



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND
2050 WORTH ROAD
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS 78234-6000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

MCHO-CL-Q

10 July 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS

SUBJECT: The Surgeon General's Excalibur Award Program

1. Reference memorandum, DASG-HSZ, 16 June 2003, subject as above (enclosed).
2. The above referenced memorandum updates policy guidance on The Surgeon General's (TSG's) Excalibur Award. We clarified the categories to make it easier for teams and organizations to determine which category is appropriate for them.
3. We encourage you to recognize teams/organizations that are working for continuous improvement and to share those improvements and innovations within your commands. We also encourage you to nominate those teams and organizations that make significant improvements for TSG's Excalibur Award. Nominations for this performance excellence award are due 30 September of each year. To assist you, our staff has developed answers to some frequently asked questions (FAQs). Nomination forms and other information on the Excalibur Award are available at <http://www.qmo.amedd.army.mil>.
4. Our point of contact is Ms. Fay Hendrix, Headquarters, U.S. Army Medical Command, Directorate of Health Policy and Services, Quality Management Division, DSN 471-6700 or Commercial (210) 221-6700.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

KENNETH L. FARMER, JR.
Major General
Chief of Staff

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL
5109 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041-3258

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DASG-HSZ

OTSG/MEDCOM Policy Memo 03-004
16 June 2003

Expires 16 June 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: The Surgeon General's Excalibur Award Program

1. Purpose. The purpose of this memorandum is to update the policy guidance on The Surgeon General's (TSG's) Excalibur Award Program.
2. Scope. This award program is available to all Army Medical Department (AMEDD) units/activities/organizations, Active and Reserve Component, Tables of Distribution and Allowances (TDA), and Tables of Organization and Equipment (TOE). The people within the AMEDD are innovative and are continuously striving to work smarter and to make improvements. This award is an opportunity to recognize the best teams and organizations in the AMEDD.
3. Policy.
 - a. The purpose of TSG's Excalibur Award Program is threefold.
 - (1) As a mechanism to recognize team and organizational performance excellence within the AMEDD.
 - (2) As an incentive to stimulate, recognize, and reward improvements.
 - (3) As a method of sharing information on good ideas and best practices across units and organizations within the AMEDD.
 - b. The long-range benefits of the awards program to the Army will be improved efficiency and effectiveness of AMEDD organizations.
 - c. The Surgeon General's Excalibur Award Program consists of the five award categories shown below. The teams/organizations winning the awards will receive a trophy to keep and display. In the case of team awards, each team member will receive a special certificate recognizing him/her as a member of a team that won TSG's Excalibur Award.

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Active Component – TDA Medical Treatment Facility (MTF)
TDA Non-MTF
TOE

Reserve Component – TDA
TOE

d. A link to the template for submitting the award is on the Quality Management Division web page (<http://www.qmo.amedd.army.mil/>). The template is a Microsoft Word document that is to be downloaded. Once downloaded, the template is a click and enter format. A copy of the template is enclosed.

e. The award nominations must be endorsed/forwarded by the first general officer in the unit/organization's chain of command or by the commander of the U.S. Army Medical Command's major subordinate command. The nominations are due to the point of contact (POC) identified on the web page by 30 September of each year. Nominations may be e-mailed to the POC, but the signed endorsements must be faxed or mailed. An alternative to faxing or mailing the signed endorsements is to have the appropriate general officer or commander email his concurrence. The web page provides information on the POC including office and fax telephone numbers. Intermediate commands are encouraged to implement similar local award programs as a means of determining which nominations will go forward for competition.

f. A multidisciplinary committee will evaluate the submissions for the awards against the following criteria:

(1) System-wide Replication Potential. The project can be replicated by other AMEDD organizations.

(2) Sustainability. The project's beneficial processes and outcomes can be maintained over time.

(3) Increased Productivity. Productivity was enhanced without increasing cost.

(4) Multidisciplinary. The project extended across broad-based interdisciplinary domains.

(5) Process-Oriented. The project contained a change in methodology (process) producing improved quality and/or outcomes.

(6) Increased Efficiency. Performance was enhanced without increasing cost.

DASG-HSZ

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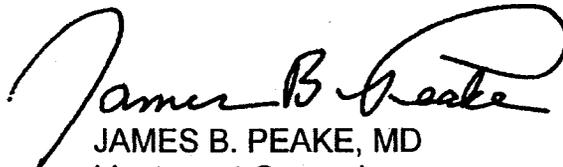
(7) Improved Quality or Standard. Process and/or outcomes advanced to a higher level either setting or exceeding a best practice benchmark.

