

New 'Expert Badge' Tab Allows Soldiers to Track Training Status

TRAINING MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE, COMBINED ARMS CENTER-TRAINING

U.S. Army expert skill badges recognize Soldiers who have proven by test that they meet or exceed the highest standards of knowledge and performance in targeted skills. The Army recognizes three expert skill badges: the Expert Infantryman Badge (EIB), the Expert Field Medical Badge (EFMB), and the Expert Soldier Badge (ESB). Soldiers must meet the exacting standards established by the badge proponents to be awarded the badge. Training to earn an expert badge can occur as part of a unit's training on their mission-essential tasks (METs) as well as through targeted training sessions. Soldiers and leaders need a resource that allows them to quickly review preparatory training results to determine if Soldiers are ready for their specific expert badge test. The Training Management Directorate (TMD) of the Combined Arms Center-Training (CAC-T) recently developed an "expert badge" tab that Soldiers can now access on their personal devices (computer, tablet, smartphone) through the Digital Job Book and the Small Unit Leader Tool.

Background

In October 2021, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) and Combined Arms Center (CAC) command sergeants major (CSMs) requested that CAC-T enhance the Digital Job Book and the Small Unit Leader Tool to allow Soldiers to view individual tasks associated with a proponent expert badge (EIB, EFMB, ESB). Additionally, the senior NCOs asked that CAC-T modify the Digital Training Management System to allow leaders to record task training evaluations associated with the expert badges in the system. The system changes allow Soldiers and leaders to track task evaluations during the train-up period prior to the actual badge testing event.

The informal evaluations are not used by the badge graders as a part of the test but provide a mechanism by which the Soldiers can see their preparedness for the test.

"This tab isn't designed to be used for the formal testing of these badges; rather it is to be used during the several months leading up to the event to help Soldiers train," said SGM Thomas Conn, CAC-T's senior enlisted advisor.

As an additional support for the Soldiers, the CSMs also requested an "expert badge" page on the Army Training Network (ATN) to provide centralized expert badge information to units and connect Soldiers and leaders to proponent resources and products.

Digital Job Book

The Digital Job Book links Soldiers to their training records in the Digital Training Management System (DTMS). It provides Soldiers the ability to select between six tabs to view their individual training data. The tabs include: Physical Training, Weapons Qualification, Training Schedules, Army Warrior Tasks, Individual Critical Task List, and Tasks. This "read only" function allows Soldiers to verify their training information for accuracy. This makes it easier

Weapon Lane	Medical Lane	Patrol Lane	Additional Events	ESB Specific	Task Name	Evaluation Date	Status
M4 Carbine/M16 Rifle			071-031-0000		Unload an M16/M4 Series Rifle		Not Evaluated
M4 Carbine/M16 Rifle			071-031-0001		Unload an M16/M4 Series Rifle	11/11/2021	Not Evaluated
M4 Carbine/M16 Rifle			071-031-0002		Load an M16/M4 Series Rifle		Not Evaluated
M4 Carbine/M16 Rifle			071-031-0003		Maintain an M16/M4 Series Rifle		Not Evaluated
M4 Carbine/M16 Rifle			071-031-0004		Correct Malfunctions of an M16/M4 Series Rifle		Not Evaluated

Figure 1 — The Digital Job Book Expert Badge Tab

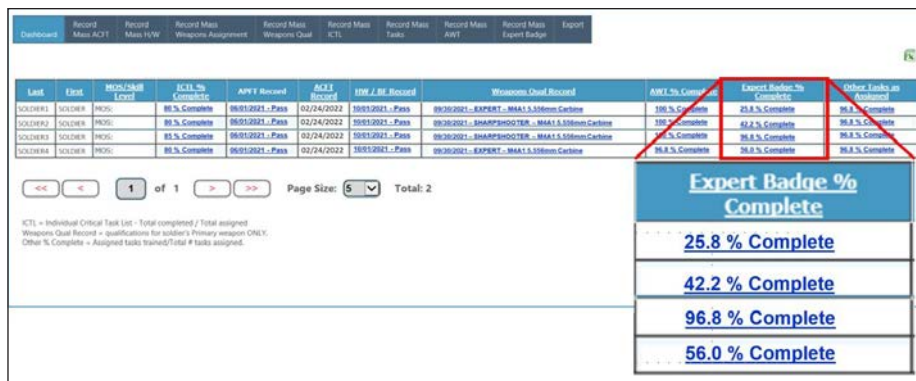


Figure 2 — Example Small Unit Leader Tool Dashboard

for Soldiers to account for training and eliminates the requirement for Soldiers to hand-carry training records when moving to a new unit.

The expert badge tab was added between the individual critical task list and tasks tabs. Soldiers who select the expert badge tab are presented with the expert badge information according to their primary military occupational specialty (MOS). Soldiers who are 11 and 18 series (except 18D) are presented the tables for the EIB. Soldiers who are 68 series (and 18D, 38BW4, and 153D) see the EFMB tables. All others see the ESB tables. Badge requirements are organized by lane and then grouped by station/event within the lane.

