Knights of the Armor Force

  **Beatrice Patton Room**

United States Army Tank Unit Rank Structure and Duties

Sometimes the rank structure and duties that your Armor Soldier has at work can be a little confusing to new wives and other ladies of Armor soldiers. In this section we have the three main categories that provide a foundation of the chain of command of an Armor (tank) unit: Enlisted Soldiers, Commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers.

**Enlisted Soldiers**



PRIVATE (PVT/PV2)

(Addressed as "Private")
Lowest rank: a trainee who’s starting Basic Combat Training (BCT). Primary role is to carry out orders issued to them to the best of his/her ability. Usually serves in a Tank Driver or Loader position (see driver and loader duties). (PVT does not have an insignia, PVT2 has one stripe)



PRIVATE FIRST CLASS (PFC)

(Addressed as "Private")
PV2s are promoted to this level after one year—or earlier by request of supervisor. Individual can begin BCT at this level with experience or prior military training. Carries out orders issued to them to the best of his/her ability. Usually serves in a Tank Driver or Loader position (see driver and loader duties) .



SPECIALIST (SPC)

(Addressed as "Specialist")
Can manage other enlisted Soldiers of lower rank. Has served a minimum of two years and attended a specific training class to earn this promotion. People enlisting with a four year college degree can enter BCT as a Specialist. Usually serves in a Tank Driver or Loader or Gunner position. (See driver and loader duties)

**Driver and Loader Duties**

**The driver** moves, positions, and stops the tank. While driving, he constantly searches for covered routes and for covered positions to which he can move if the tank is engaged. He maintains his tank's position in formation and watches for visual signals. If the tank is equipped with a steer-to indicator, the driver monitors the device and selects the best tactical route. During engagements, he assists the gunner and TC by scanning for targets and sensing fired rounds. The driver is responsible to the TC for the automotive maintenance and refueling of the tank. He assists other crewmen as needed.

**The loader** loads the main gun and the coaxial machine gun ready box; he aims and fires the loader's machine gun (if the vehicle is equipped with one). He stows and cares for ammunition and is responsible to the TC for the maintenance of communications equipment. Before engagement actions are initiated, the loader searches for targets and acts as air or anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) guard. He also assists the TC as needed in directing the driver so the tank maintains its position in formation. He assists other crewmembers as necessary.



CORPORAL (CPL)

(Addressed as "Corporal")
The base of the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) ranks. Like SGTs, they are responsible for individual training, personal appearance and cleanliness of Soldiers. Usually serve as a Tank Gunner (see Sergeant Duties).



SERGEANT (SGT)

(Addressed as "Sergeant") Typically serve as a Gunner or in some cases a Tank Commander.

The gunner searches for targets and aims and fires both the main gun and the coaxial machine gun. He is responsible to the Tank Commander for the maintenance of the tank's armament and fire control equipment. The gunner serves as the assistant Tank Commander and assumes the responsibilities of the Tank Commander as required. He also assists other crewmembers as needed. Several of his duties involve the tank's communications and internal control systems: logging onto and monitoring communications nets; maintaining digital links. Responsible for inputting graphic control measures on digital overlays; and monitoring digital displays during the planning and preparation phases of an operation.



STAFF SERGEANT (SSG) Serve as a Tank Commander

(Addressed as "Sergeant")

The Tank Commander is responsible to the tank platoon leader for the reporting of logistical needs and the tactical employment of his tank. He briefs his crew, directs the movement of the tank, submits all reports, and supervises initial first-aid treatment and evacuation of wounded crewmen. He is an expert in using the tank's weapon systems, requesting indirect fires, and executing land navigation.

The Tank Commander must know and understand the company mission and company commander's intent. He must be prepared to assume the duties and responsibilities of the platoon leader or platoon sergeant in accordance with the succession of command.



PLATOON SERGEANT (PSG) usually a Sergeant first Class (SFC)

(Addressed as "Sergeant")
The PSG is second in command of the platoon and is accountable to the platoon leader for the training, discipline, and welfare of the soldiers in the platoon. He coordinates the platoon's maintenance and logistics requirements and handles the personal needs of individual soldiers. The PSG is the most experienced TC in the platoon. His tactical and technical knowledge allow him to serve as mentor to crewmen, other NCOs, and the platoon leader. His actions on the battlefield must complement those of the platoon leader. He must fight his section in concert with the platoon leader's section. Generally has 15 to 18 years of Army experience and puts it to use by making quick, accurate decisions in the best interests of the Soldiers and the country.



