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SUBJ/FY-27 SURFACE WARFARE EARLY COMMAND BOARD (NR 431)  
ANNOUNCEMENT//  
REF/A/DOC/CNSF/06MAY2025//  
REF/B/DOC/CNPC/04SEP2020//  
NARR/REF A IS CNSFINST 1412.7B, SURFACE WARFARE OFFICER CAREER  
MANUAL. REF B IS MILPERSMAN ARTICLE 1301-804, OFFICER POLICIES AND  
PROCEDURES - COMMAND SCREEN PROCEDURES.//  
POC/KENTON/LCDR/CNPC PERS 412S/MILLINGTON TN/  
CHAD.A.KENTON.MIL(AT)US.NAVY.MIL/901-874-3890//  
POC/BONSALL/LCDR/CNPC PERS 412M/MILLINGTON TN/  
NICHOLAS.A.BONSALL.MIL(AT)US.NAVY.MIL/901-874-3485//  
RMKS/

1. This message announces upcoming board convening dates and cutting-edge Commanding Officer opportunities beyond the Early Command options outlined in ref (a).

## 2. Background

111x Department Heads, post Department Heads, and post Division Officers may compete for Executive/Commanding Officer opportunities for UxS Task Group Command (post Division Officer only), Mine Countermeasures (MCM), and Expeditionary Fast Transport Vessel (T-EPF).

2.1. The UxS Task Group Commander billet is a post-Division Officer Early Command opportunity at the forefront of manned and unmanned hybrid fleet operations. UxS Task Group Early Commanders have the opportunity to lead teams that directly contribute to future fleet design, capability, and lethality. These billets are located at USVRON-1 (Port Hueneme, CA), USVRON-3 (San Diego, CA), USVRON-7 (San Diego, CA), and CTF-59 (Bahrain). UxS Task Group Commanders will lead combined military and industry, multi-purpose teams capable of integrating UxS capabilities within traditional naval command and control across the globe. The UxS LT Commanding Officer will be charged with developing new tactics, techniques, and procedures for integrating unmanned vessels, payload integration, navigation, and teaming with afloat and ashore command and control assets. They will command at the tip of the spear, entrusted to make on scene command decisions. The Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV) Task

Group Commanders will operate offensively as an extension of the Navy's surface fleet in a high density, multi-threat environment as an integral element of an Expeditionary or Carrier Strike Group (ESG/CSG) or Surface Action Group (SAG). CTF-59 Early Commanders, based in Bahrain, will be charged with leading the rapid integration of cutting-edge maritime robotics and artificial intelligence into fleet operations. CTF-59 leverages commercial dual-use technologies to enhance maritime domain awareness. This is a heavily partnered effort and will include engagement with regional and global partners to develop and deliver capability at pace. Early Commanders selected for these positions will be on the leading edge of human-machine teaming while engaged in real-world operations. Department Head Retention Bonus (DHRB) is not required to screen for UxS or CTF-59 Early Command.

2.2. The T-EPF Commanding Officer billet is a LCDR Early Command opportunity. There will be four operational T-EPF platforms assigned to the INDOPACOM AOR designated as part of the Littoral Maneuver Bridging Solution (LMBS) in conjunction with the United States Marine Corps. Notional timeline for execution is November 2025, and the first Commanding Officers are being slated this year. An 11-person Navy crew consisting of six Officers and five enlisted, with a 15-person MSC crew for engineering/supply billets. The structure will consist of Blue/Gold crewing, with the off-hull crew being based out of San Diego, California.

2.3. The MCM Executive/Commanding Officer (Sasebo, Japan) is the remaining Early Command opportunity. The Avenger Class vessels are designed as mine sweepers/hunter-killers capable of finding, classifying, and destroying moored and bottom mines. These Warships are strategically forward deployed and assigned to missions vital for the U.S. to protect national security interests.

### 3. Screening Board Details

The FY27 Board NR 431 will convene on 03 NOV 2025. Complete packages and all correspondence shall be submitted via the EESBD submission portal on BUPERS Online NLT 2359 CST 24 OCT 2025. Electronic submission via e-mail to message POC is required.

