Next Generation Testing Stakeholder Focus Group Study

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December 15, 2022

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- **Study Purpose**
  - Key Objectives
  - Background & Considerations
- **Methodology**
  - Focus Group Data Collection
  - Data Analysis
- **Results from Military/DoD Stakeholder Groups**
  - Top 3 "Likes"
  - Top 3 "Dislikes"
- **DAC Guidance and Questions**

Study Purpose
Key Objectives, Background, and Considerations

Purpose of Study

- To collect information from a variety of stakeholders about their perspectives on the ASVAB and Enlistment Testing Program (ETP).

What tests should be administered as part of the ASVAB or on the ASVAB platform[†] in the future?

What other changes are needed to modernize the ASVAB/ETP?

[†]ASVAB platform = The test delivery modality for the ASVAB and various special purpose tests administered in the ETP.

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDER GROUPS IDENTIFIED

MAPWG Service Reps

Military/DoD Realm
- Accession Policy/MEPCOM/JAMRS
- Service policymakers
- Recruiting operations commands
- Military trainers
- Recruiters
- Classifiers
- National Guard Bureau
- Managers

Educational Realm
- MEPCOM Educational Services Specialists (ESSs)
- Department of Education
- State Boards of Education
- Career counseling organizations
- High school counselors
  High school and community college teachers

Examinee Realm
- Applicants/recruits
- HS Students
- Influencers

BACKGROUND & CONSIDERATIONS

ASVAB Content and Administration History

Test	Administration Type and Usage Dates					
	P&P 1968-75	P&P[a] 1976-80	P&P 1980-2002	P&P 2002 →	CAT 1990 →	PiCAT/Vtest 2015 →
Word Knowledge	x	x	x	x	x	x
Arithmetic Reasoning	x	x	x	x	x	x
Tool Knowledge	x					
Space Perception	x	x				
Mechanical Comprehension	x	x	x	x	x	x
Shop Information[b]	x	x	x	x	x	x
Automotive Information[b]	x	x	x	x	x	x
Electronics Information	x	x	x	x	x	x
Coding Speed[c]	x		x			
Math Knowledge		x	x	x	x	x
Numerical Operations[c]		x	x			
Attention to Detail		x				
General Science		x	x	x	x	x
General Information		x				
Paragraph Comprehension			x	x	x	x
Assembling Objects[d]				x	x	x

[a] An interest inventory was also included
[b] AI and SI are combined into one subtest in P&P-ASVAB
[c] Originally included in CAT-ASVAB, but later dropped
[d] Not administered in the Career Exploration Program

SPECIAL TESTS ON THE ASVAB PLATFORM IN THE ETP

Test	Service					
	Air Force	Army	Coast Guard	Marine Corps	Navy	Space Force
Cyber Test	×	×		×	×	×
Tailored Adaptive Personality Assessment System (TAPAS)	×	×		×		×
Coding Speed					×	
Mental Counters					×	

Next Generation Testing efforts are focusing on the *ASVAB*, as well as the *special tests* that are administered alongside the ASVAB as part of the *ETP.*

Due to the limited time for total testing in the *ETP*, it is necessary to consider *all tests* to be administered on the ASVAB platform in conjunction.

Methodology

Focus Group Recruitment, Activities, and Analysis

STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS

MAPWG Service Reps ✓

Military/DoD Realm
- Accession Policy/MEPCOM/JAMRS ✓
- Service policymakers ✓
- Recruiting operations commands ✓
- Military trainers ✓
- Recruiters ✓
- Classifiers ✓
- National Guard Bureau
- Managers ✓

Education Realm
- MEPCOM ESSs ✓
- Department of Education
- State Boards of Education
- Career counseling organizations ✓
- High school counselors ✓
- High school and community college teachers

Examinee Realm
- Applicants/recruits ✓
- HS Students
- Influencers

✓ Identifies stakeholder groups that participated in the focus group study.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

- Representative group of 10–12 participants
  - Military: Familiar with ASVAB and how it relates to their role
  - Education: Familiar with ASVAB and CEP; U.S. regional representation (NE, SE, SW, MW, W)
  - Examinee: 18+ years old, applicants/recruits (awaiting basic training), completed ASVAB/ETP, Service branch and U.S. regional representation
- Virtual 2-hour focus group per stakeholder group
  - Recorded and transcribed
  - Adherence to confidentiality and anonymity
  - Instructed to speak from their perspective only, not other stakeholders' perspectives
  - Focused on gathering information; no consensus required
  - Provided small honorarium for non-government participants

STAKEHOLDER RECRUITMENT

- DoD (AP/MEPCOM/JAMRS)
  - Collaborated with DTAC
- Services (USAF/Army/USCG/USMC/Navy/USSF)
  - Collaborated with MAPWG Service Reps
- Education realm (MEPCOM ESSs, HS Guidance Counselors, Career Counseling Organizations)
  - Collaborated with MEPCOM, CEP, recruiters
  - Conducted internet searches
- Examinee realm (military applicants/recruits)
  - Collaborated with MAPWG Service Reps

MILITARY/DoD FOCUS GROUP SAMPLE

Stakeholder Group	# of Focus Groups	# of Participants
MAPWG	1	38
AP/MEPCOM/JAMRS	1	9
Service Policymakers	6	28
Recruiting Operations Command*	5	29
Recruiters*	5	32
Classifiers*	5	23
Trainers**	6	48
Managers	6	44
Total	**35**	**251**

*   Focus group consisted of representatives from both USAF and USSF (Total Force).
** For USAF/USSF trainers, there were two groups: one for aviation courses (USAF trainers) and one for non-aviation courses (Total Force trainers).

