

Infantry School Proposes Changes to EIB Test

Noelle Wiehe

Changes to the Expert Infantryman Badge (EIB) test will become the standard following the completion of four pilot EIB tests to be administered between August and October 2015, said CSM Wilbert Engram, Infantry School command sergeant major.

The notable changes include making it performance-based versus outcome-based, requiring at least an 80-percent score on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), and the completion of the Objective Bull task.

Objective Bull will follow the 12-mile road march, CSM Engram said. During this 20-minute task, EIB candidates must move into an objective rally point and negotiate a 100-meter lane where they will find a casualty midway. They must reach the casualty by individual movement techniques, drag the casualty behind cover, stabilize the casualty, put them on a Skedco, drag the casualty out to a casualty collection point, and call for medical evacuation.

The reason for this addition is to test the Soldiers' will to complete the mission, CSM Engram said. The task got its name from Technical Sgt. Walter Bull, the first Infantryman in history to receive the EIB on 29 March 1944.

Requiring a minimum of 80 percent in each event of the APFT is going to force units to really get after their physical training.

Commanding General of the Maneuver Center of Excellence MG Scott Miller demands an institutionalized culture of fitness excellence and the physical dominance to overmatch and defeat adversaries, CSM Engram said. There was discussion to make the requirement 90 percent, because the EIB is such a determining factor for promotions 80 percent was the compromise.

CSM Engram said the latest modifications were discussed with the Army Forces Command, Training and Doctrine Command, corps, and division command sergeants major, and all were in support of the new test.

The four pilot tests of the new EIB test will determine if modifications are necessary, he said. Soldiers in the 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division will conduct the first pilot EIB.

To earn the "true blue" designation through the new EIB test, Soldiers must now successfully complete 37 tasks, receive no less than an 80-percent on the Army Physical Fitness Test, find three out of four points in day and night land navigation in two hours or less, complete a 12-mile march in three hours or less carrying 35 pounds of dry weight, negotiate Objective Bull within 20 minutes and receive a "go" in completing every task within three lanes — weapons, medical, and patrol.

The whole EIB process will take four weeks now instead of three, with one week for set-up, two weeks for training, and one week for testing.

A Soldier who fails on a task will be allotted one retest per task. A second "no-go" would result in failure of the test, and the Soldier cannot continue. Previously, Soldiers were allowed two "no-goes."

All Infantrymen are eligible to test for the EIB, CSM Engram said.

“We want as many expert Infantrymen as we can get,” he said. “For us — the Infantrymen — the Expert Infantryman Badge tells everyone that we are proficient in our Infantry tasks; it validates our proficiency in our Infantry tasks, in our MOS.”

To help units out now, the Infantry School has prepared one book to set the standardization of training for the EIB.

After the pilots, CSM Engram said the decision regarding changes will be made.

“On (Dec. 1), we are going to have a solid test that everyone is going to appreciate,” he said.

(Noelle Wiehe writes for Fort Benning’s Bayonet and Saber newspaper.)