3A. Post-Division Officers applying to UxS Task Group Early Command have modified requirements from ref (a) and must complete the following:

3A.1. Attain formal designation as a SWO (111X).

3A.2. Serve at least 36 months in a Surface Warship and complete at least one deployment.

3A.3. While assigned to a Warship, demonstrate sustained skill in navigation, shiphandling, and seamanship per ref (a).

3A.4. Attain Engineering Officer of the Watch (EOOW).

3A.5. Complete the SWSC Basic Division Officer course (BDOC) and Advanced Division Officer course (ADOC). SWO nuclear trained Officers are exempt from the ADOC requirement.

3A.6. Screen for Department Head afloat. Officers are not required to sign DHRB to be eligible for UxS or CTF-59 Lieutenant Command.

3A.7. LT Early Command Officers must screen prior to YCS-6 and be available to start training NLT YCS-7 ISO milestone considerations and career timing.

3B. A complete command screening package will be forwarded to PERS-41 for inclusion in the Early Command screening board. The package should be submitted electronically to PERS-41 by the requesting officer and should include:

3B.1. Written request for Early Command, should discuss operational experience in the last two at-sea tours;

3B.2. Commanding Officer endorsement letter;

3B.3. First Flag Officer in chain of command endorsement letter; Type Commander (TYCOM) endorsement is not required, unless the TYCOM is the first Flag Officer in the chain of command.

3B.4. SWCLA letter. All officers who are applying for Early Command must complete SWCLA prior to applying in order to be eligible for consideration.

3B.5. Command qualification record for SWOs from ref (a).

3C. If selected, post-Division Officers will complete the respective SWSC command training pipelines (to include the applicable Command Assessment (CA) and a DH 360 degree review), attend command leadership course at Naval Leadership and Ethics Center (NLEC), and be designated as qualified for command prior to assuming command.

3C.1. Post-Division Officer candidates are required to complete the post-DIVO CA during pipeline. The post-DIVO CA does not have to be completed prior to the command qualification oral board. Completion of the post-DIVO SWSC CA will not affect an Officer's requirement to complete the CDR CMD CA. Prior to assuming command, Officers must forward post-DIVO CA completion and command qual oral

board completion paperwork to the appropriate TYCOM for final designation as "qualified for command."

3D. Officer records screened for Early Command will be updated with an Early Command screening code. Please note there is a potential not all Officers screened for Early Command will be slated. This is due largely to timing and availability. Historically, more Officers screen for Early Command than are required in order to maintain flexibility in the assignment process. If slated, Officers can expect to serve as a MCM, T-EPF, or UxS Task Group Commanding Officer. Slating is based on preferences, timing, and needs of the Navy. If not slated to command, an Officer will be assigned to a traditional post Department Head or Division Officer shore tour as appropriate.

3E. Failure to screen for Early Command is not a negative reflection of an Officer's record, nor is there any indication of non-selection entered into an Officer's official record.

3F. Results of the Early Command screening board are forwarded to CNSF for final review and approval.

3G. Once approved, Officers will be notified of board results by PERS-41 and the slating process will begin.

#### 4. Amplifying Information

Early Command is a tremendous and rewarding opportunity for Junior Officers. The best and fully qualified Officers are selected to command early. Principal screening criteria for each applicant is demonstrated/observed performance at-sea as a Division Officer and/or Department Head. If career timing supports, applicants who do not screen are encouraged to reapply for future boards.

4A. MCM Executive Officer/Commanding Officer fleet-up billets will nominally be 12-15 months in duration for a combined 24-30 month tour. UxS Task Group Command tours are 18 months in duration. T-EPF Command tours are 24 months in duration.

5. Specific questions should be directed to LCDR Kenton, at 901-874-3890, or email at [chad.a.kenton.mil@us.navy.mil](mailto:chad.a.kenton.mil@us.navy.mil) //

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