



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
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27 Feb 20

From: Chief of Naval Personnel
To: FY-21 Active-Duty Navy and Navy Reserve Senior Enlisted
Advancement Selection Boards

Subj: FY-21 ACTIVE-DUTY NAVY AND NAVY RESERVE SENIOR ENLISTED
ADVANCEMENT SELECTION BOARDS PRECEPT

Ref: (a) Enlisted Career Paths

Encl: (1) FY-21 Active-Duty Navy and Navy Reserve Senior
Enlisted Advancement Selection Boards Guidance

1. Function and Membership

a. The function of the advancement selection boards is to consider senior enlisted candidates for advancement to the rank indicated in each board's convening order. Advancement selection boards shall consider carefully, without prejudice or partiality, the record of every eligible candidate. The records and names of all eligible candidates, determined as of the date each board convenes, will be furnished to the board.

b. I will personally appoint the members of advancement selection boards. During each board process, the personnel assigned as board members work directly for me, under oath. Board members are entrusted with selecting the future leadership of the Navy. The performance of these duties will have a greater effect on the future of the Navy than any other duties they perform. During the board process, all other duties of an assigned member are secondary to the board process and the utmost care will be given to ensure the process is not compromised or rushed to accommodate outside concerns. Each record reviewed represents years of service by the individual candidate. It is absolutely essential that your evaluation affords each eligible candidate fair and equitable consideration.

2. Advancement boards shall proceed in accordance with the convening order, any guidance contained in this letter, the cycle NAVADMIN and enclosure (1).

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3. Reference (a) will be provided in the selection board spaces in conjunction with the precept and convening order, to inform the selection board members of specific requirements to be qualified and typical career milestones of the candidates within each paygrade and rating. It is not expected that every candidate will meet the typical career path and guidelines depicted in reference (a).
4. Unless expressly authorized or required by me or higher authority, no member of the board, recorder, assistant recorder or administrative support staff may disclose the proceedings, deliberations or recommendations of the advancement selection boards. All board members, the recorder, assistant recorders and administrative support staff must comply fully with these requirements and I expect each board president to emphasize the need for strict confidentiality.
5. In order to continually improve the advancement selection board process, each board president is directed to provide written feedback via the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel (DCNP) immediately after the board regarding all written guidance that I provide for the selection board. The board president should indicate whether all written guidance to the board was sufficiently direct, clear and concise to assist board members in performing their duties. The report should also assess board support and the administration of the board. Further, an office call and a debrief regarding the board process should be offered to myself and DCNP. DCNP and I will accept an office call offer if the written feedback warrants it.


JOHN B. NOWELL, JR

**FY-21 ACTIVE-DUTY NAVY AND NAVY RESERVE SENIOR ENLISTED
ADVANCEMENT SELECTION BOARD GUIDANCE**

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APPENDIX - A

GENERAL GUIDANCE

1. Duties of the Board President. The president of a board is appointed by me and shall perform prescribed administrative duties and is a voting member of all tank groups. The board president has no authority to constrain board members from recommending or not recommending, candidates for advancement. During the board proceedings the president may direct a second review of any record at any time if it is deemed the record was not adequately evaluated. Additionally, the president may direct the Senior Enlisted Advisor to conduct spot checks of individual record reviews.

2. Duties of the Board Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA). The SEA of a board is appointed by me and shall serve as the Board President's advisor and a voting member of all tank groups. The SEA shall raise important issues before the board in the interest of full disclosure to help clarify selection standards, provide institutional expertise regarding each rating and assist in deliberative matters during the execution of the board. The SEA has no authority to constrain board members from recommending or not recommending, candidates for advancement. The SEA should, under direction of the Board President, conduct spot-checks to ensure thorough record reviews are completed.

3. Board Proceedings. The following directions apply to all board proceedings:

a. Each of you (president, SEA, members, recorder, assistant recorders and administrative support staff) is responsible for maintaining the integrity and independence of this advancement selection board and for fostering careful consideration, without prejudice or partiality, of all eligible candidates.

b. You must pay particularly close attention to the rules governing communications with and among other board members, the information authorized to be provided to you and the procedures you should follow if you believe that the integrity of this advancement selection board has been improperly affected.

c. You may not receive, initiate or participate in communications or discussions involving information that is precluded from consideration by an advancement selection board. You are to base your recommendations on the material in each

candidate's military record, any information I have provided to the board and any information about his or her own record communicated to you by individual eligible candidates in accordance with the regulations I have issued.

d. In your deliberations, you may not discuss or disclose the opinion of any person not a member of the board concerning a candidate being considered unless that opinion is contained in material provided to the board in accordance with Navy regulations. You may not introduce anything about a candidate that is not documented in the candidate's record or letter to the board.

