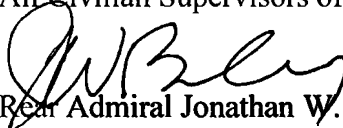




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MAR 17 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Civilian Supervisors of NOAA Corps Officers

FROM: 
Rear Admiral Jonathan W. Bailey, NOAA
Director, NOAA Corps

SUBJECT: Supervision of NOAA Corps Officers

NOAA's workforce is comprised of various components. Those components include civilians, contractors, NOAA Corps officers and wage mariners. As supervisors, it's imperative that we understand the guidelines that govern each workforce component under our supervision. For example, I have NOAA Corps officers, civilians, wage mariners and contractors on my staff. Thus, as a supervisor of these various components, I have made myself familiar with the requirements for each component. With that said, the primary purpose of this letter is to focus on some of the requirements for the NOAA Corps officers assigned under your supervision.

In order to supervise NOAA Corps officers, the following three tools (knowledge, written guides, human resources) are needed:

a. **Knowledge.** To effectively supervise a NOAA Corps officer you need knowledge about:

(1) General supervisory skills and concerns, such as responsibilities, authorities, prerogatives, techniques, and requirements set forth for NOAA Corps personnel, and your role as leader of your work group in the accomplishment of specific work objectives and the overall mission of the program in which you work;

(2) Major elements of the NOAA Corps human resources, such as those described in the attached supervisor's guide;

(3) The channels in your organization that should be used when seeking information and taking actions in the NOAA Corps human resources system; and

(4) The Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC) that administers the NOAA Corps human resources system.

b. **Written Guides.** Many written aids, such as the attached supervisor's guide, exist to assist you in making day-to-day decisions about NOAA Corps officers under your supervision. These include:

(1) The NOAA Corps Directives (NCD), which contains regulations, policy, procedure, and guidance about all aspects of the NOAA Corps human resources system. <http://www.noaa Corps.noaa.gov/cpc/procedures/directives.html>.

(2) Forms designed exclusively for use by supervisors and the NOAA Corps officers under their authority. <http://www.noaa Corps.noaa.gov/cpc/forms/index.html>

c. **Human Resources.** There are people throughout NOAA using NOAA Corps officers who specialize in various functions related to the human resources system. These include:

(1) Line office liaisons who are responsible for acting as liaison between a line office and the NOAA Corps Commissioned Personnel Center for management and policy matters related to the use of commissioned officers;

(2) Administrative personnel who specialize in processing personnel actions and who perform administrative tasks for officers assigned to their line; and

(3) CPC personnel who can provide specialized guidance about every aspect of the NOAA Corps human resources system. The CPC staff exists to assist officers, supervisors and line offices to help make the best use of each officer and the personnel system in general.

One of the things you will quickly discover is that the officer is governed by various U. S. Codes and Presidential Executive Orders, which are significantly different from those that are used for civilian federal employees. The complexities of the various Titles/Directives/Committees require an understanding of the Uniformed Services human resource systems. To that end, the NOAA Corps' Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC) is available to assist you with any human resource matter.

As the Director of the NOAA Corps, I am charged with overseeing the NOAA Corps and ensuring that it is in a constant state of readiness. In order to ensure a constant state of readiness, I personally approve the assignment of billets to the various line offices. It is important to note that I have more requests for billets than I am able to provide due to legislative restrictions on the number of authorized officers. Thus, I consider the mission of the NOAA Corps when determining where each billet is established. The mission of the NOAA Corps is to provide technically competent officers to assume positions of leadership and command in NOAA, the Department of Commerce (DOC) programs and in the Armed Forces during times of war or national emergency. As such, NOAA Corps officers must adhere to the requirements of a uniformed service. Many of those requirements are contained in the attached supervisor guide and are discussed in greater detail in the NOAA Corps Directives. A few examples of those requirements are presented below:

a. **Uniforms.** Officers are required to wear the uniform at all times. This is a condition of employment as a member of a uniformed service. I have been informed by some officers that their supervisor tells them not to wear their uniform. Some supervisors have expressed a concern that it makes the officer stand out. They want everyone to be equal, and they tell the officer not to wear the uniform. This is unacceptable. The officer is different. They are governed by a different set of rules. As indicated earlier, I have more requests for officers than authorized positions. Thus, if a supervisor is unwilling to support this requirement, he/she may lose the officer position to another line/office that does adhere to this requirement.

b. **Evaluations.** I cannot over emphasize the importance of evaluations. Evaluations impact every facet of the officer's career. Thus, it is imperative that supervisors submit evaluations on time. The following website provides additional information concerning the OER: <http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/evaluation.html>. The NOAA Corps Officer Evaluation System (OES) has been designed to:

(1) Provide information for important personnel management decisions. Especially significant among these decisions are promotions, assignments, and career development.