EDUCATION FOCUS GROUP SAMPLE

Stakeholder Group	# of Focus Groups	# of Participants
MEPCOM ESSs	1	9
HS Guidance Counselors	2	16
Career Counseling Organizations	1	6
Total	**4**	**31**

Participant Representation

MEPCOM ESSs = NE (1), SE (2), MW (2), SW (2), W (2)

HS Guidance Counselors = NE (2), SE (3), MW (1), SW (4), W (6)

Career Counseling Organizations = Department of Labor (1); National Career Development Association (2); Texas Education Agency (1); Tulsa Technology Center (1); University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (1)

EXAMINEE FOCUS GROUP SAMPLE

Stakeholder Group	# of Focus Groups	# of Participants
Applicants and Recruits	3	20

Participant Representation

Services = USAF (2), Army (0), USCG (1), USMC (7), Navy (7), USSF (3)

Regions = SE (1), MW (2), SW (3), W (2), Unknown (12)

Focus Group Questions For Military/DoD Stakeholders

DO WE NEED TO CHANGE THE ASVAB AND/OR ETP?

- **What do you <u>like</u> about the current ASVAB/ETP?**
  - What do you really value about the ASVAB/ETP and don't want to change?
  - What issues, if any, do you think are improved by the current ASVAB/ETP?
  - What issues, if any, do you think the ASVAB/ETP effectively addresses?
- **What do you <u>dislike</u> about the current ASVAB/ETP?**
  - What's not working for you about the ASVAB/ETP and needs to change?
  - What issues, if any, do you think are caused/worsened by the current ASVAB/ETP?
  - What issues, if any, do you think the ASVAB/ETP fails to adequately address?

Do we need to change the ASVAB and/or ETP?

- If you could make changes <u>today</u> to the current ASVAB and/or ETP, what would they be?
  - What is expendable in the current ASVAB/ETP?
  - What is missing from the current ASVAB/ETP?
  - What other changes would you recommend?

- Identify primary reasons for changing the ASVAB and/or ETP in the future.

- What barriers are there to changing the ASVAB/ETP and how might they be addressed?

WHAT PURPOSES SHOULD THE ASVAB/ETP SERVE?

- Identify specific goals to be obtained with a revised ASVAB and/or ETP.

- What priority should be given to diversity and inclusion in considering revisions to the current ASVAB/ETP?

  – How does the testing program contribute to the DoD's diversity and inclusion goals?

  – How much emphasis should be placed on increasing diversity/reducing adverse impact (relative to prediction of performance)?

DATA ANALYSIS

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

- **Qualitative data analysis approach**
  - Combined notes from each focus group, referring to transcripts as needed
  - Created a coding scheme using whiteboards generated during each focus group
  - Used MAXQDA (qualitative data analysis tool) to code notes
  - Conducted consensus meetings to discuss coding differences
  - Conducted quality/consistency review of coded data

- **Inclusion rule for reporting results**
  - Required 3 or more stakeholder groups commenting on a category for inclusion

Military/DoD Stakeholder Groups

Brief Overview of Initial Findings

Top 3 "Likes" Mentioned

- **Predicts performance success** (n=16 or 46%)
  - *"Good predictor of performance in entry-level MOS training and first enlistment term"*
  - All military/DoD groups except Classifiers and Recruiting Ops

- **Improves person-job fit** (n=16 or 46%)
  - *"Does a good job of classifying recruits into career fields that were chosen by them or for them"*
  - All military/DoD groups except MAPWG

- **Measures wide range of knowledge/skills** (n=16 or 46%)
  - *"Valuable that it covers so much different information because everyone has an opportunity to show their skill set. If you aren't great at math, you can show what else you offer."*
  - All military/DoD groups

n = # of stakeholder groups commenting; % is out of 35 total stakeholder groups

TOP 3 "DISLIKES" MENTIONED

- **Does not measure potential/ability to learn** (n=16 or 46%)
  - *"ASVAB only focuses on education to date. It does not appear to focus on ability to learn or reflect future potential."*
  - All military/DoD groups except MAPWG, AP/MEPCOM/JAMRS, and Recruiters

- **Includes content that is outdated or unapplicable to Services** (n=15 or 43%)
  - *"What are we testing—are we still focusing on the 1980s to 1990s? Services have evolved a lot since then. If we do a next generation ASVAB, an evaluation of occupations and how they have evolved over the years would be very beneficial."*
  - All military/DoD groups except MAPWG and Recruiters

TOP 3 "DISLIKES" MENTIONED (CONTINUED)

- Does not predict all aspects of performance/success (n=13 or 37%)
    - *"It would be helpful if it identified failure to adapt to military life or service. We see a lot of failure to adapt during basic training and it results in attrition."*
    - All military/DoD groups except MAPWG, AP/MEPCOM/JAMRS, and Recruiters

NEXT STEPS

- Complete analysis for stakeholder groups in Military/DoD realm
  - Summarize results for remaining categories
- Conduct analyses for stakeholder groups in Education and Examinee realms
  - Conduct quality/consistency review of coded data
  - Synthesize and summarize results applying inclusion rule
- Document findings for all 3 realms of stakeholders
  - One section for each stakeholder realm
  - One section to summarize findings across stakeholder realms
  - Executive summary

DAC Guidance & Questions

DAC GUIDANCE & QUESTIONS

- How best can we report the results given the volume of data?

  – Current requirement for inclusion in results: minimum of 3 stakeholder groups must contribute a comment to a topic category

  – Other suggestions?

- How best can DTAC use the results from this study?

- Other thoughts or suggestions to consider?

- Questions?