



# CPC CyberFlash

HONOR

RESPECT

COMMITMENT

## *From the Director's Desk*

**In this Cyberflash, I will attempt to demystify the promotion process. I'll do this by using a list of questions that the staff has been asked over the years.**

### **How are the number of officers to be promoted and the promotion zone sizes determined?**

In the fall of each year, the Director approves an Officer Corps Management Plan (OCMP) prepared by the Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC). This document establishes the number of officers authorized in each grade, the opportunity of selection for each promotion board, and whether to hold certain boards such as the Annual Review, continuation and promotion boards. The approved OCMP contains the authorized promotion zone sizes and the number of officers to select. These numbers are approximately equal to the number of vacancies estimated for the next 12 months, less the number of officers on the promotion list for that grade. Decisions about zone sizes and opportunities of promotion for each grade are based on a few factors: the needs of the Service; the number of billets and the estimated number of vacancies.

### **Why is the stated opportunity of selection (OOS) always higher than the actual OOS announced with the board results?**

For a given board, the stated OOS is simply the total number of officers to be selected divided by the number of officers in zone. The actual OOS is the number of officers selected in zone divided by the number of officers in and above zone. The actual OOS is usually lower because some officers may be selected from above and below the zone. The difference between stated and actual OOS is best illustrated in an example.

For the promotion board the OCMP announced the following:

# to be selected = 5  
# in zone = 10  
therefore, the stated OOS was  $5/10 = 50\%$

In making their decisions, the board actually selected:

1 (above zone)  
4 (in zone)

Therefore, the actual OOS (for those in zone) was  $4/10 = 40\%$ . As is usually the case, the actual OOS was lower than the stated OOS.

**What are the OOS, number to select and zone sizes that will be used in the upcoming board season?**

FY06 OOS			
Board	Number to Select	OOS	IZS
CAPT	5	50%	10
CDR	10	60%	17
LCDR	13	80%	16
LT	20	90%	22
LTJG	All	100%	

The actual names of the officers in the zone will be announced in a separate CYBERFLASH.

**When does my next promotion board meet?**

Board Schedule	Convenes on or about
Annual Review	27-Feb-06
LTJG	1-Mar-06
LT	2-Mar-06
LCDR/LT Continuation	20-Mar-06
CDR/LCDR Continuation	22-Mar-06
CAPT/CDR Continuation	3-Apr-06
CAPT's Annual Review	24-Apr-06

**What does it mean to have a "Best Qualified" board?**

Most promotion boards are best qualified (Lieutenant through Captain). All officers under consideration compete with each other for a limited number of vacancies. The NOAA Corps workforce depicts a pyramid structure, which relies on a large junior officer workforce but a much smaller senior officer workforce. Natural attrition alone is inadequate to reduce the size of the workforce as it matures. A best qualified board will always result in fewer officers selected than were considered. By necessity, the best qualified process results in the non-selection for promotion of officers who may be fully qualified to serve in the next-higher grade.

Selection on a "best qualified" basis embodies four elements. Selection boards are required

to:

- (1) Consider all officers impartially and equally;
- (2) Develop criteria by which officers can be compared and apply the same criteria to all those being considered;
- (3) Evaluate by comparison, with the most capable officers advancing to positions of higher responsibility; and
- (4) Be legally sufficient.

Selection boards convened to recommend officers for promotion to the grades of lieutenant through captain consider officers on a “best qualified” basis. Promotion to lieutenant (junior grade) is made on a “Fully Qualified” basis. “Best Qualified” boards consider officers’ records, comparing past performance, the officers’ capacity to undertake successfully tasks of progressively greater difficulty involving broader responsibilities, the officers’ capability and inclination to study for further professional growth, and their potential to perform creditably those duties to which they might be assigned in the next higher grade.

### **What does it mean to have a "Fully Qualified" board?**

LTJG promotion boards are fully qualified. These boards recommend those officers for promotion whose records indicate they are qualified to perform all duties to which they reasonably might be assigned in the grade for which they are being considered. The board must recommend whether each officer it considers is or is not fully qualified, without any restrictions or qualifications. The board may also determine an officer to be performing unsatisfactorily in grade. In that case, the officer's commission is revoked and the member is discharged from the officer corps. All officers under consideration may be selected in a fully qualified board.

### **What selection criteria do the boards use?**

Promotion boards recommend on either a best qualified or fully qualified basis as set forth in law and directed in the precept. Each board develops its own overall standards and selection criteria. The degree of significance a board assigns to each of the many factors it considers may vary according to the grade and type of selection the board is making. A board selecting officers for lieutenant may emphasize different factors than would a captain board.

Whether convened on a "fully qualified" or a "best qualified" basis, selection boards consider various criteria such as performance, leadership ability, management ability, professional development and breadth of experience. Based on the above factors, each board develops its own overall selection criteria. The degree of significance a board assigns to each of the many factors it considers may vary according to the grade and type of selection the board is making. Boards are charged to make their decisions based on matters of record only, and are provided each eligible officer's record for

consideration.