(2) Set performance and character standards to evaluate each officer.

(3) Prescribe organizational values by which each NOAA Corps officer can be described.

(4) Provide a means of feedback to determine how well an officer is measuring up to the standards.

Supervisors must ensure accurate, fair, and objective evaluations are provided to all officers assigned to them. To that end, performance evaluation forms have been made as objective as possible, within the scope of jobs and tasks performed by officers. In using the Officer Evaluation Form, NOAA Form 56-6A, strict and conscientious adherence to specific wording of the standards is essential to realizing the purpose of the evaluation system. Individual officers are responsible for managing their performance. This responsibility entails determining job expectations, obtaining sufficient performance feedback, and using that information to meet or exceed standards. While each officer is ultimately responsible for his or her own performance; it is imperative that supervisors provide adequate performance feedback. Performance feedback should be given and issues should be addressed as they occur so that proper guidance may be given and/or corrective action taken early to ensure the standards of performance are maintained.

c. **Promotions.** The promotion process for an officer is completely different from the civilian process. Officers must compete on a best qualified basis against other officers. Fundamental to selecting for promotion on a best-qualified basis is the fact the number of officers to be selected is fewer than the number being considered. Therefore, some officers will not be selected for promotion. Officers not selected by a previous promotion board will be considered by the next board. If the second board does not select them for promotion, the officer will normally be separated from the NOAA Corps.

An important point to make is that most promotion boards consider officers' records, comparing past performance, their capacity to successfully undertake tasks of progressively greater difficulty involving broader responsibilities, their capability and their potential to perform creditably those duties to which these officers might be assigned in the next higher grade. Please keep this in mind as you are evaluating the officers assigned to you.

d. **Core Values.** Core values serve as the officer's road map and sets the standard for their behavior. They serve to remind the officer of the importance of the profession they have chosen, the oath they took, and the demands placed upon them as members of a uniformed service. Because officers represent NOAA to the public, they must embrace these values in their professional undertakings as well as in their personal lives. As a supervisor, you are one of the key players in ensuring the officer maintains these standards at all times. A description of each core value is shown below.

Honor: Abide by an uncompromising code of integrity. We will conduct ourselves in the highest ethical manner in all relationships. We will take responsibility for our actions and be accountable for our professional and personal behavior. We will do what is right at all times.

Respect: Commit to treat each individual with human dignity. We will value inclusiveness and tolerance, respecting diversity of expression while maintaining unity of purpose. We will cultivate an environment where all can excel.

Commitment: Commit and dedicate ourselves to the nation and NOAA. We will serve our nation effectively and efficiently with knowledge, skill, loyalty, and perseverance. We will be mindful of the resources entrusted to us and will ensure they are used in an honest, careful, and efficient way.

e. **Collateral Duties.** At times officers will be required to perform collateral duties, which may not be directly associated with their current position. These duties include serving on various NOAA Corps personnel boards which make recommendations for the accession of new officers, selection of officers for promotion, disciplinary action, etc.

Finally, as a supervisor, I ask that you to do the following:

- a. Effectively use the officer performance management process:
 - (1) Establish clear expectations for the assigned officer(s).
 - (2) Provide honest and timely feedback – both formal and informal.
 - (3) Support the officer's growth and development.
 - (4) Recognize and reward desired performance.

(5) Correct undesirable performance.

(6) Remain focused on helping employees to succeed.

b. Provide leadership to officers and help create a supportive performance management culture.

c. Be fair, reasonable, accountable, consistent, and timely in your interactions with the assigned officer(s).

d. Communicate honestly and directly.

e. Follow the organization's policies, procedures and guidelines for governing the NOAA Corps.

f. Ensure the officers adhere to their core values.

g. Ask the Commissioned Personnel Center for assistance when needed.

We view the officer as a very important asset to NOAA and the Nation. Your help in developing the future leaders of the NOAA Corps and NOAA is greatly appreciated. The Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC) stands ready to assist you with any officer human resource issue. CPC's contact information is shown below:

NOAA Commissioned Personnel Center
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 500
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3282
Website: <http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov>

Toll-free Telephone: 1-800-224-6622
Phone: 301-713-3444 / FAX: 301-713-4140
Medical Br. Fax No: 301-713-2039
Recruiting Toll-free: 1-800-299-6622