MASTER SERGEANT (MSG)

(Addressed as "Sergeant")
Principal NCO at the battalion level, and often higher. Not charged with all the leadership responsibilities of a 1SG, but expected to dispatch leadership and other duties with the same professionalism.



FIRST SERGEANT (1SG)

(Addressed as "First Sergeant")
Principal NCO and life-blood of the company: the provider, disciplinarian and wise counselor. Instructs other SGTs, advises the Commander and helps train all enlisted Soldiers. Assists Officers at the company level.



SERGEANT MAJOR (SGM)

(Addressed as "Sergeant Major")
SGMs experience and abilities are equal to that of the CSM, but the sphere of influence regarding leadership is generally limited to those directly under his charge. Assists Officers at the battalion level.



COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR (CSM)

(Addressed as "Command Sergeant Major")
Functioning without supervision, a CSM’s counsel is expected to be calm, settled and accurate—with unflagging enthusiasm. Supplies recommendations to the commander and staff, and carries out policies and standards on the performance, training, appearance, the conduct of enlisted personnel and assists Officers at the brigade level.



SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE ARMY

There’s only one Sergeant Major of the Army. This rank is the epitome of what it means to be a Sergeant and oversees all Non-Commissioned Officers. Serves as the senior enlisted advisor and consultant to the Chief of Staff of the Army (a four-star General).

**Officers**



SECOND LIEUTENANT (2LT)

(Addressed as "Lieutenant")
The platoon leader is responsible to the commander for the discipline and training of his platoon, the maintenance of its equipment, and its success in combat. He must be proficient in the tactical employment of his section and of the platoon in concert with a company team or troop. He must have a solid understanding of troop-leading procedures and develop his ability to apply them quickly and efficiently on the battlefield.

The platoon leader must know the capabilities and limitations of the platoon's personnel and equipment; at the same time, he must be well versed in enemy organizations, doctrine, and equipment. He must serve as an effective tank commander (TC). Most important of all, the platoon leader must be flexible, using sound judgment to make correct decisions quickly and at the right times based on his commander's intent and the tactical situation.



FIRST LIEUTENANT (1LT)

(Addressed as "Lieutenant")
A seasoned lieutenant with 18 to 24 months service. As a senior Lieutenant, they are often selected to be the Executive Officer of a company-sized unit.



CAPTAIN (CPT)

(Addressed as "Captain")
Commands and controls company-sized tank unit, together with a principal NCO assistant. Instructs skills at service schools and The United States Army combat training centers and is often a Staff Officer at the battalion level.



MAJOR (MAJ)

(Addressed as "Major")
Serves as Battalion XO duties include personnel, logistical and operational missions.



LIEUTENANT COLONEL (LTC)

(Addressed as "Lieutenant Colonel” or "Colonel")
Typically commands battalion-sized units, with a CSM as principal NCO assistant. May also be selected for brigade and task force Executive Officer.



COLONEL (COL)

(Addressed as "Colonel")
Typically commands brigade-sized units (3,000 to 5,000 Soldiers), with a CSM as principal NCO assistant. Also found as the chief of divisional-level staff agencies.

**Warrant Officers**

Army Warrant Officers are usually not part of an Armor Company, but Armor ladies may encounter them at official functions. Warrant Officers are formally addressed as either Mr. or Ms.



WARRANT OFFICER 1 (WO1)

Appointed by warrant from the Secretary of the Army. WO1s are technically and tactically focused officers who perform the primary duties of technical leader, trainer, operator, manager, maintainer, sustainer, and advisor.



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 (CW2)

Chief Warrant Officers become commissioned officers as provided by the President of the United States.   CW2s are intermediate level technical and tactical experts who perform increased duties and responsibilities at the detachment through battalion levels.



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 (CW3)

Advanced-level experts who perform the primary duties that of a technical and tactical leader. They provide direction, guidance, resources, assistance, and supervision necessary for subordinates to perform their duties. CW3s primarily support operations levels from team or detachment through brigade.



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 (CW4)

Senior-level experts in their chosen field. They primarily support battalion, brigade, division, corps, and echelons above corps operations. CW4s typically have special mentorship responsibilities for other WOs and provide essential advice to commanders on WO issues.



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 5 (CW5)

Master-level technical and tactical experts that support brigade, division, corps, echelons above corps, and major command operations. They provide leader development, mentorship, advice, and counsel to WOs and branch officers. CW5s have special WO leadership and representation responsibilities within their respective commands.