### **What information do boards see in making their decisions?**

Officer promotion boards review only officers' service records and any communications from candidates directly to the board. Records are presented to the boards using electronic imaging. The boards are also given eligibility rosters of the candidates in alphabetical order. Above and in zone officer rosters are combined, so that the status of the candidates is not discernible. Information regarding ethnicity is not available to promotion boards at any time.

### **Are the boards given quotas for diversity reasons?**

No. The precepts tell the board how many officers to select for promotion from the eligible candidate pool without any reference to race or gender. Based on the Supreme Court's ruling in the 1995 case of Adarand v. United States Department of Transportation, Federal affirmative action programs that use racial and/or ethnic criteria as a basis for decision making are subject to strict judicial scrutiny, which typically results in judicial invalidation of such race-based initiatives. In the wake of the Adarand decision, the DOD has lost several landmark cases (Baker v. United States and most recently, Christian v. United States) in which selection boards were impermissibly using race and gender as criteria. In essence, the impact of the Adarand decision and follow on rulings is that boards cannot be directed to consider minority or gender status in selecting those officers "best qualified" for promotion.

### **Can board chairpersons vote?**

Yes, board chairpersons have an equal vote in any decisions made by the board. All promotion boards (O-2 through O-5) have an O-6 chairperson who acts as the senior member.

### **What happens if a board member is a close friend or relative of someone under consideration?**

In a small service such as ours, it is not unusual for board members to have personal knowledge of officers under consideration. For instance, a board member who is CO of a unit may have his OPS boss or a JO under consideration. In some cases, board members may have friends or distant relatives under consideration. However, board members are charged to make their decisions on matters of record only. Board members who feel that they have personal knowledge of a member under consideration may remove themselves from evaluating that member for promotion.

### **Do boards factor my medical condition into their decision?**

No. Promotion boards are not given any information about medical condition of the officers under consideration. They are instructed to assume that all officers whose records they see are medically qualified.

### **Do boards exclusively use electronic records?**

All promotion boards use electronic records. These records are scanned in so that images of the documents appear on the computer screen.

### **If I am passed over will the board know it the next time?**

No. Promotion boards are given a combined roster of above and in zone officers under consideration, with officers listed alphabetically, so that the status of the candidates is not discernible.

### **Can I find out exactly why I got passed over?**

Deliberations of a promotion board are confidential, and board members take an oath to that effect. This requirement is not to hide the process, but is instead intended to protect officers from following what could be misleading guidance. Every year, boards convene with different members, a different precept, and different Service needs. They develop their own specific criteria for promotion. If each board gave out advice as to what they thought was the key to promotion, officers might follow suggestions that would not help them succeed in future years. Officers seeking career and promotion advice should ask their chain of command, assignment officer or the Chief of the Career Management Division in CPC for feedback and recommendations on how to strengthen their records.

### **Will a board see my retirement/resignation/temp separation letter?**

No. Promotion boards will not see the specific contents of your resignation request. However they will be presented with a list of those that have approved resignation requests for whom orders have been cut. Officers who have an approved resignation request remain eligible for consideration for promotion while those with approved retirement requests shall not be considered for promotion to the next higher grade.

### **What can I do six months out to prepare for a promotion board?**

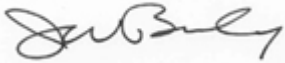
Review your official record for completeness. You can review your record at the following website: <https://cpc.nmao.noaa.gov/opfonline/login.jsp>. While every effort is made to ensure that records are checked for completeness prior to each promotion board, officers are ultimately responsible for their own records. Officers are encouraged to personally review their records while visiting the Washington, DC area.

### **Can you appeal promotion board results?**

No. Promotion boards are governed by law, not just policy. Once a board report is approved the results are firm. Promotion boards are not reconvened to address any type of appeal.

### **How can someone who is known to be a "top performer" get passed over?**

As a result of the "best qualified" selection process, some high performing officers are passed over. Boards have the benefit of seeing each member's entire record (including things along the way that co-workers may not be aware of) and being able to then compare all of those records in one sitting. Other officers may have had much stronger complete records in comparison to someone you personally know. It is important to remember that the "best qualified" selection process often results in very tough competition among qualified officers.



Captain Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA  
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

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### **CPC POINTS OF CONTACT (301) 713-3444**

Assignments	LCDR Cecile Daniels
Awards	Greg Raymond
Career Counseling	CDR Brad Kearse
Correspondence Courses	LCDR Anne Lynch
DEERS/ID Cards	Neavaly Touray
EEO	Katherine Raymond
Medical Issues	LT Liz Hobson-Powell
Payroll	J. Thompson/Carol Holley
PCS Travel	Greg Raymond
OPF Online	Greg Raymond
Promotions	Katherine Raymond
PUT	CDR Brad Kearse
Recruiting	LTJG Nicole Manning
Retirement	Neavaly Touray
Training	LCDR Anne Lynch
Transportation	Greg Raymond

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### **Recommended Leadership Course**

OPM's Management Development Centers are very pleased to announce a brand new 2 1/2-day course based on the "grassroots" leadership principles described in the best selling book by Captain Michael D. Abrashof, "It's Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy".

