



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS
COMMISSIONED PERSONNEL CENTER
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3282

JAN 17 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Rear Admiral Michael J. Silah, NOAA
Director, NOAA Corps

FROM: Captain Devin R. Brakob, NOAA
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

Devin R. Brakob
CAPT, NOAA

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2020 Officer Corps Management Plan

PURPOSE:

The Officer Corps Management Plan (OCMP) is an annual plan for the management of the NOAA Corps workforce. The OCMP provides recommendations for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY 2020) promotion zones based on a projection of planned officer accessions and attritions, an analysis and projection of historical officer accession and attrition data, and Service needs. The OCMP serves as an execution plan to initiate the NOAA Corps promotion process.

OVERVIEW:

The Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC) develops the annual OCMP by analyzing on-board workforce strength, attrition trends and forecasts, and accessions required to maintain the commissioned officer workforce. The decisions made with this memorandum enable the NOAA Corps to meet workforce management needs within legal requirements.

There are three steps to the officer promotion process: eligibility, selection, and promotion. Each step is controlled by laws, regulations, and administrative procedures. The promotion process for the NOAA Corps is described in NOAA Corps Directive (NCD) Chapter 4, Part 2.

- 1) Eligibility - Eligibility for promotion to each grade is provided in NCD Chapter 4, Part 3. The *critical* elements considered in determining promotion eligibility are: 1) completion of required training; 2) years of service (YOS); 3) time-in-grade (TIG, Table 1 below); and 4) medical qualification.

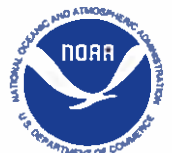


Table 1 - Required Time-in-Grade for Promotion	
Captain (O-6)	Four years in the permanent grade of commander
Commander (O-5)	Four years in the permanent grade of lieutenant commander
Lieutenant Commander (O-4)	Three years in the permanent grade of lieutenant
Lieutenant (O-3)	Two years in the permanent grade of lieutenant (junior grade)
Lieutenant (junior grade) (O-2)	One year in the permanent grade of ensign

- 2) Selection - A range, or zone, of officers on the lineal list eligible for selection are evaluated and recommended (or not recommended) for promotion by an Officer Personnel Board (OPB). Officers are considered to be "in zone" if they meet eligibility requirements, have not twice failed to be selected for promotion, and do not have an approved voluntary retirement or resignation. The zone size is dependent on the number of vacancies in each rank, the opportunity of selection, the time required to promote selected officers to fill known and estimated vacancies, and the needs of the Service.

- 3) Promotion - Following selection for promotion, officers may have their promotion effected anywhere from 2 to 18 months after notification of selection. The variation in timing is dependent on differences between planned and actual vacancies, promotion approval processes, executive calendars, and the needs of the Service.

DEFINITIONS:

Authorized Strength: 33 U.S.C. § 3005 established NOAA Corps' authorized strength at 321 commissioned officers. Flag officers are not included in determining the authorized strength.

Accession: Accession is the increase in strength through bringing new officers into the Service via Basic Officer Training Class (BOTC), Inter-Service Transfer (IST), or original appointment.

Attrition: Attrition is any retirement, death, resignation, or separation of a member from the Service. Attrition rates are calculated annually using the number of officers that detach from the NOAA Corps and the average annual strength (AAS). Attrition creates vacancies in the respective grades and affects the actual number of NOAA Corps promotions effected in a given year. Table 2 shows historical attrition rates by grade for the four previous years.

Table 2 - Historical Attrition & Percentage Rates by Grade						
	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	Average	*% Average
O-6	10	3	3	3	5	17.9%
O-5	1	2	4	2	2	8.0%
O-4	1	1	4	5	3	9.8%
O-3	7	13	9	13	11	37.5%
O-2	5	3	3	2	3	11.6%
O-1	4	5	5	4	5	16.1%
TOTAL	28	27	28	29	28	100.0%
Overall % Attrition	8.9%	8.5%	8.8%	9.1%	8.8%	*% Average based on four years; FY16-19
Avg. Annual Strength	313	317	319	317	317	

Note: Does not include officers recalled from retirement. Averages in each grade are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Average Annual Strength (AAS): The average number of officers on active duty in the NOAA Corps over a given fiscal year. The OCMP is planned using the authorized strength. Vacancies in each rank are determined and promotions are effected using average annual strength.

Cohort: A grouping of officers in sequential order on the lineal list that share identical or similar time-in-grade and/or total years of service.

Control Grade Distribution by Law: 33 U.S.C. § 3004 specifies the distribution of NOAA Corps officers by grade. Of the total number of officers on the lineal list, the proportion (in percentage) and total number of officers authorized in each permanent grade for an authorized strength of 321 is shown in Table 3. The actual number of officers in each grade is controlled by the average annual strength of the NOAA Corps.

Table 3 - Grade Distribution of Officers (33U.S.C. § 3004)		
Grade	Percentage By Law	Authorized Number of Officers
O-6	8%	26
O-5	14%	45
O-4	19%	61
O-3	23%	74
O-2	18%	58
O-1*	18%	57
Total Authorized	100%	321

* The number of officers in each grade is rounded to the nearest whole number. The number of ensigns is decreased by one to account for rounding error and to keep the total authorized strength at 321.