(8) Improved Resource Management. The project controlled or reduced costs, reduced demand, and/or caused improvements resulting in quantifiable dollar savings.

g. The Surgeon General will announce the winners around mid-November each year in an appropriate forum. Schedule permitting, TSG will personally present the awards to the winning teams/organizations.

h. The Quality Management Division web site mentioned above also contains answers to some frequently asked questions.

4. Our POC is LTC(P) Leo L. Bennett, Chief, Quality Management Division; Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Health Policy and Services; Headquarters, U.S. Army Medical Command, DSN 471-6195 or Commercial (210) 221-6195.



JAMES B. PEAKE, MD
Lieutenant General
The Surgeon General

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DISTRIBUTION:

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THE SURGEON GENERAL'S EXCALIBUR AWARD NOMINATION TEMPLATE

TITLE OF PROJECT. [Click here and type Title of Project](#)

AWARD CATEGORY. Choose one and delete the other (If the project was a joint effort, the category should be that of the unit submitting the award nomination.)

Active Component

Reserve Component (ARNG/USAR)

If Active Component, choose one and delete the others

MTF

Non-MTF

TO&E

If Reserve Component, choose one and delete the other

TDA

TO&E

SUBMITTING OFFICIAL AND ORGANIZATION. Provide the submitting official's name and organization. Include address, telephone number and e-mail address.

[Click here and type information on Submitting Official](#)

SPECIFIC NAME OF GROUP CONDUCTING THE PROJECT. Provide the name of the group (organization/team/group/division) that conducted the project.

[Click here and type Name of Group Conducting Project](#)

PROJECT TIME PERIOD. Provide Project Time Period. The project must have been completed after October 1999 and must include 6 months of analyzed data.

[Click here and type Project Time Period](#)

PROJECT SUMMARY. Limit to 2 pages with double-spaced lines and 1-inch margins in a 12-point font size. **(Any portion over 2 pages will not be considered when evaluating your package.)** Specifically address project goals, methods, and future. Include evidence demonstrating that the project fulfills some or all of the improvement award's criteria for best practice—is replicable, sustainable, multidisciplinary, process oriented and/or improves productivity, efficiency, resource management, and quality.

[Click here and type Project Summary](#)

THE SURGEON GENERAL'S EXCALIBUR AWARD

SAVINGS ANALYSIS. List the results of analyses demonstrating the project's cost avoidance or real savings realized. Include savings details for money, time, space, or personnel as applicable. Limit one page, single-spaced, minimum font size of 12 point.

[Click here and type Savings Analysis](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. Summarize in 50 words or less the project and its impact. This summary must be suitable for general readership.

[Click here and type Final Executive Summary](#)

GROUP PARTICIPANTS. Provide the names of team members (20 maximum) to be recognized for the project's success. (Ensure names are reflected the way the name would be shown on a winner's certificate, e.g., include middle initial and given name versus nickname.)

[Click here and type names of team members](#)

POC. Provide a POC name, address, telephone number and e-mail address.

[Click here and type POC information](#)

You can save the application to your hard drive at any time by clicking "FILE" and then "SAVE AS" from the Word menu and saving the file to your hard drive in the directory you specify.

THE SURGEON GENERAL'S EXCALIBUR AWARD PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who can apply for The Surgeon General's (TSG's) Excalibur Award?

Any Army Medical Department (AMEDD) unit/activity/organization can apply. That includes both Active component and Reserve component, TDA and TOE units/activities/organizations.

2. Is there any AMEDD organization that cannot apply for the Excalibur Award?

An AMEDD organization that is also a TRICARE Lead Agent cannot apply for the award as a TRICARE Lead Agent. That AMEDD organization can apply for the award as a MEDCOM Regional Medical Command (RMC) but must ensure that the project it is describing is an RMC initiative not a Lead Agent initiative. We encourage the TRICARE Lead Agents to take pride in their units' successes.

3. If I work at a small health clinic and want to submit a nomination for the Excalibur Award, would I have to compete in the same category as a medical center such as Walter Reed?

Yes, your medical treatment facility (MTF) would compete in the same category as a large MTF. While you compete in the same category, neither your application nor your savings would be compared to that of the larger MTF. Each nomination regardless of unit, activity, organization, or team size is evaluated solely against the criteria.

4. Can we nominate a project for the Excalibur Award if there was only one individual involved in the project?

No, the award was established to recognize teams or organizations. Both the military and civilian personnel systems provide ways to award or recognize individuals.

5. Can an organization submit the same project two years in a row?

Yes, there is nothing that prohibits an organization/team from resubmitting the same project two years in a row. However, the organization/team would need to ensure the data is updated and the project is not too old. The project completion date must be within the 3 previous fiscal years (FYs) (counting the current FY). For example: for nominations in 2003, projects must have been completed between FY 2000 and 2003 (Oct 99 to present).

