

**09 May 2014**

**AR 600-9, The Army Body Composition Program**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Are units required to conduct unit weigh-ins at least seven days apart from the APFT?**

No. Previous policy required that the two events be scheduled together. This is no longer the case. Commanders are now advised that scheduling them too close together may affect Soldier performance. Ultimately, it is up to commanders to schedule these events in a manner that best suits the needs of the unit.

**Q: Why is the current tape test method the Army standard for measuring body fat?**

A: The Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 1308.3, DOD Physical Fitness and Body Fat Programs Procedures (5 Nov 02), mandates use of circumference method ("Tape Test"). The Tape Test is relatively accurate, inexpensive and field expedient.

**Q: Are deployed Soldiers exempt from meeting body fat standards per AR 600-9?**

A: No. There is no exemption from body standards while deployed, or upon return from deployment, except in the case of pregnancy and medical conditions as outlined in AR 600-9.

**Q: Is the Gulick tape authorized to use to measure body fat?**

A: No. Acceptable tape measures are made of non-stretchable (fiberglass) material. The Gulick tape has a weighted end that may get stretched over time, thereby making measurements inaccurate.

**Q: Is there a G-1 approved auto calculator or application the field can use to calculate body fat?**

No. Currently the DA Form 5500/5501 does not support the logic that is needed to calculate body fat using the same rounding rules (to the hundredths digit) as the manual calculation. Due to this discrepancy and to ensure the method for calculating body fat is standardized, auto calculators will not be used. This is particularly important as the body fat data could be used to support a potential legal/separation action. NOTE: Army G-1 continues to work to find an automated solution.

**Q: How do you round when using the body fat calculation formula to determine body fat percentage?** See instructions highlighted in **YELLOW** below.

**SAMPLE (WOMEN)**

The equation for women is:
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$$\% \text{ body fat} = [163.205 \times \text{Log}_{10} (\text{waist} + \text{hip} - \text{neck})] - [97.684 \times \text{Log}_{10} (\text{height})] - 78.387$$

Measurements: Neck=15 inches; Waist=42 inches; Hip=44 inches; Height=64 inches

A. Solve:  $[163.205 \times \text{Log}_{10} (71)]$ . Take the  $\text{Log}_{10} (71) = 1.85$  (when using a calculator, be careful not to use In key (natural log). Instead, enter 71 and press the LOG key. Round this number to two decimal places.

B. Solve:  $[97.684 \times \text{Log}_{10} (64)]$ . Take the  $\text{Log}_{10} (64) = 1.81$  (when using a calculator, be careful not to use the In key (natural log). Instead, enter 64 and press the LOG key. Round this number to two decimal places.

C. Solve the equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \% \text{ body fat} &= (163.205 \times 1.85) - (97.684 \times 1.81) - 78.387 \\ &= 301.93 - 176.81 - 78.387 \\ &= 47\% \text{ (actual number is 46.73\%; round to the nearest whole \%)} \end{aligned}$$

#### SAMPLE (MEN)

The equation for men is:

$$\% \text{ body fat} = [86.010 \times \text{Log}_{10} (\text{waist} - \text{neck})] - [70.041 \times \text{Log}_{10} (\text{height})] + 36.76$$

Measurements: Neck=16 inches; Waist=49 inches; Height=69 inches

A. Solve:  $[86.010 \times \text{Log}_{10} (33)]$ . Take the  $\text{Log}_{10} (33) = 1.52$  (when using a calculator, be careful not to use In key (natural log). Instead, enter 33 and press the LOG key. Round this number to two decimal places.

B. Solve:  $[70.041 \times \text{Log}_{10} (69)]$ . Take the  $\text{Log}_{10} (69) = 1.84$  (when using a calculator, be careful not to use the In key (natural log). Instead, enter 69 and press the LOG key. Round this number to two decimal places.

C. Solve the equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \% \text{ body fat} &= (86.010 \times 1.52) - (70.041 \times 1.84) + 36.76 \\ &= 130.74 - 128.88 + 36.76 \\ &= 39\% \text{ (actual number is 38.62\%; round to the nearest whole \%)} \end{aligned}$$

#### Q: If a Soldier has a miscarriage of her baby, what is the guidance in regards to her APFT and weigh-in?

A: The DOD Directive 1308.1 (30 Jun 04), Physical Fitness and Body Fat Program, states pregnant service members shall not be held to the standards of fitness and body fat testing until at least six months after pregnancy termination. In accordance with AR 40-501, convalescent leave after a termination of pregnancy (for example, miscarriage) will be determined on an individual basis by the attending physician

**Q: Are “love handles” measured when you obtain abdominal circumference?**

A: No. For males AR 600-9 describes the abdominal circumference site as being at the level of the “belly button”, and for females at the point of minimal abdominal circumference, usually located about halfway between the navel and lower end of sternum (breastbone). Consistency in measurement is an important aspect of doing the tape test correctly. Deviation from the prescribed techniques may lead to incorrect body fat measurements and an incorrect assessment on whether a Soldier is making progress in losing body fat.

Body circumference measurements must always be done exactly as described in AR 600-9 to ensure consistency and fairness each time a Soldier is measured.

The locations to measure the various body circumferences are based on standard body sites determined by scientists who studied how best to measure body fat in males and females. That said, moving the tape up or down when measuring the waist to ensure that the tape includes or avoids a roll of body fat is not a good practice and deviates from the scientific recommendations. It is neither appropriate nor fair to change the location of the tape based on a person’s body shape.

**Q: Can the commander or attending physician approve exemptions to AR 600-9?**

A: No. The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, is the proponent for the Army Body Composition Program (ABCP). Commanders must provide counseling to Soldiers to establish a personal weight /body fat goal and implement the ABCP. Healthcare personnel assist commanders and supervisors by providing weight reduction/nutritional counseling, identification of pathological conditions that require medical treatment, and evaluating Soldiers with medical limitations. The DA Form 3349, Physical Profile Form, will not be used to excuse Soldiers from the provisions of AR 600-9. AR 600-9 contains a standard memorandum for completion by a physician if there is an underlying or associated disease process that is the cause of the overweight condition.

**Q: What is the required documentation to request a waiver to AR 600-9?**

A: All waiver requests must include: a memo from the Soldier requesting exemption, endorsements from their company commander, battalion commander, and brigade commander, pertinent medical documentation from the Soldier’s healthcare provider, current and historical documentation of the Soldier’s body composition assessments. The local senior legal advisor must provide a formal review of the request. Once the request is completed, the Soldier will be notified through a letter from the DCS, G-1 as to the approval or denial of their request. This process can take 60-90 days. Mail completed packet to:

Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1

**Office: DAPE-AR**

**C/O: Chief, Health Promotions Policy**

**ATTN: The Army Body Composition Program**

Suite 1000, Taylor Building/NC-2, Floor 6

2530 Crystal Dr., Crystal City, VA 22202