



CTI CAREER PATH
(IW/AW/EXW/NAC/PJ/SG/SW)

Cryptologic Technician Interpretive (CTI). CTIs are professional Cryptologic Language Analysts (CLA), specializing in analysis of foreign military operations, radiotelephone communications, cyber operations, and preparation of statistical studies/technical reports requiring proficiency in foreign language and regional/cultural expertise (LREC).					
YEARS OF SERVICE	CAREER MILESTONES	AVERAGE TIME TO ADVANCE	COMMISSIONING OR OTHER SPECIAL PROGRAMS	SEA / SHORE FLOW	TYPICAL CAREER PATH DEVELOPMENT
26-30	CTICM	21.5 Yrs	CSEL	Not Defined	8 th – 9 th Tour Billet: Staff Duty/CSEL/CSLA Duty: BUPERS, CIWT, CNRC, CWA, CWG, FCC/C10F, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NIOC/NIOD, NSA/CSS, NSW, OPNAV
23-26	CTICM CTICS	21.5 Yrs 17.1	CSEL	Not Defined	7 th – 8 th Tour Billet: Staff Duty/CSEL/CSLA. Duty: BUPERS, CIWT, CWA, CWG, CWMA, FCC/C10F, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NCU, NIOC/NIOD, NPC, NSA/CSS, NSW, OPNAV, RTC Qualification: CSEL, SEA
20-23	CTICM CTICS CTIC	21.5 Yrs 17.1 12.9	CWO, CSEL	Not Defined	6 th – 7 th Tour Billet: Staff Duty/CSEL/Dept/Dir LCPO, Tactical Supervisor, CSLA/TLA, Cyber Teams Duty: BUPERS, CIWT, CNRC, CSG, CWA, CWG, CWMA, Cyber, DTRA, FCC/C10F, Fleet/Joint Staff, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NCU, NIOC/NIOD, NPC, NRC, NSA/CSS, NSW, OPNAV, RTC Qualification: SEA, ELDC
16-20	CTICM CTICS CTIC CTII	21.5 Yrs 17.1 12.9 7.7	CWO, OCS, CSEL, Recruiting, RDC, Screened special programs	Not Defined	5 th - 6 th Tour Billet: Staff Duty/CSEL/Detailer/Div/Dept LCPO/LPO/Direct Support LCPO/LPO, Watch Supervisor, Lead Instructor, Instructor, Lead Analyst, Tactical Supervisor, Cyber Teams, WTI, CSLA/TLA Duty: BUPERS, CIWT, CNRC, CSG, CWA, CWG, CWMA, Cyber, DPAA, DTRA, FCC/C10F, Fleet/Joint Staff, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NCU, NCWDG, NIOC/NIOD, NPC, NRC, NSA/CSS, NSW, OPNAV, RTC, WHCA Qualification: SEA, ELDC, MTS, Adjunct Faculty, IW, SW, AW, SG, EXW, NAC



