

Admin Officer Guide: Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

There may be a time in your career that you will serve as either “Staff” Executive Officer (XO) during your tour as Flag Secretary or billeted to be the XO of a shore activity (NOBC: 9436). If selected for an XO of a shore activity, you will be provided the opportunity to receive training in Newport, RI (Executive Officer Leadership Course). This course will give you a foundation of the required information through various topics. You must always remember that being an Admin Officer gives you a distinct advantage in this particular billet because of the relationship and processes that you already have mastered to ensure that you and your command are set up for success.

OVERVIEW

Per OPNAVINST 3120.32D (SORM), “the executive officer is the direct representative of the commanding officer and shall be primarily responsible to the commanding officer for the organization, performance of duty, training, maintenance, and good order and discipline of the entire command.” Being part of the TRIAD (CO, XO, and CMC) is a vital component to the success of the command. You must never lose sight of that and never take it for granted.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER ACTION

As also listed in the SORM, your overarching duties, responsibilities, and authority are listed below:

“The executive officer executes the policies of the commanding officer assisted by subordinates. His/her orders will have the same force and effect as if issued by the commanding officer. The executive officer assumes command, should the need arise, as defined by NAVREGS. The executive officer subject to the orders of the commanding officer assisted by subordinates will:

- (1) Make frequent inspections in company, when practicable, with the subordinates concerned; and to correct defects.
- (2) Supervise and coordinate the work, exercises, training, and education of the personnel command of the command.
- (3) Supervise and coordinate the operational plans and schedules of the command.
- (4) Prepare and issue a daily schedule of employment and such other advance schedules as may aid subordinates in planning their work.
- (5) Ensure that all prescribed or necessary security measures and safety precautions are understood and strictly observed.
- (6) Evaluate the performance of officers and enlisted and personnel and make recommendations to the commanding officer concerning their promotion and advancement.”

Upon reporting to your command and before you turnover, you must familiarize yourself with various timeline requirements and command-wide responsibilities:

- (1) Routine Meetings
- (2) Tracker/Tickler
- (3) Daily/Weekly/Monthly Reports
- (4) Periodic Events (ie. command and possibly base-wide events)
- (5) Understanding your “Approval Authority”
- (6) Manning but also specifically Officer Manning. XO is normally the AMM for Officers.
- (7) Command Board membership (specifically which ones that you inherit as XO)

- (8) Oversight of Watchbills within your command
- (9) CO's SAPR Tool Kit (within 30 days of reporting)
- (10) Military Rules of Evidence 514/Legal Brief
- (11) SJA Ethics Briefs

As XO, you are in charge of establishing (and keeping) the Battle Rhythm for not only the TRIAD but for the entire command. Instituting the command schedule is vitally important. This can be established via the Plan of the Week or other command-wide documents (Command Schedule, Flight Schedule, etc). Another facet you must always remember is your responsibility to your staff and Department Heads.

As you will learn once you go through the XO Leadership Course (also the two-day Legal Officer/Ethics Course), relationships do matter. One relationship that is equally as important as the CO is establishing that relationship with the Command Master Chief (CMC). Many responsibilities the CMC carries affords them to work directly with the CO on matters that pertain to enlisted Sailors but ensuring that the TRIAD "triangle" stays intact is vital for the required over-communications within the command. You and the CMC will consistently overlap on various programs within the command and that relationship is extremely important.

Another facet as XO is ensuring that you keep a consistent "pulse" on all matters related to military justice and discipline. As mentioned in the AO's Guide – Legal Officer, "JAGs are great resource for all legal issues – they are the subject matter experts. A best practice is to create a working relationship with the JAGs in your chain of command. At your first opportunity, seek out the JAGs in your chain of command." It is highly recommended that you sync with your Legal "Team" on a monthly basis to ensure absolute oversight on all legal matters (to include administrative separations).

Being an XO is an important career goal for many Navy officers, and one of the reasons that you qualify for the Command Qual program (AQD: 2D1). This billet is incredibly important, and as you have learned throughout your career, it is essential to have an extensive contact list (network) to ensure that you are stabilizing the command and doing the absolute best for your Sailors.

REFERENCES

[OPNAV Instruction 3120.32D \(Standard Organization Regulations of the U.S. Navy\)](#)
[OPNAV INSTRUCTION 3120 -DDNS wOJAG Adjudications Final \(navy.mil\)](#)

5800-1 AO Guide – Legal Officer

<https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Career/Detailing/Officer/SurfaceWarfare/LDOCWO/5800-1%20AO%20Guide%20-%20Legal%20Officer.pdf?ver=7nWQt7dpex8Kn-hJ3v1ldQ%3d%3d>