



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

MEMORANDUM FOR: Rear Admiral Michael J. Silah, NOAA **MAY 15 2018**  
 Director, NOAA Corps

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

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2018 Officer Corps Management Plan

Per your request, the following Zone Size and Opportunity of Selection (OOS) actions are respectfully submitted for your approval.

Zone Size and Opportunity of Selection. CPC recommends you approve the following zones and opportunity of selection for promotion to the next higher grade and authorize the Officer Personnel Board to not exceed the number of officers recommended for selection.

To Be Grade	Board Date (on or about)	Zone Size	OOS Percentage	Select	TIG by Board Date
O6	15 May 2018	11	60%	6	4.1
O5	15 May 2018	15	70%	10	4.3
O4	15 May 2018	11	80%	9	4.7
O3	15 May 2018	14	90%	12	2.0
O2	15 May 2018	14	100% (if qualified)	14	2.0
O2	14 Sep 2018	10	100% (if qualified)	10	1.7

*Michael J. Silah* 14 MAY 18  
 Approved Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Do Not Concur Date





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

FROM: Captain Anne K. Lynch, NOAA *Anne K. Lynch CAPT NOAA*  
 Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2018 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 2018 (FY18) 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. 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 retirement. 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. Public Law 110-386 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) or Inter-Service Transfer (IST).

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. 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.

<b>Table 2 – Historical Attrition &amp; Percentage Rates by Grade</b>						
	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	Average	*% Average
O-6	7	3	10	3	6	24.9%
O-5	2	3	1	2	2	7.2%
O-4	1	8	1	1	3	11.2%
O-3	4	7	7	13	8	21.4%
O-2	6	6	5	3	5	20.7%
O-1	4	4	4	5	4	14.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	24	31	28	27	28	100.0%
<b>Overall % Attrition</b>	7.5%	9.7%	8.9%	8.5%	8.8%	* % Average based on four years; FY14-17
<b>Avg. Annual Strength</b>	318	321	313	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.

<b>Table 3 – Grade Distribution of Officers (33 U.S.C. § 3004)</b>		
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*
<b>Total Authorized</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>321</b>
*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 four previous years, approved detachment dates of known attritions, and planned promotion of officers to the next grade.

Opportunity of Selection and Promotion Zone Size. To meet Service need, the Director, NOAA Corps has the authority to adjust the opportunity of selection by 10 percent of the percent opportunity listed in NCD 04204 and shown in Table 4 below.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Table 4 – Opportunity of Selection</b>	
To Grade	Percent Opportunity (+ or - 10%)
O-6	50% (40-60%)
O-5	70% (60-80%)
O-4	80% (70-90%)
O-3	Determined annually (typically 90%)
O-2	100% of qualified ensigns

<sup>1</sup>The Opportunity of Selection policy is subject to change as the current NCD is under review; the following verbiage is to reflect the recommended change, the Opportunity of Selection shall be determined annually by the end of the fiscal year.

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 table above. For example, if four O-6 vacancies are to be filled, and 50% is the opportunity of selection, the zone size will be  $4/.5 = 8$ .

#### **DISCUSSION:**

There are several workforce challenges that influence the FY18 OCMP. First, the projected number of O-6 vacancies is equal to the number of eligible candidates. The cohort groups for promotion to O-6 (and to a lesser extent O-5) are shallow with relatively low time-in-grade and total years of service. There is no indication that attrition rates in FY18 will be substantially higher or lower than in previous years. In addition, the junior officer ranks are much more stable with slower promotion rates due to the cascading effect of vacancies and distribution of officers by grade. Finally, the historical solution to filling rank vacancies for officers in the BOTC-92 to BOTC-100 cohort has relied upon time-in-grade waivers and slowing promotion rates. Neither of these tactics is beneficial to officer career development or retention. The inability to fill the senior ranks with time-in-grade qualified candidates from these cohorts creates a down-stream promotion impact on more junior ranks.

Given these factors along with the need to balance career development against rank progression, and with the goal of maintaining an average authorized strength of 321 members, this OCMP recommends a more active approach to management at all ranks, and in particular the junior officer ranks, by performing an Annual Review of the lineal list in February of 2019, and adjusting the Opportunity of Selection (OOS) for O-6 to 60% for FY18. If any current O-6 officers retire prior to the board date and increase the vacancy size for the O-6 zone, the zone should follow an OOS of 50% in effort to avoid increasing the TIG waivers. These actions support a working strength of 321 officers.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The recommended zone sizes for FY 2018 have been established to optimize years of service in senior ranks while balancing the need to fill vacancies and providing promotion opportunity to high performing junior officers. The opportunity of selection and zone sizes have been established to ensure the Corps is managed as efficiently as possible, to maintain its 321 member authorized strength, and meet legal grade distribution. Until the Secretary receives authority from Congress to increase the NOAA Corps authorized strength, promotion rates will continue to normalize, i.e., slow down, and time-in-grade will increase for all ranks except ensigns who by law must be promoted before the completion of 3 years of service or be separated. Involuntary separation of under-performing officers will become much more common at lower years of service than in previous years and will serve to modestly increase promotion rates at the more junior ranks. This plan will allow the NOAA Corps to retain high-performing individuals, through consistent execution of policies and legal authorities, and effecting separations earlier in cases of non-selection for promotion when warranted.

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

- A. Zone Size and Opportunity of Selection. CPC recommends you approve the following zones and opportunity of selection for promotion to the next higher grade and authorize the Officer Personnel Board to not exceed the number of officers recommended for selection.

To Be Grade	Board Date (on or about)	Zone Size	OOS Percentage	Select	TIG by Board Date
O-6	15 May 2018	11	60%	6	4.1
O-5	15 May 2018	10/14/18	70%	7/9/18	4.3
O-4	15 May 2018	9	80%	7	4.7
O-3	15 May 2018	14	90%	12	2.0
O-2	15 May 2018	14	100% (if qualified)	14	2.0
O-2	14 September 2018	11	100% (if qualified)	11	1.7

Michael G. Sill 29 JAN 18  
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- B. BOTC-132 and 133. CPC recommends you approve the selection of up to 12 candidates for BOTC 132 and 12 candidates for BOTC 133 to be assessed FY19 (January).

Michael G. Sill 29 JAN 18  
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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 21 waivers for time-in-grade, of no more than five months each, to expand the zone of eligible candidates for promotion within the zones of captain, commander, and lieutenant. Captain is to increase from 4 eligible to 11 in zone, commander is to increase from 7 eligible to 10 in zone, and lieutenant is to increase from 3 eligible to 14 in zone.

Michael G. Sill 29 JAN 18  
 Approved Date Do Not Concur Date

- D. Board Schedule. CPC recommends approval of the following board schedule to hold the FY 18 promotion boards and for announcement to the officers in zone. Dates are approximate and may be adjusted.

Board Schedule	Board Date
O-6 Selection	15 May 2018
O-5 Selection	15 May 2018
O-4 Selection	15 May 2018
O-3 Selection	15 May 2018
O-2 Selection	15 May 2018
O-2 Selection	14 September 2018

*Michael G. Silah* 29 JAN 18  
 Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Do Not Concur \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- E. Annual Review. CPC recommends performing an Annual Review of the lineal list in accordance with 33 U.S.C. § 3022, around February of 2019.

*Michael G. Silah* 29 JAN 18  
 Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Do Not Concur \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- F. Inter-Service Transfers. CPC recommends approval to select up to 2 inter-service transfers to support aviation requirements.

*Michael G. Silah* 29 JAN 18  
 Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Do Not Concur \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_