Vacancies: The planned vacancies are based on the attrition rate per grade over the four previous years, approved detachment dates of known attritions, and planned promotion of officers to the next grade.

Opportunity of Selection (OOS): To meet Service need, the Director, NOAA Corps has the authority to adjust the OOS annually.

Table 4 - Opportunity of Selection	
To Grade	Percent Opportunity
O-6	Determined annually
O-5	Determined annually
O-4	Determined annually
O-3	Determined annually
O-2	100% of qualified ensigns

Promotion Zone Size: Per NCD, the number of officers in a promotion zone (the zone size) shall not be less than the number of selections planned, divided by the applicable opportunity of selection shown in the approved table. In cases where the results contain a fraction, the zone size will be rounded to the next higher number. For example, if six O-6 vacancies are to be filled, and 50% is the opportunity of selection, the zone size will be $6/.5 = 12$.

DISCUSSION:

There are several workforce challenges that influence the FY 2020 OCMP. First, the projected number of O-6 vacancies is greater than the number of eligible candidates which will require a time-in-grade waiver for an entire cohort group as well as an over one year time-in-grade waiver for part of another cohort. The second year of a higher than historical average O-6 select requirement also cascades down into the lower ranks requiring significant time-in-grade waivers at all levels except for the O-2 zone. In addition, the O-3 zone will require several over one year time-in-grade waivers.

The low FY 2016 AAS of 313 recovered to 319 in FY 2018 but dropped to 317 in FY 2019 due to a slightly higher than average attrition rate and two smaller sized BOTC classes due to logistical issues. Moving forward, while returning to an AAS closer to 321, it will be necessary to remain vigilant in monitoring the AAS to ensure the NOAA Corps does not exceed its authority, while ensuring accessions do not stall and impact the supply of new officers to meet operational needs. This FY 2020 OCMP is designed to bring the NOAA Corps AAS back towards the authorized strength of 321 and support the first year of growth of the NOAA Corps Workforce Plan Implementation Plan. Currently, this plan includes the 14 officers for BOTC 135, 15 officers for BOTC 136, and 17 officers for BOTC 137. Additional accessions of three inter-service transfers or original appointments per FY are planned during FY 2020 and FY2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The OOS and zone sizes have been established to ensure the NOAA Corps is managed as efficiently as possible, to maintain its 321 officer authorized strength, meet legal grade distribution, and support the first year of growth of the NOAA Corps Workforce Plan Implementation Plan. These recommended zones meet the needs of the Service and projected vacancies in the grades for FY 2020 and into FY 2021.

Based on this analysis, the following actions are respectfully submitted for your approval:

- A. Zone Size and OOS. CPC recommends you approve the following zones and OOS for promotion to the next higher grade and authorize the OPB to not exceed the number of officers recommended for selection. In cases where the results contain a fraction, the zone size is rounded to the next higher number.

To Be Grade	Board Date (on or about)	Zone Size	OOS Percentage	Select	TIG by Board Date
O-6	April 20, 2020	13	65%	8	3.51
O-5	April 20, 2020	20	70%	14	3.96
O-4	April 20, 2020	22	80%	17	3.38
O-3	April 20, 2020	38	90%	34	1.74
O-2	April 20, 2020	31	100% (if qualified)	31	1.73

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 Approved Date Do Not Concur Date

- B. BOTC 136 and BOTC 137. CPC recommends you approve the selection of up to 15 candidates for BOTC 136 and 17 candidates for BOTC 137 to be assessed FY 2021 (January).

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- C. Time-in-Grade Waivers. In accordance with NCD 04203B, when the needs of the NOAA Corps require, the Director may adjust length of time-in-grade requirements, to the extent that time-in-grade requirements are not otherwise fixed by statute. CPC recommends that you approve 59 waivers for time-in-grade to expand the zone of eligible candidates for promotion within the zones of captain, commander, lieutenant commander,

and lieutenant. Captain is to increase from 2 eligible to 13 in zone, commander is to increase from 7 eligible to 20 in zone, lieutenant commander is to increase from 11 eligible to 22 in zone, and lieutenant is to increase from 14 eligible to 38 in zone.

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- D. Board Schedule. CPC recommends approval of the following board schedule to hold the FY20 promotion boards and for announcement to the officers in zone. Dates are approximate and may be adjusted.

Board Schedule	Board Date (on or about)
O-6 Selection	April 20, 2020
O-5 Selection	April 20, 2020
O-4 Selection	April 20, 2020
O-3 Selection	April 20, 2020
O-2 Selection	April 20, 2020

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- E. Annual Review. CPC recommends performing an Annual Review of the lineal list in accordance with 33 U.S.C. § 3022.

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- F. Inter-Service Transfers. CPC recommends approval to select up to three inter-service transfers with transfer dates in FY 2021.

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- G. Blended Retirement System Continuation Pay. CPC recommends approval of a 2.5x multiplier for Continuation Pay payout at 12 years for a commitment of 4 years.

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