharging firearm within municipal limits	Possession of indecent publications or pictures
Disobeying summons	Purchase, possession, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by minor
Disorderly conduct; creating disturbance; boisterous conduct	Removing property under lien
Disturbing peace	Removing property from public grounds
Drinking liquor on train (other than club car)	Robbing orchard
Drunk in public; drunk and disorderly	Shooting from highway
Dumping refuse near highway	Shooting on public road
Fighting; participating in affray	Simple assault
Fornication	Throwing glass or other material in road
Illegal betting or gambling; operating illegal handbook, raffle, lottery, punch board; matching cockfight	Trespass to property
Juvenile non-criminal misconduct: beyond parental control, incorrigible, runaway, truant, or wayward	Unlawful assembly
Killing domestic animal	Using or wearing unlawful emblem
Liquor: unlawful manufacture, sale, or possession, or consumption in public place	Vagrancy
Loitering	Vandalism: injuring or defacing public property or property of another; shooting out streetlights
	Violation of fireworks law
	Violation of fish and game laws

Note: It would be impractical to prepare an all-inclusive list of minor nontraffic offenses valid for all states. The above list is intended as a guide. Offenses of a similar nature should be treated as minor offenses. In doubtful cases, the following rule should be applied: if the maximum confinement under local law is four months or less, the offense should be treated as minor.

Source: Findings and Recommendations of the Study Group on Moral Standards. Washington, D.C.: OASD(Manpower), 1966.

Table A3

Guide List of (Nonminor) Misdemeanors

Adultery	Petty larceny (value \$100 or less); stealing hub caps; shoplifting
Assault consummated by battery	Reckless driving
Bigamy	Resisting arrest
Breaking and entering vehicle	Selling or leasing weapons to minor
Check, worthless, making or uttering, with intent to defraud or deceive (\$100 or less)	Slander
Conspiring to commit misdemeanor	Stolen property, knowingly receiving (value \$100 or less)
Contributing to delinquency of minor	Suffrage rights, interference with
Desecration of grave	Unlawful carrying of firearms; carrying concealed firearm
Driving while drugged or intoxicated	Unlawful entry
Failure to stop and render aid after accident	Unlawful use of long-distance telephone lines
Indecent exposure	Use of telephone to abuse, annoy, harass, threaten, or torment another
Indecent, insulting, or obscene language communicated to a female directly or by telephone	Using boat without owner's consent
Leaving dead animal	Wilfully discharging firearm so as to endanger life; shooting in public place
Leaving scene of accident (hit and run)	Wrongful appropriation of motor vehicle; joyriding; driving motor vehicle without owner's consent
Looting	
Negligent homicide	

<sup>a</sup>This group of motor vehicle offenses, and offenses of comparable nature and seriousness but variously described (auto theft, auto larceny, etc.), comprises the familiar case of taking or withholding a motor vehicle without authority and with intent temporarily to deprive the owner of his property. It does not encompass offenses where there is clear evidence that the offender intended permanently to deprive the owner of his motor vehicle. Offenses of the latter nature are included in grand larceny or embezzlement involving a value of over \$100, which are felonies.

Note: It would be impractical to prepare an all-inclusive list of nonminor misdemeanors valid for all states. The above list is intended as a guide. Offenses of a comparable seriousness should be treated as non-minor misdemeanors. In doubtful cases, the following rule should be applied: if the maximum confinement under local law exceeds four months but does not exceed one year, the offense should be treated as a non-minor misdemeanor.

Source: Findings and Recommendations of the Study Group on Moral Standards.  
Washington, D.C.: OASD (Manpower), 1966.

**Table A4**  
**Guide List of Felonies**

Aggravated assault; assault with dangerous weapon; assault intentionally inflicting great bodily harm; assault with intent to commit felony	Indecent assault
Arson	Kidnapping; abduction
Attempt to commit felony	Mail matter: abstracting, destroying, obstructing, opening, secreting, stealing, or taking
Breaking and entering with intent to commit felony	Mails: depositing obscene or indecent matter
Bribery	Maiming; disfiguring
Carnal knowledge of female under 16	Manslaughter
Cattle rustling	Misprison of felony
Check, worthless, making or uttering, with intent to defraud or deceive (over \$100)	Murder
Conspiring to commit felony	Narcotics or habit forming drugs: wrongful possession, use, or sale
Criminal libel	Pandering
Extortion	Perjury; subornation of perjury
Forgery; knowingly uttering or passing forged instrument	Public record: altering, concealing, destroying, mutilating, obliterating, or removing
Graft	Rape
Grand larceny; embezzlement (value over \$100)	Riot
Housebreaking	Robbery
Indecent acts or liberties with child under 16	Sedition; solicitation to commit sedition
	Sodomy
	Stolen property, knowingly receiving (value over \$100)

**Note:** It would be impractical to prepare an all-inclusive list of felonies valid for all states. The above list is intended as a guide. Offenses of comparable seriousness should be treated as felonies. In doubtful cases, the following rule should be applied: if the maximum confinement under local law exceeds one year, the offense should be treated as a felony.

**Source:** Findings and Recommendations of the Study Group on Moral Standards. Washington, D.C.: OASD(Manpower), 1966.