6. How do you ensure all nominations are given fair evaluations?

There are a couple of different things we do to ensure objectivity:

First, we remove the organization's name and identifying information from the package. For example, besides the name of the organization, if it says it works closely with the local San Antonio community, we delete San Antonio so the package reads it works closely with the local community.

Secondly, individuals, who volunteer to be reviewers and are from an organization that submitted a nomination for the award, are assigned packages that are in different categories. For example, someone from an MTF volunteers to be a reviewer and his/her organization submitted a nomination. That individual would be assigned to review packages that are in the Active Component, Non-MTF; Active Component, TOE; or Reserve Component TDA or TOE Categories.

7. How important is it to stay within the page limitations (two double-spaced pages for the summary and one single-spaced page for the savings analysis)?

**THE SURGEON GENERAL'S EXCALIBUR AWARD PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Continued)**

It is very important to be succinct and stay within these limitations. Any amount over the limits will not be considered. The portion that exceeds the page limitations will not be sent to the reviewers. This requires the submitting organization to address the criteria rather than attempt to showcase the organization.

8. Can we include pictures with our nomination? We have some really nice photos.

Photos can be included only if you want to use them within your 2 page total for the project summary. The nomination package is scored on how well it meets the criteria. A chart or graph may respond to the criteria better than a photo.

9. Can we include charts/graphs in the project summary or savings analysis?

Absolutely. Many times a chart or graph can provide a clearer representation of the results than just words. However, the chart or graph must be included within the page limitations of whichever section it is used in (project summary or savings analysis).

10. Why must a general officer in our chain of command sign the forwarding correspondence?

It is important that the leaders throughout your chain of command be aware of the improvements and accomplishments of the units within their organizations. By having to approve and sign the nominations, the general officers/senior leaders will have an opportunity to see the accomplishments of one organization and share the improvements with other organizations within the command.

11. We worked on a joint project and want to nominate that project but don't know what category to put it in.

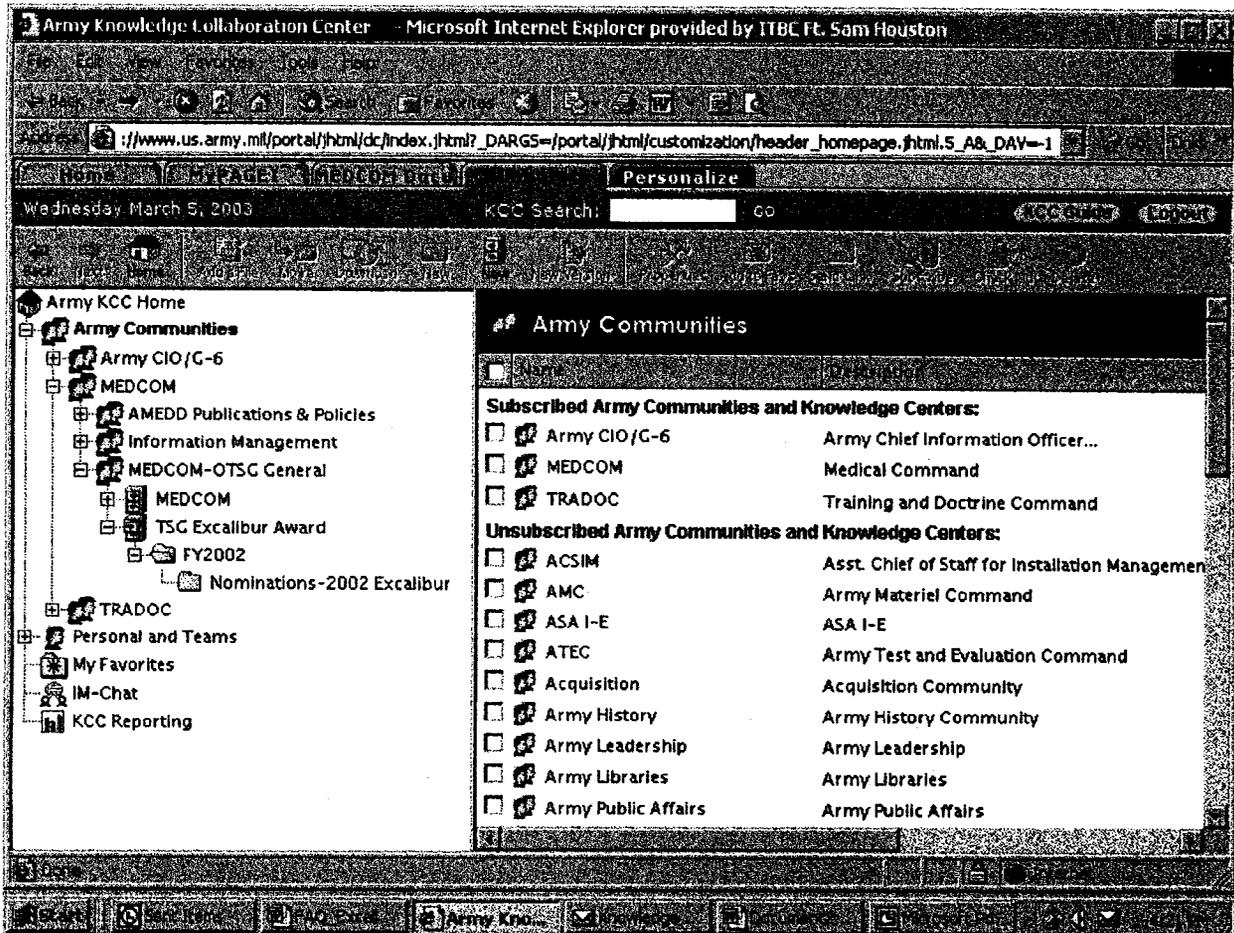
The category is determined not by the project but by the unit, activity or organization that submits the nomination.

