

Subject: CPC CyberFlash
From: "Director CPC" <Director.CPC@noaa.gov>
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From the Director's Desk

As Admiral Lautenbacher stated in his all hands e-mail, on March 29th, the U. S. House of Representatives joined the U.S. Senate in passing legislation, which allows for the normal promotion of NOAA Commissioned Corps officers including those slated for the highest leadership positions.

Once the President signs the legislation into law, the President is authorized to appoint and promote officers temporarily, without a change in the grade they currently occupy in a "de facto" capacity. There are currently 137 officers in a de facto status. We have prepared a nomination package containing those 137 officers' names for the Secretary to forward to the President to effect their temporary appointments and promotions. Once the President makes the appointments and promotions, the Secretary will sign a temporary certificate for each affected officer, evidencing their temporary appointment or promotion.

Those same 137 officers, once temporarily promoted, along with an additional 27 ensigns currently serving on temporary appointments, will still need to be permanently appointed in and promoted to their current grades. We have prepared a nomination package containing those 164 officers' names for the Secretary to forward to the President. Upon approval by the President, the nomination package will be forwarded to the Senate for its advice and consent. Once the Senate gives its consent, and the White House notifies us, the Secretary will issue commissions to each affected officer, evidencing their permanent appointment or promotion.

The flag nominations will also require Presidential approval, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Currently we project that thirty days after the President signs the temporary promotions if the Secretary of Commerce concurs with the eighty promotion recommendations that the Officer Personnel Board (OPB) has made over the past year, the Secretary will forward the eighty nominations for promotion to the President. Again, by law, those nominations require Presidential approval, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, before an officer can be considered eligible for promotion. Once the Senate gives its approval and the White House notifies us, the promotion list will be maintained at CPC and when a vacancy occurs, only qualified officers will be promoted and receive a signed commission which evidences such promotion.

Qualifications of officers for promotion to permanent grades are both statutory and contained in the NOAA Corps Directives (NCD), Chapter four. An officer shall meet all requirements before being considered eligible for promotion. An officer must be found

to be mentally and physically qualified at the time of nomination and promotion. Nomination occurs after the OPB makes its recommendation for promotion to the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary approves the recommendation. A promotion occurs after the President has approved the OPB recommendations and the Senate has given its advice and consent. The NCD describes all other requirements necessary to be considered qualified for nomination and promotion. Different time frames associated with eligibility for nomination and promotion, depending on the grade to which the officer is being nominated or promoted, are addressed in the NCD. The OPB shall not consider officers in the permanent grade of lieutenant and above for promotion until all qualifications have been documented at the time the OPB convenes to make recommendations for promotion. Officers not qualified at the time the OPB convenes will be considered to have failed selection. Officers in the grade of ensign and lieutenant (junior grade) shall be found to be qualified at the time of nomination. An officer's nomination and promotion may be delayed or suspended depending on the circumstances. Nomination and promotion delays and suspensions remain in effect until all qualifications have been documented. All officers are encouraged to read the new NCD, Chapter four, which will be available on the CPC web site next week. If you have any questions regarding your status for nomination or promotion or the NCD, call CPC for assistance.

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

Uniform and Awards Board

Awards:

The following officers were awarded the NOAA Special Achievement Award.

CDR Scott E. Kuester
LT Elizabeth I. Jones

Regulation Changes:

The following regulation changes have been approved and will be published in the next regulation/directives change.

NOAA Corps Officers are no longer authorized to receive monetary awards. This change is effective April 19, 2004. The Commerce Department form CD-326 is no longer the authorized form, the NOAA Form 56-63 is to be used when submitting a NOAA Corps Officer for recognition for the following awards: NOAA Corps Director's Ribbon, NOAA Corps Achievement Medal, and the NOAA Corps Commendation Medal. This change will bring the NOAA Corps Uniformed Officers more in line with the other Uniformed Services. The NOAA Form 56-63 can be found on the CPC website.

It was announced previously that the NOAA Corps Rifle and Pistol Ribbons are no longer authorized to be awarded. The Deputy Director, NOAA Corps has further approved that the NOAA Corps Rifle and Pistol Ribbons are no longer authorized for wear on the uniform. This change also includes all firearm qualification ribbons and or badges obtained from other services. The only exception is if the Officer was previously awarded the ribbon/badge while on active duty with another service and it is documented in that service's discharge certificate (e.g. DD-214, NGB-22).