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12-16	CTIC CTI1	12.9 Yrs 7.7	CWO, OCS, Recruiting, RDC, Screened special programs Internship: MECCAP, MLAP	Not Defined	4 th - 5 th Tour Billet: Div/Dept LCPO/LPO, Direct Support LCPO/LPO, Watch Supervisor, Lead Instructor, Instructor, Lead Analyst, Tactical Operator/Analyst, Cyber Teams, CLPM, WTI Duty: CIWT, CNRC, CSG, CWA, CWG, CWMA, Cyber, DPAA, DTRA, FCC/C10F, Fleet/Joint Staff, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NCU, NCWDG, NIOC/NIOD, NPC, NRC, NSA/CSS, NSW, RTC, WHCA Qualification: ELDC, MTS, Adjunct Faculty, IW, SW, AW, SG, EXW, NAC
8-12	CTIC CTI1 CTI2	12.9 Yrs 7.7 4.0	OCS, Recruiting, RDC, Screened special programs Internship: MECCAP, MLAP	Not Defined	3 rd – 4 th Tour Billet: Div/Dept LCPO/LPO, Direct Support Supervisor, Watch Supervisor, Instructor, Senior Language Analyst, Senior Operator, Tactical Operator/Analyst, Special Programs, Cyber Teams, CLPM Duty: CIWT, CNRC, CSG, CWA, CWG, CWMA, Cyber, DPAA, DTRA, FCC/C10F, Fleet/Joint Staff, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NCU, NCWDG, NIOC/NIOD, NPC, NRC, NSA/CSS, NSW, PEP, RTC, WHCA Qualification: ELDC, MTS, Adjunct Faculty, IW, SW, AW, SG, EXW, NAC
4-8	CTI1 CTI2 CTI3	7.7 Yrs 4.0 2.0	STA-21, OCS, USNA/NAPS, Recruiting, RDC, Screened special programs Internship: MECCAP, MLAP	Not Defined	2 nd Tour Billet: Senior Language Analyst, Senior Operator, Direct Support Op, Tactical Operator/Analyst, Cyber Teams Duty: CSG, CWA, CWG, CWMA, Cyber, DPAA, DTRA, Fleet Staff, IWTC, NAVIFOR, NAWDC, NCU, NCWDG, NIOC/NIOD, NPC, NRC, NSA/CSS, NSW, PEP WHCA Qualification: ELDC, IW, SW, AW, SG, EXW, NAC
2-5	CTI2 CTI3	4.0 Yrs 2.0	STA-21, OCS, USNA/NAPS	Not Defined	1 st Tour Billet: Language Analyst, Basic Operator, Direct Support Duty: NIOC/NIOD (HI, MD, GA, TX, Korea) Qualification: ELDC, IW, SW, AW, SG
1+	SN SA Accession Training	0.5 Yrs	STA-21, OCS, USNA/NAPS	Not Defined	Recruit Training/Student “A” School



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Notes:

1. **Becoming a CTI:** “A” School required. CTI “A” school consists of two A3 (NEC awarding) courses. Part 1 is language instruction at Defense Language Institute (DLI) which awards a language NEC. Part 2 is follow-on cryptologic training at Goodfellow AFB which awards the C30-C33A NECs. Sailors already having requisite language capability may be waived from attending DLI, but a Sailor cannot be rated as a CTI until successful completion of the cryptologic course.
2. **Clearance Requirements:** CTIs shall maintain an adjudicated TS/SCI clearance. Counter-Intelligence polygraphs and access to assigned mission spaces are required for assignment at most locations.
3. **Advancement Groups:** The CTI community is organized into five advancement groups which are affiliated with a geographic region or area of interest. CTIs (Groups 1-4) are identified both by the group affiliation and the primary language(s) to which they are assigned. The primary accession languages are Arabic, Chinese-Mandarin, Korean, Persian-Farsi, Russian, and Spanish. Hebrew graduates are encouraged to re-train into another language due to billet structure limitations.
 - a. CTI (Group 1) comprises Middle Eastern/North African languages.
 - b. CTI (Group 2) comprises Eastern/Far Eastern languages.
 - c. CTI (Group 3) comprises Latin/South American languages.
 - d. CTI (Group 4) comprises Eastern European languages.
 - e. CTI (Compressed at E9) comprises all CTICMs with no language affiliation.
4. **“Fully Qualified” DLPT Requirements:** All CTIs competing for advancement **MUST** achieve a minimum of L2/R2 on the most recent Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) in their primary language, as assigned by their CO (also known as the control language (CLANG)) , to be eligible to participate in the advancement cycle. CTIs scoring L3/R3 or higher on the DLPT are required to recertify at least every two years. CTIs scoring below L3/R3 are required to recertify every year. To ensure clarity during record reviews, boards, or advancement cycles, DLPT scores should be written into evaluations noting the month and year or documentation should be provided as listed in 4.b. or 4.c.
 - a. DLPT test scores are valid through the first day of the first month after the previous certification date unless the Sailor recertifies or an exception to policy is granted. For example, a score dated 14JUN25 is valid through 01JUL26 (or 01JUL27 for L3/R3).
 - b. Acceptable documentation of DLPT scores includes an evaluation with language scores listed or the auto-generated memorandum for the record score report accessible via Command Language Program Manager (CLPM) access from the Navy Foreign Language Testing Office (NFLTO) database forwarded to the board via the candidate's Letter to the Board (LTB). Sailors are strongly advised to include the NFLTO memo in any LTB.
 - c. Any CTI whose primary language DLPT has expired **MUST** possess a valid waiver from the Navy Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Office (OPNAV N13F) in order to participate in the Navy-Wide Advancement Examination (NWAE) or to be eligible for selection by a CPO, SCPO, or MCPO screening board. Sailors are strongly advised to include the waiver in any LTB.
 - d. See BUPERSINST 1430.16, “Special requirements for CTI Personnel” for further information.
5. **Sea-Shore Rotation and Days Deployed:** Core cryptologic language operations are performed by CTIs both at sea and on shore. The CTI billet base does not support a standardized Sea-Shore Rotation and CTIs cannot serve PCS afloat. Due consideration should be given to those demonstrating a balance between sea/arduous and shore assignments. Depending on language, CTIs may not have the opportunity to serve outside a few commands. Therefore, consecutive tours shall not be considered negatively, provided that a CTI continues to grow in billet complexity, technical expertise, and responsibility. Sailors can enhance evaluation clarity by annotating the number of days spent on operational deployments.
6. **Hard-to-fill Assignments:** Sailors who have completed successful tours in hard-to-fill jobs, such as Korea, Direct Support (DIRSUP) submarines, Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), Defense POW/MIA