e. In addition, should a candidate's record reveal the removal of an evaluation, a member of the board may not discuss any personal knowledge regarding the circumstance that resulted in the removal of the evaluation, nor should any member conjecture or draw any inference as to the underlying circumstances involved.

f. The Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and for reserve boards, the Reserve Force Master Chief Petty Officer and I are the only individuals who may appear in person to address you on other than administrative matters. All communications with this board, other than those that are clearly administrative, must be in writing, given to each of you and made part of the board's record. I have designated in writing those persons authorized to provide routine administrative information to you.

g. To ensure impartiality, you may not visit or communicate with detailers, placement officers, community managers or any candidate immediately prior to or during your time serving on the advancement selection board. After you are released from the advancement selection board by the board president, you may visit or communicate with detailers, placement officers, community managers or any candidate. As a general rule, communications of any kind or method with outside parties (i.e., persons other than board members, the recorder, assistant recorders, board sponsors and administrative support staff) before, during or after the board relating in any way to the advancement selection board or its proceedings, discussions, deliberations or recommendations are prohibited. Questions concerning the propriety of any communications prior to the board should be addressed to the board sponsor(s). The proceedings, discussions, deliberations or recommendations of the advancement selection boards shall not be disclosed, nor

shall any written or documentary record of such proceedings, discussions, deliberations or recommendations be used for any purpose, unless expressly authorized or required by the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel, me or higher authority or as outlined in paragraphs 3i and 3j below.

h. To ensure the integrity of the board process, it is imperative that you advise the board sponsor(s) of any relationship with any eligible candidate that may affect the perceived integrity of the board. Such relationships include, but are not limited to, spousal, immediate relative by blood, marriage, adoption or blended family up to the fourth degree of kinship (i.e., first cousin), fiancé(e), significant other or other intimate partner, ex-family member, business relationship or an accuser/accused in legal proceedings. If you have any doubts or reservations, err on the side of disclosing the relationship. This is a continuing obligation throughout the board proceedings. If necessary, take such action as will protect the integrity of the board process as outlined in paragraph 3j below.

i. Before the report of the advancement selection board is signed, the recommendations and proceedings may be disclosed only to the members of the board, the recorder, assistant recorders and those administrative support staff I have designated in writing. After you sign the board report and the public release has been made, only the names of the selectees and non-selectees may be disclosed. Procedures and processes of the board may be discussed only in general terms. The proceedings and deliberations of the board may not be disclosed to any person not a board member, recorder or assistant recorder, except to request relief from board duties as outlined in paragraph 3j below.

j. If at any time you believe that you cannot in good conscience perform your duties as a member of the board without prejudice or partiality, you have a duty to request relief by me from this duty. I will honor any such request. If you believe that the integrity of the board's proceedings have been affected by improper influence of military or civilian authority, misconduct by the board president, board SEA, a member or any other reason, you have a duty to request from me or higher authority relief from your obligation not to disclose board proceedings and, upon receiving it, to report the basis for your belief.

k. During the period the board is in session, you are not authorized to hold social gatherings/meetings that involve any personnel not listed on enclosures (1) and (2) of the convening order. Regardless, discussions involving board actions may only be held in board spaces with the recorder or assistant recorders present.

4. Marital/Dependency Status. Advancement selection boards are prohibited from considering the marital or dependency status of an eligible candidate or the race, religion, color, sex, gender (including gender identity), sexual orientation, national origin, employment, education or volunteer service of a candidate's spouse.

5. Leadership of Diverse Organizations

a. Our differences give us the strength, courage and creativity necessary to accomplish our mission in and meaningfully contribute to, an ever-changing world. The ability to maintain current and future readiness requires that we understand our differences and recognize the valuable contributions our differences make to the Department of the Navy and to our nation. As we build the Navy of the 21st Century, we must be able to operate successfully and with credibility across our nation and in a challenging multi-cultural world. When reviewing a candidate's potential for the next higher rank, consider that the Navy benefits when the Navy leadership possesses a broad spectrum of experience, background, perspective, innovative talent and a depth and breadth of vision, drawn from every facet of the society it serves and understanding of the world within which it operates. The Navy needs innovative and bold leaders to lead, think creatively, challenge assumptions and take well-calculated risks that maximize effectiveness.

b. Today's Navy is composed of Sailors representing dozens of different ethnic groups and literally hundreds of cultural heritages. Similarly, our allies, partners and friends across the globe represent a broad range of experience, backgrounds, perceptions and understandings - regionally, nationally or through agreements. To be effective, Navy leaders must draw upon the Navy's rich diversity of experience, backgrounds, perspective, innovative talent and depth and breadth of vision. You should give careful attention to selecting candidates who possess these valuable attributes and have demonstrated the potential to lead large organizations in a complex world composed of Sailors coming from widely varying backgrounds. The

Navy's ability to meet this leadership challenge depends, in part, on having leaders for and from our entire Navy who reflect our very best, including performance, background, professional experience, education and the spectrum of professional communities. These are factors for you to consider in selecting candidates who are best and fully qualified for advancement.