The Uniform and Awards board is scheduled to convene again on April 14, 2004. If any NOAA Corps officer has any requests or suggestions please submit them to Greg Raymond at gregory.raymond@noaa.gov before the convening date.

PCS and TDY Travel Involving Commercial Air Travel:

Many domestic flights and a few international flights are now eligible for electronic ticketing (e-tickets). When a government traveler requests a paper ticket for a flight that is e-ticket eligible, airlines impose a paper ticket fee. This is in addition to the reservation transaction fee charged by Sato Travel under the Department's contract. Paper ticket fees range between \$20 and \$50, depending on the originating airline, which can add substantially to travel costs. An example is provided below.

Round trip government contract flight on US Airways from Washington's Reagan National Airport to New York's La Guardia Airport:

$\$136.70$ (Round trip airfare) + $\$28.00$ (SATO (DC) fee) = $\$164.70$ (Cost with E-Ticket)

$\$164.70$ + $\$50.00$ (US Airways paper ticket fee) = $\$214.70$ (E-ticket cost+30%)

The following website explains what e-tickets are and how to use them:

<http://www.satotravel.com/travelResources/tips/ETickets.asp>

When traveling by commercial air all NOAA Corps Officers are required to use e-tickets. This will reduce unnecessary charges to the government. If you have questions regarding the use of e-tickets, your local Sato travel agent is available to assist you.

CPC RefTra:

Government Travel Cards:

The use of the contractor-issued government travel charge card is mandatory for all NOAA Corps Officers who travel on official business, unless an exemption has been

granted. The use of the card is limited to expenses incurred incident to officially authorized government travel. Use of the card at or in the vicinity of the official duty station or residence is strictly forbidden unless its use is in connection with officially ordered travel. Personal and family member use of the card and purchases made in retail stores are also strictly forbidden. However, common or shared services or facilities (i.e., rooms, meals, etc.) with family members or business associates may be charged to the card while on official business. This does not apply to common carrier transportation tickets. Only your official portion of the charged expense may be claimed on the travel voucher.

Possession and use of the card does not relieve the employee from observing rules and regulations governing official travel, including use of government city-pair contract carriers, American-Flag carriers, or Travel Management Centers (authorized travel agents under contract with the government).

Neither bureau managers, charge card coordinators, nor any other bureau officials have the authority to override the contractor's corporate policy regarding suspension or cancellation of employee accounts, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

DO'S AND DON'TS ON THE USE OF THE GOVERNMENT TRAVEL CARD

Do use the government travel card to pay for official travel expenses only.

Do obtain travel advances for official travel through an ATM.

Do track your expenses while on travel so you have accurate information for filing your travel claim.

Do file your travel claim within 5 days after you complete your trip or every 30 days if you are on continuous travel.

Do review your monthly statement carefully to ensure that all charges shown were made by you.

Do follow Citibank's dispute process for charges which are incorrect.

Do submit payment in full to Citibank for each monthly Bill.

Do contact Citibank's customer service (1-800-790-7206) if you have questions about your monthly bill.

Do be aware that misuse of the card or delinquency could result in disciplinary actions by your bureau.

Don't use your government travel card for personal use.

Don't obtain travel advances through the ATM which exceed your expected expenditures for a trip.

Don't obtain travel advances through the ATM unless you are on travel or will be on travel shortly.

Don't allow your monthly bill to become overdue.

Don't wait for receipt of your monthly bill to file your travel claim.

Don't forget that the card is issued in your name and liability for payment is your responsibility.

Don't make late payments because this could result in suspension or cancellation of your card. Failure to pay your monthly bill will result in the loss of your charging privileges. If your card is suspended, you will be unable to use it until payment is received by Citibank. If your card is cancelled due to non-payment, your delinquency may be reported to credit bureaus, referred to collection agencies, or lead to other collection actions.

Failure to follow the regulations pertaining to use of the government Travel Care can and will result in disciplinary action.

This message was generated for the Director of Commissioned Personnel