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Accounting Agency (DPAA), Special Projects Air/Surface/Subsurface, and Special Operations are highly valued by the CTI community and should be given favorable consideration.

7. **Warfare Qualifications and Sea Time:** Enlisted Information Warfare Specialist (EIWS) is expected for all CTIs and lack of EIWS should be explained in the LTB. Sea time is accrued through DIRSUP missions on Aircrew, Surface, or Subsurface platforms as well as in the Naval Special Warfare (NSW) community. CTIs may accrue extensive sea time yet not attain a warfare qualification other than EIWS due to augmentation aboard different class platforms and inconsistencies across platform types during a DIRSUP tour.
8. **Cyber Operations:** Due to the lengthy cyber mission training pipeline and in order to build technical expertise with operational impact, retouring in cyber teams is encouraged and shall not be a negative consideration.
9. **Special Operations:** Select CTIs with exceptional technical expertise and physical fitness qualify to serve with NSW and other Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) priority units. Though their contributions are often unconventional in comparison to those of a typical CTI, these Sailors contribute to National and Navy missions in their own distinct way. These Sailors are still expected to demonstrate sustained superior performance and technical expertise, while also maintaining language readiness standards. It is important to note that special operations tours are longer than other tours for most ratings and due consideration should be afforded to those who are excelling but whose career progression may appear delayed within this highly competitive peer group.
10. **Cryptologic Internship Programs:** The Military Language Analyst Program (MLAP), Middle Enlisted Cryptologic Career Advancement Program (MECCAP), and other National Security Agency (NSA) apprenticeship programs are highly competitive and groom experts in their respective disciplines. These programs incur a six-year obligation with the first three years to complete or graduate the program prior to a follow-on three-year tour. During the initial three-year internship, a Sailor may not be afforded the opportunity for traditional Navy leadership while they focus on in-depth technical expertise. “Graduating” the program indicates the CTI has completed all requirements while “completing” the program indicates the CTI was unable to complete all requirements, normally the L3/R3 DLPT requirement. Graduates should apply for and hold the Master Cryptologic Language Analyst NEC (C25A).
11. **Joint Service Work Roles:** Many joint service billets exist across the CTI billet base, mostly located at CWG-6, NIOC, and NIOD commands. These organizations may use titles such as Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC), Senior NCOIC (SNCOIC), and Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) interchangeably. These roles are the operational equivalent to the hierarchical duties of a Division LCPO/LPO, Department LCPO/LPO, or Directorate SEL. Evaluations should include the number of personnel and/or number of work centers supervised as well as any technical leadership encompassed within these roles.
12. **MCCEP:** The NSA/CSS Military Cryptologic Continuing Education Program (MCCEP) legacy program was a voluntary three to four-phase program completed through specified National Cryptologic University (NCU) courses, DLPT scores, and mission experience which relied heavily on assignment at an NSA/CSS location. MCCEP 2025 is an auto-enrolled program that captures the career progress of service members through the Cryptologic Training System Training Standards (CTS-TS) based on completion of job qualification standards, on-the-job training, NCU, and service training regardless of assignment. The three phases of MCCEP 2025 are Phase 0 - Apprentice, Phase 1 - Intermediate, and Phase 2 - Advanced.
13. **Additional Considerations:** Favorable consideration should be given to CTIs who demonstrate both technical leadership and leadership of command or department level organizations such as collateral duties, Enlisted Leader Development Continuum (ELDC) courses, CPO Initiation, Sailor 360, or Chief Petty Officer/First Class Petty Officer/Junior Enlisted Associations.