6. Area Tours. If a candidate's record contains multiple or consecutive tours in a particular geographic location, it should not be viewed negatively, provided the candidate has progressed in billet complexity, professional development and leadership responsibility. Likewise, those candidates who have demonstrated the ability to succeed in challenging assignments in diverse geographic locations, particularly overseas, should be viewed positively.

7. Record Review. Commands should have taken proactive steps to ensure candidates' records are properly updated and that candidates review their Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) and Performance Summary Record (PSR) and submit letters to the board (LTBs) as appropriate. Each candidate has the opportunity to review his or her OMPF and PSR and then exercise reasonable diligence to ensure his or her record is complete and accurate. If the OMPF or PSR does not get updated, candidates have the opportunity to provide the missing or corrective documentation via the candidate's LTB. If there is missing information in the record, board members shall evaluate the record with what is available. Candidates are not required to submit a LTB to notify the board that everything is complete and accurate in their record.

a. In evaluating a gap in a candidate's evaluation history, consideration should be given to the fact that any gap, regardless of its duration, results in a period of undocumented performance.

b. Some candidates may have breaks in service of extended length due to enrollment in Career Intermission Program or release from active/inactive duty. These breaks in service should be considered as a natural part of a candidate's history of assignments and shall not be viewed negatively. Board members shall evaluate these records in the same fashion as other candidates who do not have a break in service. The entire record shall be reviewed for those candidates who are being considered for selection to the next higher rank.

c. A decline in performance is a drop of two or more evaluation trait grades by the same reporting senior on subsequent reports within the same paygrade or promotion status. If the comments specifically state it is not a decline in performance, the report is not considered adverse. A decline in trait grades due to a transfer between a command's shore and sea components with the same reporting senior is not in itself considered a decline in performance or an adverse report.

d. A decline in performance also occurs when there is a drop in promotion recommendation by the same reporting senior on subsequent reports within the same paygrade or promotion status. If comments clearly state it is caused by forced distribution, it is not considered a decline in performance or an adverse evaluation.

e. The Reporting Senior's Cumulative Average (RSCA) is the reporting senior's historical trait average of all Sailors (active-duty and reserve) within a paygrade. Board members shall compare the RSCA to the candidate's individual trait average (as evaluated by that reporting senior) to determine the candidate's level of performance. Board members shall also compare the individual trait average to the summary group being reported.

f. During deliberations, a candidate's entire record is available for review.

8. Adverse Information

a. Just as you must consider positive performance, you must consider incidents of misconduct or substandard or marginal performance documented in a candidate's official service record when selecting candidates who are best and fully qualified for advancement. Adverse information may reflect negatively on a candidate's suitability for selection and future service in positions of greater responsibility and trust. For those candidates who are recommended for selection and who have received disciplinary action or whose official military personnel file contains matters relating to conduct or performance of duty that was documented within the past 5 years (regardless of the date the underlying matter occurred), every board member in that respective tank shall be briefed on the adverse information contained therein prior to the final board decision. Board members must differentiate between

discriminators and adverse information during review and briefing to ensure each record receives thorough and fair consideration.

b. While the Navy is and will remain a service of the highest standards and strict accountability, we do not embrace blind adherence to a zero-defect mentality. Many of us have made mistakes in the past, the test is of the character and resilience of the candidate and his or her ability to learn and grow from that experience. Also, some reportable incidents are of a more serious nature than others. Where a candidate has performed exceptionally well in the time subsequent to a reportable incident, I consider the test to be substantially met. Taking into account the candidate's entire career performance, the severity of the incident and the candidate's performance after the reportable incident, as well as the amount of time that has passed since the incident, you shall determine if the candidate has fully recovered. You should not automatically discount any candidate who, except for a single incident, would otherwise be considered best and fully qualified for advancement.

c. For those members having transferred to the Reserve Component after service in the Active Component, you are charged with maintaining the promotion standard - they are the same for AC and RC. I would expect a significant discussion to take place and exceptional performance and circumstances to warrant promotion in the RC after having failed to promote to the same grade in the AC.