GrassRoots Leadership: It's Your Ship  
Jan. 31 - Feb. 2 at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

Cost: \$1,000

This breakthrough course is the result of a collaboration among OPM, Captain Abrashof, and the team of Ed Oakley and Doug Krug, authors of another best seller, "Enlightened Leadership: Getting to the Heart of Change".

The tactics and tools behind Captain Abrashof's phenomenal success in turning the USS Benfold into one of the highest-performing ships in the Navy are brought to life in this course, providing participants a playbook to becoming a successful GrassRoots Leader.

Space is limited for this exciting new course, so register early: 304-870-8008.

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### **Officer Evaluation System (OES) Training**

January 4: Honolulu, HI  
Navy Lodge on Ford Island  
POC: LTJG Kelly Stroud

January 6: Seattle, WA  
Location: MOC-P, 0900-1100  
POC: CDR Mark Ablondi

January 9: Newport, OR in conjunction with the Command Conference  
POC: CAPT John Clary

January 16: Silver Spring, MD (Question Session)  
Location: SSMC 3, Room 12836, 1400—1600  
Telecon #: 1-877-646-0985 (password: 999678#)  
POC: CDR Brad Kearse (POC)

February 15: OER's due to CPC

A copy of the OER presentation, guidance and forms can be found at:  
[http://www.noacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/pdf/OES\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.noacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/pdf/OES_Overview.pdf)

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### **Reserve Officers Association Mid-Winter Legislative Conference**

Washington Hilton and Towers Hotel Washington, DC from February 5-8, 2006  
[http://www.roa.org/events/pdf/reg\\_mid06.pdf](http://www.roa.org/events/pdf/reg_mid06.pdf)

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### **National Association of Commissioned Officers Awards**

**NOAA ACO Engineering and Science Awards**

The National Association of Commissioned Officers requests nominations for the NOAA ACO Engineering Award and NOAA ACO Science Award. Any NOAA Corps officer or member of another service assigned to NOAA, who by making outstanding engineering or scientific contributions have distinguished him or herself above those performing similar services are eligible. All commands and field offices are invited to submit nominations for these awards. The National ACO will select the nominees in January 2006.

Please submit nominations to CDR Brian Taggart, President, National Association of Commissioned Officers via E-mail to [Brian.K.Taggart@noaa.gov](mailto:Brian.K.Taggart@noaa.gov), no later than January 6, 2006.

### **Junior Officer of the Year Nominations**

The National Association of Commissioned Officers requests nominations for the NOAA Corps Junior Officer of the Year. All commands and field offices that have officer(s) of the rank O-3 and below are invited to submit nominations for this award.

The National ACO will select the nominee in mid-January 2006. In addition, this officer's name will be entered in the Reserve Officers Association Junior Officer of the Year selection. The selection will be completed at the ROA mid-winter conference this January in Washington, D.C. Our NOAA Corps nominee will be invited to attend the Conference.

Please submit nominations to CDR Brian Taggart, President, National Association of Commissioned Officers via E-mail to [Brian.K.Taggart@noaa.gov](mailto:Brian.K.Taggart@noaa.gov), no later than January 6, 2006.

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### **2006 Reserve Components Joint Officer Professional Development Seminar**

In conjunction with the ROA Mid-Winter Legislative Conference  
Washington Hilton and Towers Hotel Washington, DC  
February 5-8, 2006

CPC will select and sponsor three officers between the grades of 01—03 to attend the Joint Officer Professional Development Seminar. All interested officers please send request via E—mail to [William.kearse@noaa.gov](mailto:William.kearse@noaa.gov) by January 6, 2006.

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### **Requests for Training**

In order to expedite the processing and tracking of training requests, an online form and email account has been developed by CPC. Officers wishing to apply for correspondence courses, leadership and management training should complete the form at:  
<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/training.html>.

Submit the form to [cpc.training@noaa.gov](mailto:cpc.training@noaa.gov) via an email attachment or by using the “submit by



email” button at the bottom of the training form. If you encounter difficulties while filling out or submitting the training form, please inform CPC at [cpc.training@noaa.gov](mailto:cpc.training@noaa.gov).

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### **Developmental Opportunity**

The United States Military Academy, Chemistry Department has requested a NOAA Corps Officer present during its Chemistry Department Lecture Series, spring 2006. Officers who have a background in chemistry or are involved in chemical oceanography operations please contact CDR Kearse via email @ [William.Kearse@noaa.gov](mailto:William.Kearse@noaa.gov) for more information. CPC will pay for the travel to support this activity.

**This message was generated for the Director of Commissioned Personnel**