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Considerations for advancement from E6 to E7

Fully Qualified:

- **DLPT:** Score a minimum of L2/R2 on most recent DLPT in their primary language and be within periodicity standards. (See note 4)
- **ELDC:** Complete the Advanced Leader Development Course per current Navy guidance. It is recommended to include proof of completion in the LTB if the course is not documented in evaluations.
- **Warfare Qualification:** See note 7.

Best Qualified:

- **Technical Leadership:** Documented technical expertise with operational impact, preferably developing language analysts, developing new mission sets, improving systems or equipment, and/or employment of new tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) to include cross-training in additional technical disciplines.
- **Navy and Mission Leadership:** Documented leadership with results as an LPO, SEL, Workcenter Supervisor/Mission Supervisor, NCOIC Battle Watch Supervisor, SIGINT Sensor Manager, ACDSE Supervisor, Subsurface DSE Supervisor (NEC C24A), Line of Effort (LOE)/Team Lead, or Instructor. See note 11.
- **Exceeds Language Standards:** Scored above L2/R2 on most recent DLPT or displays history of achieving scores above L2/R2 in their primary language.
- **Language Programs:** Leadership of language programs with documented impact (e.g. Command/Department Language Program Manager (C/DLPM), Technical Language Mentor (TLM), Remedial Language Training Program (RLTP) language Mentor, etc.)
- **Rating Leadership:** Participate in rating leadership via Occupational Standards (OCCSTDS), Job Duty Task Analysis (JDTA), Training Requirements Review (TRR), Personnel Qualifications Standards (PQS), DLPT standard setting, Rate Training Manual (RTM) updates, Regional and Cultural Studies Program (RCSP) updates, and other community working groups.
- **Special Assignments:** Personnel assigned to internship programs, Navy Personnel Command (NPC), Navy Recruiting Command (NRC), Recruit Training Command (RTC), or as training command instructors (“A” schools or National Cryptologic University (NCU)) are carefully screened and selected for those assignments.
 - For Sailors serving on instructor duty, Master Training Specialist (MTS) is expected if available. Those serving in a NCU billet may not be eligible for MTS, but all should qualify Adjunct Faculty or Faculty Certification.
- **Warfare Program:** Actively leads within the EIWS program. Other Enlisted Warfare pins are expected when available.
- **Technical Qualifications:** Completion of MCCEP phases or other technical certifications/qualifications. See note 12.
- **Education:**
 - Completion of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Regional Security Studies Master Certificate Program.
 - Completion of the DLI Associate of Arts (AA) degree. This degree is available to all graduates of DLI.
 - Completion of the DLI Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree. This degree is only available to graduates of the DLI Intermediate and Advanced courses and opportunities are limited.
 - Completion of the National Intelligence University (NIU) Bachelor of Science in Intelligence (BSI), Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence (MSSI), or Master of Science and Technology Intelligence (MSTI) program.
 - Rating-related post-secondary education.
- **Peer Leadership:** Demonstrated leadership of peers via FCPO Mess and/or FCPOA leadership.



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Considerations for advancement from E7 to E8

Fully Qualified:

- **DLPT:** Score a minimum of L2/R2 on most recent DLPT in their primary language and be within periodicity standards. (See note 4)
- **ELDC:** Completion of the Chief Petty Officer Leader Development Course per current Navy guidance. It is recommended to include proof of completion if the 8LDC NEC is not reflected in Sailor's Electronic Service Record (ESR).
- **Warfare Qualification:** See note 7.