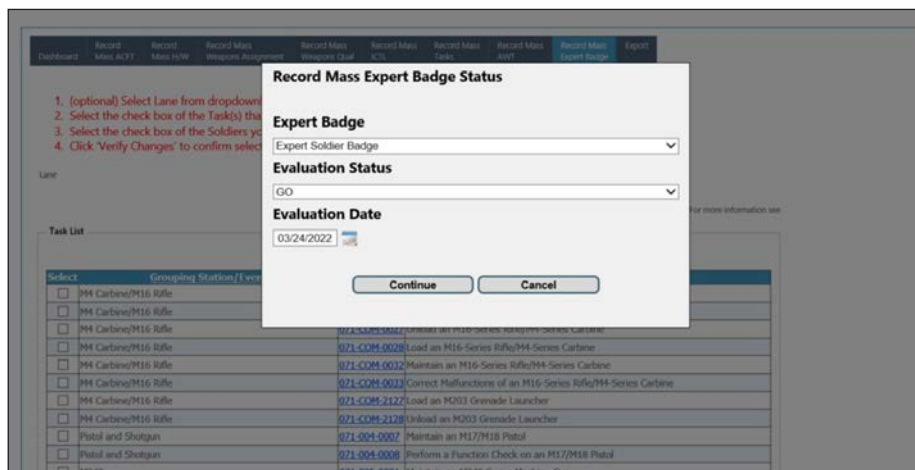
Small Unit Leader Tool

The Small Unit Leader Tool gives unit junior leaders access to their assigned Soldiers’ key training records, including the new expert badge tab information. The tool’s modified dashboard includes a new column displaying “expert badge percentage complete” for members of the unit. The percentage complete is based on the number of expert badge tasks that have been trained divided by the number of expert badge-related tasks.

“Leaders can track individual progress to determine who is ready to compete for the badge and where to narrow the focus of training to better prepare Soldiers,” SGM Conn said.

Each Soldier’s completion percentage is hyperlinked to a detailed view of that Soldier’s training status and allows input of expert badge evaluations for that Soldier based on the Soldier’s primary MOS. The view defaults to the first expert badge lane, but leaders can select other lanes using a drop-down menu selection. Selecting a lane populates a grid with the tasks associated with the lane. Leaders record task evaluations for an individual Soldier directly into the grid. Clicking the “verify changes” and “save changes” buttons completes the action and enters the results into the Soldier’s training record.

Figure 3 — Example Record Mass Expert Badge Entry



Task List

Select	Grouping Station/Event	Task Number	Task Name
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		031-COM-1003	Mark CBRN-Contaminated Areas
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		052-COM-1270	React to a Possible Improvised Explosive Device (IED) (UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY) (U//FOUO)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		071-COM-4408	Construct Individual Fighting Positions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		171-COM-0011	Employ Progressive Levels of Individual Force
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		191-COM-0009	Search a Detainee

Personnel Roster

Soldier Count in MOS (all) = 2 Total Unit Count = 2

Row	Last	First	MOS	Skill Level	Evaluation Date	Status
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1	SOLDIER1	SOLDIER	0301		03/23/2022	GO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2	SOLDIER2	SOLDIER	0301		03/23/2022	GO <input type="checkbox"/>

Save Changes Edit Changes

Figure 4 — Example Mass Expert Badge Entry Screen

TMD also added the ability for leaders to upload expert badge training records for their entire unit using the “Record Mass Expert Badge” tab. Leaders may have to manage training records for multiple expert badges based on their Soldiers’ primary MOS. TMD designed this tab to allow the leader to select the appropriate badge for the mass entry. The leader selects an evaluation status and a date of the evaluation. The leader then selects the lane for which evaluations are being entered using the drop-down menu, then selects the tasks and Soldiers who received the evaluations. All Soldiers selected will receive the evaluation entered for the tasks selected. Leaders can edit the status of individual Soldiers prior to saving the data to DTMS. The Record Mass Expert Badge function allows leaders to rapidly upload task evaluations for their unit while maintaining the ability to modify individual records if some Soldiers missed the training or did not achieve the standard.

The Small Unit Leader Tool is a “permission-based access” tool. If you are a small unit leader and do not have access to the tool, your DTMS manager has not set the permission for you. Unit commanders determine who can access the Small Unit Leader Tool, and the unit DTMS manager applies the permission for junior leaders to see the small unit information.

Future Enhancements

The Training Management Directorate continues to work on enhancements to the expert badge tab function in DTMS. Currently under development are unit (battalion and below) and larger unit (brigade and above) reports on expert badge training preparation status. TMD is working with operational units to determine the format for the reports to make them useful for the field. Additionally, the Army Training Network will have a page dedicated to expert badge training information. The page will provide a single point of entry allowing Soldiers and leaders to find proponent expert badge regulatory guidance, training support packages, and suggested training/testing time-lines. The page will not reproduce or replace the proponent pages for each badge. TMD is working to determine what information to include on the ATN expert badge page and is considering resources common to all badges as an option.

Conclusion

The Digital Job Book and the Small Unit Leader Tool are valuable tools to maintain visibility on the training status of Soldiers.

The addition of the expert badge tab enhances the ability of Soldiers and leaders to track their own preparedness prior to testing by maintaining a record of preparation training results. Rigorous training allows Soldiers and leaders to meet the high standards of knowledge and performance in targeted skills required by the three expert skill badges. Accurate training records maintained in DTMS helps them know when they are ready to test.

To learn more about the Digital Job Book and the Small Unit Leader Tool, including tutorials on adding them to your personal devices, visit the ATN homepage at <https://atn.army.mil>.

The Training Management Directorate is the Army's proponent for training management. TMD manages, develops, and sustains training management doctrine, processes, products, and systems to enable training and training management across the Army's institutional, operational, and self-development training domains. Fundamental products of TMD include the ATN, DTMS, and the Combined Arms Training Strategies.



A Soldier assigned to 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, conducts the M2 machine gun function check task on 7 April 2022 during an expert badge event hosted by the Spartan Brigade at Fort Stewart, GA. (Photo by SPC Michael Udejiofor)