12. Are there any samples of previous Excalibur Nominations that I can look at?

All the nominations from 2002 are posted on the Army Knowledge Online (AKO)(https://www.us.army.mil/portal/portal_home.jhtml). From the AKO home page, click on the Collaborate tab. On the left of the next page, you will see Army Knowledge Collaboration Center (KCC) Home with Army Communities under it. If MEDCOM is shown under Army Communities, click on it. If MEDCOM-OTSG is shown, click on it and you should see the choice for TSG Excalibur Award. If you don't see MEDCOM or MEDCOM-OTSG under Army Communities, you will have to subscribe to these folders (first MEDCOM, then MEDCOM-OTSG). You subscribe to the Army Communities by clicking the box next to its name in the center portion of the web page and then clicking on the subscribe icon in the gray panel. Once you have subscribed to MEDCOM and MEDCOM-OTSG General, you should see a folder for TSG Excalibur Award. Click on the folder titled FY2002 to see the actual folder where the nominations reside.

In the following graphic, the center (right column) depicts the page for checking the boxes and subscribing to the appropriate communities. The left side reflects the hierarchy of the folders within the Army KCC and the location of the nominations for the TSG Excalibur Award.

THE SURGEON GENERAL'S EXCALIBUR AWARD PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Continued)



13. What web sites have information about the Excalibur Award?

The AKO (https://www.us.army.mil/portal/portal_home.ihtml), the Quality Management web site (<http://www.gmo.amedd.army.mil/Home.htm>), and the AMEDD Knowledge Exchange (<https://ke.army.mil/>)

14. Can contractors be included in the nomination package as one of the team members?

Yes, if contractors are contributors to the team's accomplishments, they can be included in the nomination package as a team member.

15. Can anyone be a reviewer?

Almost anyone can be a reviewer. Our only prerequisite is that the individuals have experience/expertise. Therefore, we ask that reviewers be at least a senior major (or above) or an E8 (or above) if military and a GS-12 (or above) if civilian.

16. Can I be a reviewer if I work for an MTOE unit or for a Reserve Component Unit?

THE SURGEON GENERAL'S EXCALIBUR AWARD PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Continued)

Yes, you can, but you must meet the rank/grade criteria of being at least a senior major (or above) or an E8 (or above).

17. Can a contractor be a reviewer?

Yes, as long as the individual meets the rank/grade criteria of being equivalent to a senior major (or above), an E8 (or above), or a GS-12 (or above).

18. How do I become a reviewer?

A request for reviewers is sent to the U.S. Army Medical Command's major subordinate commands for their dissemination to their units. Volunteers can respond to that email request. Otherwise, anyone interested in being a volunteer can send the POC an email message expressing interest in being a reviewer. It is best to notify the POC before the first of September of your interest to be a reviewer.

19. Can a reviewer get assistance by sending the nomination packages to others in the office for them to review?

No! For continuity purposes, it is extremely important that each reviewer read and score all the packages that he/she receives. If someone volunteered to be a reviewer and cannot dedicate the necessary time to review all the packages, that individual can find someone within his/her organization who can review all the packages and/or notify the POC that he/she can no longer be a reviewer. We anticipate that individuals will need approximately half a day to review all the packages he/she has. That is total time not the time per nomination package.