Best Qualified:

- **Technical Leadership:** Documented technical expertise with operational impact, preferably developing language analysts, developing new mission sets, improving systems or equipment, and/or employment of new TTPs to include cross-training in additional technical disciplines.
- **Navy and Mission Leadership:** Documented leadership with results as an LCPO, SEL/NCOIC, Workcenter Supervisor/Mission Supervisor, Battle Watch Chief/Supervisor, SIGINT Sensor Manager, ACDSE Supervisor or Subsurface DSE supervisor (NEC C24A), LOE/Team Lead, or Instructor. See note 11.
- **Exceeds Language Standards:** Displays history of achieving scores above L2/R2 in their primary language.
- **Language Programs:** Leadership of language programs with documented impact (e.g. CLPM, TLM, RLTP, language mentor, etc.).
- **Rating Leadership:** Participate in rating leadership via OCCSTDs, JDTA, TRR, PQS, Advancement Exam Readiness Review (AERR), Rating Strategy Council (RSC), DLPT standard setting, RTM updates, RCSP updates, and other community working groups.
- **Special Assignments:** Personnel assigned to Commander Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC), FCC/C10F, MLAP, NAVIFOR, RTC, or training command instructors ("A" schools or NCU) are carefully screened and selected for that assignment.
 - Sailors serving on instructor duty are expected to qualify MTS, if available. Those serving in a NCU billet may not be eligible for MTS, but all should qualify Adjunct Faculty or Faculty Certification.
- **Warfare Program: Actively leads within the EIWS program. Other Enlisted Warfare pins are expected when available.**
- **Technical Qualifications:** Completion of MCCEP phases or other technical certifications/qualifications. See note 12.
- **Education:**
 - Graduate Senior Enlisted Academy (SEA).
 - Completion of the NPS Regional Security Studies Masters Certificate Program.
 - Completion of the DLI AA degree. This degree is available to all graduates of DLI.
 - Completion of the DLI BA degree. This degree is available to graduates of the DLI Intermediate and Advanced courses and opportunities are limited.
 - Completion of NIU BSI, MSSSI, or MSTI program.
 - Rating-related post-secondary education.
- **Peer Leadership:** Demonstrated leadership of peers via CPO Mess, CPO Initiation and/or CPOA leadership.

Considerations for advancement from E8 to E9

Fully Qualified:

- **DLPT:** Score a minimum of L2/R2 on most recent DLPT in their primary language and be within periodicity standards. (See note 4)
- **ELDC:** Graduate the SEA, Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, USMC SEA, Coast Guard Senior Enlisted Leadership Course, Army Sergeants Major Academy, or the Joint Special



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Operations Forces SEA per current Navy guidance. It is recommended to include proof of completion if the 8SEA NEC is not reflected in Sailor's ESR.

- **Warfare qualification:** See note 7.

Best Qualified:

- **Technical Leadership:** Documented technical expertise with operational impact, preferably developing language analysts, developing new mission sets, improving systems or equipment, and/or employing new TTPs in include cross-training in additional technical disciplines.
- **Navy and Mission Leadership:** Documented leadership with results as a CSEL, Command Senior Language Advisor (CSLA), Department LCPO, Senior Mission Supervisor, or SEL/SNCOIC.. See note 11.
- **Exceeds Language Standards:** Displays history of achieving scores above L2/R2 in their primary language.
- **Language Programs:** Leadership of language programs with documented impact (e.g. CSLA, CLPM, TLM, RLTP, language mentor, etc.).
- **Rating Leadership:** Participate in rating improvement initiatives via OCCSTDs, JDTA, TRR, PQS, AERR, RSC, DLPT standard setting, RTM updates, RCSP updates, and other community working groups.
- **Special Assignments:** Personnel assigned to FCC/C10F, NAVIFOR, NPC, OPNAV, RTC, or a training command ("A" schools or NCU) are carefully screened and selected for that assignment.
 - Sailors serving on instructor duty are expected to qualify MTS, if available. Those serving in a NCU billet may not be eligible for MTS, but all should qualify Adjunct Faculty or Faculty Certification.
- **Warfare program:** Actively leads within the EIWS program. Other enlisted warfare pins are expected when available.
- **Technical Qualifications:** Completion of MCCEP phases or other technical certifications/qualifications. See note 12.
- **Education:**
 - Completion of the NPS Regional Security Studies Masters Certificate Program.
 - Completion of the DLI AA degree. This degree is available to all graduates of DLI.
 - Completion of the DLI BA degree. This degree is available to graduates of the DLI Intermediate and Advanced courses.
 - Completion of NIU BSI, MSSSI, or MSTI program.
 - Rating-related post-secondary education.
- **Peer Leadership:** Demonstrated leadership of peers via CPO Mess, CPO Initiation, and/or CPOA leadership.