APPENDIX - B

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY GUIDANCE

1. The Department of the Navy is dedicated to equality of treatment and opportunity for all personnel without regard to race, religion, color, sex, gender, (including gender identity), sexual orientation or national origin. Discrimination on any of these bases is contrary to the Department's values of honor, courage and commitment. The Navy strives to maintain a professional working environment in which an individual's race, religion, color, sex, gender, (including gender identity), sexual orientation or national origin will not limit his or her professional opportunities. Accordingly, within this board's charter to determine the candidates who are best and fully qualified, you must ensure that candidates of every race, religion, color, sex, gender, (including gender identity), sexual orientation and national origin are given fair and equitable consideration.

2. Your evaluation of all candidates must be fair and equitable. You should be particularly vigilant in your evaluation of records to take care that no candidate's advancement selection opportunity is disadvantaged by service utilization policies or practices. You should evaluate each candidate's potential to assume the responsibilities of the next higher rank. This includes his or her ability to successfully lead a diverse organization, the overriding factor being performance of duties assigned.

3. The Navy benefits when we capitalize on the diverse experience, perspective, innovative spirit, background and ideas in our ranks. Diversity is not founded on statistics, percentages or quotas. Diversity is about achieving peak performance. Our Navy should draw upon the entire possible set of talents and backgrounds to maximize our warfighting capability, innovate to address new threats and challenges and take advantage of emergent opportunities.

4. The Navy has assigned some candidates outside of traditional career development patterns. These assignments, though greatly beneficial to the Navy, may have foreclosed to the candidates so assigned opportunities available to other candidates. In addition, other utilization policies or practices, such as those based on statutory restrictions on the assignment of women, may have had an effect on career opportunities. Such assignment practices should not prejudice the selection of these men and

women for advancement, to do so may deny the Navy diversity of talent, background and experience we should seek and which is necessary for sustained success in our changing world. Successful performance of duties assigned is the key in measuring a candidate's potential for advancement. These duties performed well by men and women affected by such utilization policies or practices should be given weight equal to duties performed well by a candidate not affected by such policies or practices.

5. This guidance should not be interpreted as requiring or permitting preferential treatment of any candidate or group of candidates on the grounds of race, religion, color, sex, gender, (including gender identity), sexual orientation or national origin.

APPENDIX - C

BOARD REPORTS

1. The record of the board's proceedings shall be compiled by the recorder, assistant recorder(s) and administrative support staff. The written report of the board shall be signed by the board president, board SEA, members, recorder and assistant recorder(s). It shall contain the names of the candidates recommended for advancement, with appropriate selection statistics, as well as the following items:

a. Convening Order.

b. All instructions, information and guidance that were provided to the board, except information concerning particular candidates, which must be retained and transferred to Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel.

c. Certification that:

(1) To the best of your knowledge, the board complied with all instructions contained in this precept and the convening order and, as appropriate, other letters of guidance or instruction provided by me.

(2) You were not subject to or aware of any censure, reprimand or admonishment about the recommendations of the board or the exercise of any lawful function within the authorized discretion of the board.

(3) You were not subject to or aware of any attempt to coerce or improperly influence any action in the formulation of the board's recommendations.

(4) You were not party to or aware of any attempt at unauthorized communications.

(5) To the best of your knowledge, the board carefully considered the record of each candidate whose name was furnished to the board.

(6) The candidates recommended for advancement are, in the opinion of the majority of the members of the respective tank group, fully qualified and best qualified to meet the needs of the Navy from those candidates whose names were furnished to the board.

(7) You are aware that the names of the selectees will be released to the public after the board report is approved, and you know that you may not disclose the recommended selectees until the names are released to the public.

(8) You understand that, except as authorized by Naval Regulations, you may never disclose the proceedings, discussions or recommendations of the board to any person who is not a board member, recorder or assistant recorder.

d. A list of all candidates eligible for consideration.

e. This precept.

2. The report shall be forwarded for approval to me via the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel.

APPENDIX - D

OATHS

1. The president of the board or a commissioned officer shall administer the following oath or affirmation to the recorder and assistant recorders:

"Do each of you, solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will keep a true record of the proceedings of this board and you will not divulge the proceedings of this board except as authorized or required by the Chief of Naval Personnel or higher authority, so help you God?"

2. The president of the board or a commissioned officer shall then administer the following oath or affirmation to the members of the board:

"Do each of you, solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will perform your duties as a member of this board without prejudice or partiality, having in view both the special fitness of candidates and the efficiency of the naval service and you will not divulge the proceedings of this board except as authorized or required by the Chief of Naval Personnel or higher authority, so help you God?"

3. The president of the board or a commissioned officer shall then administer the following oath or affirmation to the administrative support staff:

"Do each of you, solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will not divulge the proceedings of this board except as authorized or required by the Chief of Naval Personnel or higher authority, so help you God?"