Speech Recognition Test Procedures (Maryland CNC) (1) The starting presentation level must be 40 dB re SRT. If necessary, the starting level must be adjusted upward to obtain a level at least 5 dB above the threshold at 2000 Hz, if not above the patient's tolerance level.

(2) The normal speech recognition performance is 94 percent or better for a full (50 word) list. If speech recognition is worse than 94 percent after presentation of a full list, then a modified performance-intensity function must be obtained to determine best performance. The modified performance intensity function must be performed as follows: (a) The starting level is 40 dB re: SRT (speech reception threshold).

(b) The starting level will be adjusted upward to obtain a level at least 5 dB above the threshold at 2000 Hz, if not above the patient's tolerance level.

(c) Present 25 words at 6 dB above and 6 dB below the starting level.

(d) If recognition performance improves less than 6 percent, then maximum word recognition performance has been obtained. ***NOTE: Example -****Starting level=50 dB HL. Initial performance=80%. Decrease level to 44 dB HL. Performance decreases to 76%. Increase level to 56 dB HL. Performance increases to 84%. Test level for full list=50 dB HL.*

(e) If performance improves by 6 percent or more at the first 6-dB increment, then word recognition is measured using another 25 words at an additional 6-dB increment. ***NOTE: Example -S****tarting level=50 dB HL. Initial performance=80%. Increase level to 56 dB HL.*

Performance improves to 88% (+8%). Increase level to 62 dB HL. Performance decreases to 84% (-4%). Test level for full list=56 dB HL.

(f) A full list (50 words) is then presented at the level of maximum performance. The word recognition performance at this level is reported as the speech recognition score. Only the best performance for a full list (50 words) will be reported.

i. The examining audiologist must state that the C-file was or was not reviewed.
j. The audiologist completes the required examination worksheets and must respond to all questions. Examinations must be documented in accordance with VBA, VHA, or facility policy.
k. If VBA requests an opinion, audiologists must respond to all issues and must provide a thorough, scientifically-based, and well-reasoned clinical rationale for all opinions.
l. Pure tone test stimuli must not exceed 105 dB HL or the tolerance level. Speech stimuli must not exceed 100 dB HL, or the tolerance level.
m. Pausing. Examiners need to pause, when necessary during speech recognition tests, in order to give the Veteran sufficient time to respond. This procedure will ensure that the test results are based on actual hearing loss rather than on the effects of other problems that might slow a Veteran's response. There are a variety of problems that might require pausing, for example, the presence of cognitive impairment. Audiologists need to determine when to use pausing and the length of the pauses.