

## **INTENT OF THIS BRIEFING:**

Probationary Officer Continuation and Redesignation (POCR) Boards can have more than 60 candidates for review, and not all seem equally prepared for the process. The steps in this brief are suggestions that may help you set yourself up for success and be selected by one of your preferred communities, even if it is not the CEC.

## **Helpful CEC Information Links:**

<https://www.navy.com/careers/civil-engineering>

<https://www.necc.usff.navy.mil/seabees/>

<https://www.navfac.navy.mil/Careers/Students-Grads/CEC-Accessions-Program/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PamwAhTqtFU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSu-HrxxitM>

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**Step 1:** One of the more important things for you to do in this process: reach out to the Officer Community Manager(s) (OCM). In your POCR package, you are supposed to apply to up to five designators, including one URL. Reach out to each OCM on your list.

As much as we would like to pick every single candidate that applies, we are constrained by year groups and quotas. I have had several candidates in the past boards who have put CEC as a desired designator, but did not contact me before the Board. If the POCR memorandum tells them to contact the Community Managers, but they do not, how strongly can I rate them?

CEC OCM Page: <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Career-Management/Community-Management/Officer/Active-OCM/Staff-Corps/Civil-Engineer-Corps/>

Have questions when you call or email. Some good questions for your first conversation can include:

“Am I eligible to join your community?”

“Do you have room in my year group?”

“Do you have references where I can research more about your community?”

“What TAD options are there for me to experience your community before the Board convenes?”

Be ready for the OCM to ask questions too, such as:

“Why are you redesignating?”

“What attracted you to the Civil Engineer Corps?”

“What do you know about what we do?”

**Step 2:** One concern I have noticed: candidates not researching the community. Do in-depth research on each community on your list. Find out about the requirements to join, what will be expected of you in the community, what is required for your career progression and the types of jobs you will do. The research prepares you for interviews and TAD. See the “Helpful CEC Information Links” at the top of the page.

**Step 3:** Request **no cost TAD** to work in the community (if possible). Work with your Admin department to get a 1-2 week TAD (more if possible) to experience the day to day life in each of your chosen communities. You may find out it is not the right call for you to join that community, and you

have the ability to contact that OCM and request they not select you. Try to take the “test drive” in as many communities as possible on your list. The no cost TAD should also not be funded by you.

**Step 4:** Request Letters of Recommendation from the supervisors at your TAD location and other senior officers who know you and observed your work. If timing does not allow it to be included in your package, ask the OCM if they are willing to accept a late recommendation. Letters of Recommendation and results of senior officer interviews can factor strongly into the CEC decision to select you.

**Step 5:** Follow up with each community on your list. Things like periodic check-in and asking good questions, even if by email, shows initiative and desire. Remember, we can’t pick up everyone who puts us as their #1 pick. Not following up, or only following up with one OCM, is like putting all your eggs in one basket. If that OCM can’t take you in your year group, what does that mean for you?

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### **No Cost TAD**

Is TAD required? No, however I find it highly valuable in determining if you are a good fit for the CEC. It also allows you to make sure the CEC is the right career choice for you – and it is better for both of us if you find this out sooner rather than later. If you are unable to do a TAD with the CEC for reasons such as:

- > Your command will not release you,
- > Insufficient time between receiving notice of POCR and package submission date, or
- > You did TAD time with other designators, and ran out of time before the Board
- **You are not out of luck.**

You can reach out to arrange an interview with a senior CEC officer in your area. Interviews are less preferred because it is more difficult to objectively assess you, but I have selected based on interviews before. I can also consider non-CEC specific comments from your TAD to other designators in making my decision, so if you do well on another TAD but they cannot select you, it can still help.

What is a desired TAD duration? The CEC prefers 2 weeks. This gives time for us to assign you tasks that you can complete, observe your work ethic, thought processes, etc. More than two weeks, we are negatively impacting your ability to explore TAD opportunities with other communities. Less than this and it is more difficult to make a good assessment and give you a strong positive Letter of Recommendation.

### **TAD Process:**

1. For the CEC, it is preferred that you coordinate your TAD after reaching out to the Community Manager to make sure I am tracking you as someone coming to POCR and considering the CEC.
2. Once we’ve made contact, we can discuss what units may be in your area with CEC Officers in your area.
  - a. It will be your responsibility to reach out to the unit and respectfully request a TAD opportunity.
  - b. It gives you a chance to find out important details before arrival, such as:
    - What uniforms to bring/wear

- Do you need to bring safety toe footwear?
- Where to report and when
- When and where is command PT
- Special access concerns for the building where you will work

3. Usually people do TAD on the base where they are currently assigned. During our interview I will ask you what Navy bases are near you.

4. After settling on the location, you will need to talk with your Admin department to find out when they will release you for your TAD.

#### What you will do on TAD:

It depends on the unit you go to, and what they have for you to do. POOCR candidates have performed studies, reviewed construction contract designs and documents, and participated in planning exercises, many times it is the same thing the junior officer they are shadowing does daily. More than once I have received a Letter of Recommendation describing specific projects where the POOCR candidate made a significant positive contribution to the office.

#### After the TAD:

1. Keep working on improving your chances with all communities up until the Board convenes – this is you influencing the course of your future!
  2. Review the elements in your POOCR Package – does your personal statement indicate your motivation to serve the Navy and **all** of your identified designators? Does it contain the information the Community Manager needs to confirm you meet their minimum requirements?
    - <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Career-Management/Boards/Administrative/POOCR/>
  3. Consider a “thank you” email to the Office where you did your TAD. They took time to work with you.
  4. Talk with the Community Manager. Reaffirm your desire to join their community. This does not mean to call us every week, but if there is something significant, or you have questions...
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#### FAQ: What makes a POOCR package strong/competitive?

