

(UNCLASSIFIED)

INFORMATION PAPER

MAPO
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SUBJECT: West Point Graduate Retention

1. Purpose: To correct the record ref. West Point graduate retention.

2. Facts: For more than a decade, retention has been relatively stable. Six-year retention hovers around 53% (median is 51%) and ten-year retention remains at approx. 35%.

a. WP graduates have a 5-year Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO), but as most do not leave active duty exactly at 60 months, a better metric to judge trends is 6-year retention. However, Year Group '03 5-year retention is above average. YG '04 ADSO is not yet complete.

b. WP graduate (and ROTC) retention IS down compared to pre-Desert Storm levels. Between 1982-92 (i.e. YG '77-'87) retention decreased significantly. It has remained approx. at YG '87 levels ever since.

c. WP graduate retention compares favorably with the U.S. median of 4 years, according to the Department of Labor which also found that older workers tend to have much longer tenure.

d. WP graduate retention percentages by year group for the past 25 years:

YG \ %	5 Years	6 Years	10 Years	15 Years	20 Years
1977	90	76	57	45	36
1982	83	70	51	37	32
1987	60	48	37	30	27
1992	77	58	35	31	
1993	70	51	33	29	
1994	68	48	33		
1995	67	50	36		
1996	72	54	36		
1997	73	58	36		
1998	80	58	35		
1999	72	59			
2000	70	51			
2001	66	50			
2002	68	51			
2003	80				

e. Comments from the YG 2000-4 suggest primary reasons for leaving active duty are high operations tempo (OPTEMPO) and dissatisfaction with the Army experience.

f. Although officer retention is not declining, the Army understands the stresses on our Soldiers and Families, and is working to improve retention. Since 2006, precommissioning service incentives allow both WP and ROTC graduates to extend their ADSO by three years in return for graduate school or branch or post of choice. Approx 1/3 of WP graduates selected that option each of the past 3 years, thus retention should increase in 2011 and beyond.

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