1. Some of this is out of your control when you are notified that you are going to POOCR.
  - a. Objective factors: **Candidates not meeting these requirements are rarely, if ever, selected.**  
See Program Authorization for CEC Specifics:  
[https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Career/OCM/PA-104\\_CEC\\_Mar-2025.pdf?ver=HYdi\\_I7hksnmI2OnFiPAQg%3d%3d](https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Career/OCM/PA-104_CEC_Mar-2025.pdf?ver=HYdi_I7hksnmI2OnFiPAQg%3d%3d)
  - b. Minimum Qualifying Requirements
    - Engineering or Architecture Degree (must be ABET-EAC or NAAB Accredited program, or have your EIT)
      - <https://www.abet.org/accreditation/find-programs/>
      - <https://www.naab.org/accreditation/accredited-programs>
    - Engineering Technology Degrees also eligible if ABET-ETAC accredited and registered EIT or PE with NCEES
      - <https://ncees.org/>
    - Cumulative GPA (minimum 2.7)
    - Navy performance history (recommended for promotion and retention)
    - Secret security clearance (eligible)

- World-wide assignable/deployable (no restrictions)

c. Other things we consider, more subjective:

- Soft skills: what is your leadership experience, how you deal with leadership challenges, how you deal with personal challenges and setbacks, how you interact in a team-based environment, how you interact with peers, subordinates and superiors.

- Past relevant experience: expeditionary/forward deployed, contract administration, facilities operations, facility construction, project management.

d. If your year group has room and the Community Manager has POCR quotas remaining for the FY: Each community receiving POCRs has a given number of quotas, set by the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel. For strong candidates, we can occasionally receive additional quotas as long as we are not exceeding our authorized end strength for your rank. We can go a bit above our target for a year group if you are an otherwise strong candidate, but this means we may be shorting an adjacent year group.

FAQ: Do I need to take the Fundamentals of Engineering Exam (FE) to be considered or competitive? **If** your degree is from an ABET-EAC or NAAB accredited program, **NO\***. Given the choice between researching new opportunities and cramming for an exam that covers the full breadth of your engineering curriculum, in my opinion your time is better spent researching designators and career opportunities. You will need to pass the FE (or at least one of your architectural registration exams) before making O4, but not right now. Notice I also did not list the FE in the “how to be more competitive” answer...

\* If you do not have a degree from an ABET-EAC or NAAB accredited program, then **yes**, both the FE **and** registration as an Engineer in Training are required. ABET-ETAC (Technology) degrees require Engineer in Training registration to be considered. No waivers.

FAQ: What if I don't select you as my #1 choice? Do you still rank me?

Yes, if you “tell me” to. When I start my record review to rank candidates, I look at their personal statement and the recommendations in the application package.

- If the personal statement discusses the CEC and why they feel they are a good fit for us,
- If they have taken the time to seek CEC TAD and / or interviews, and
- If they have called me to ask at least those Step 1 questions, I can ignore the community rank order.

- I understand you have to select up to 4 other designators and not everyone can be #1.

- Statements such as, “If I am unable to be selected for (other designator), I would gladly accept redesignation into the CEC. I can bring value to the CEC because...” might be helpful.

Remember – I have limited quotas and cannot select every single candidate who applies. If your POCR package does not indicate serious interest in the CEC, my ranking of your record will reflect this.

FAQ: What happens at the POCR Board? How does the process work?

In the two weeks prior to the board, all of the Community Managers review the board packages to confirm eligibility for candidates who have requested to redesignate into their community. Ideally this is not the first time they are aware you are considering their community. (See step 1!) Candidate

records are ranked considering factors such as community requirements, available room in the year group, and available quotas.

The Board generally tries to balance needs of the Navy and desires of the member whenever possible. When the board convenes, each POCCR candidate record is briefed, followed by the rankings of the various community managers. After all records are briefed, the Board recommendations are presented to the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel for review and approval. The results are typically released within a few weeks of the board convening date, however there have been occasions where the results have not been released for a month or more. Please do not ask the Community Manager to tell you the results before the approval memo is released – we are not allowed to discuss this.

FAQ: The results are out, what now?

Contact your new Detailer! Use the Navy Personnel Command website, Officer menu to navigate to the Detailer contact. Although your new Detailer probably already knows you are coming, this is a good way to find out where you will go, and the plan for any required school/training before your first assignment. You may need to sign some paperwork relating to your designator change as well.

Also, continue to deep dive your new community's requirements. Here are the CEC's requirements for promotion to O-4 (knowing these will allow you to hit the ground running as a newly selected 5100):

- CEC Community Values
  - [https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Boards/Active%20Duty%20Officer/documents/FY26\\_Promotion\\_Board\\_Materials/FY26\\_AC\\_Staff\\_Community\\_Briefs.pdf?ver=cHTiFsZfGk4TpxE4nsiQGQ%3d%3d](https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Boards/Active%20Duty%20Officer/documents/FY26_Promotion_Board_Materials/FY26_AC_Staff_Community_Briefs.pdf?ver=cHTiFsZfGk4TpxE4nsiQGQ%3d%3d)
- Engineers – Passed Fundamentals of Engineering Exam and Registered EIT with NCEES
  - <https://ncees.org/>
- Architects – Completed hours for NCARB registration or passed at least one architecture exam
  - <https://www.ncarb.org/>
- Contracting Professional Certification
  - <https://www.dau.edu/functional-areas/contracting>
- Warfare Qualification
- Navy performance history (recommended for promotion and retention) – sustained superior performance