



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
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MILLINGTON, TN 38055-0000

BUPERSINST 1540.41F  
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BUPERS INSTRUCTION 1540.41F

From: Chief of Naval Personnel

Subj: QUALIFICATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL IN THE NAVAL  
NUCLEAR PROPULSION PROGRAM

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST C3000.5E (NOTAL)  
(b) E.O. 12344  
(c) NAVPERS 15560D, Naval Military Personnel Manual (MILPERSMAN)  
(d) NAVPERS 15839I, Officer Manpower and Personnel Classifications, Volume 1  
(e) OPNAVINST 1220.1F  
(f) 42 U.S.C. §7158  
(g) NAVSEA S9213-41-MAN-000/(R) Engineering Department Manual for Naval  
Nuclear Propulsion Plants (EDM) (NOTAL)  
(h) SECNAV M-5510.30C of Jan 2020  
(i) SECNAVINST 5510.36B

Encl: (1) Sample AQD Removal/Suspension Letter  
(2) Sample AQD Retention/Restoration Letter

1. Purpose

a. To issue qualification requirements and assignment policies for personnel ordered to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. This instruction reaffirms previously published personnel aspects of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program (NNPP) and states policies and practices of the Chief of Naval Personnel (CHNAVPERS) and Commander, Navy Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM).

b. Major changes include updated:

(1) Credit time an officer spends pursuing nuclear qualification on a routinely critical reactor toward the 6 months required prior to attending the prospective nuclear engineer officer course;

(2) Policy on nuclear-qualified reactor department master chief (RDMC)/nuclear-qualified engineering department master chief (EDMC)/nuclear-qualified propulsion plant watch supervisor (PPWS), and nuclear-qualified engineering watch supervisor (EWS) Navy enlisted classification (NEC) codes;

(3) Requirements for OPNAV Naval Nuclear Propulsion (N00N) concurrence for personnel assignment changes; and

(4) Retention policy for nuclear-trained surface warfare officers (SWO(N)) and nuclear-trained engineering duty officers (EDO(N)) and clarified the expected timing for reexamination of officers who fail the prospective nuclear engineer officer (PNEO) exam the first time.

2. Cancellation. BUPERSINST 1540.41E.

3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction is applicable to all Navy commands and activities involved in operations and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants and in the management and assignment of personnel in the NNPP.

4. References

a. Guidelines. References (a) through (i) provide guidelines for the NNPP.

b. Responsibilities. Reference (a) assigns responsibilities to operational commanders, systems commanders, and bureau chiefs and provides further guidance for operation of nuclear-powered ships. A responsibility assigned to the Chief of Naval Personnel (CHNAVPERS) by reference (a) is to ensure personnel ordered to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants are fully qualified and competent to perform such duty. To assist CHNAVPERS in carrying out that responsibility, references (a) and (b) charge the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program OPNAV (N00N) to provide assistance and concurrence in the selection, training, qualification, and assignment of personnel who supervise, operate, or maintain naval nuclear propulsion plants.

c. Eligibility. Reference (c), MILPERSMAN 1520-050 and 1306-500, as agreed to by the Department of Energy, provides guidance regarding eligibility, selection, and other criteria for officer and enlisted personnel ordered into nuclear propulsion training. The referenced instructions, together with provisions herewith, establish qualification requirements for naval personnel ordered to duty in connection with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

5. Officer Qualification Requirements

a. General

(1) Naval officers ordered to duty in connection with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants at sea, land-based nuclear prototype plants, and moored training ships must be nuclear trained and assigned appropriate additional qualification designators (AQDs) per reference (d). These designators facilitate tracking and identification of personnel that have the requisite proficiency and naval nuclear propulsion training.

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(2) All nuclear-trained officers, except for the commanding officer (CO), executive officer (XO), and engineer officer (ENG), assigned to a nuclear-powered submarine must qualify as engineering officer of the watch (EOOW) and maintain watch standing proficiency.

(3) All nuclear-trained officers, other than the CO, XO, reactor officer (RO), or chief engineer (CHENG), assigned to a nuclear-powered surface ship must qualify as propulsion plant watch officer (PPWO) and maintain watch standing proficiency. Officers assigned to non-engineering billets who have not qualified to be ENG of nuclear-powered ships and officers assigned to engineering billets or the reactor department on nuclear aircraft carriers (CVNs) must maintain watch standing proficiency as EOOW/PPWO. Block 29 in the individual officer's fitness report must reflect qualification as EOOW/PPWO and the number of months during which qualification was maintained.

b. Nuclear-Trained Officers

(1) To be considered nuclear-trained, officers must successfully complete 1 year of formal training as follows:

(a) Six-month academic course for officers at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command (NNPTC).

(b) Six-month operational course for officers at one of the nuclear power training units (NPTU). Waivers of the above requirements will not be allowed, except as specifically recommended by CHNAVPERS and approved by OPNAV (N00N).

(2) Following completion of the 1-year formal nuclear training program described above, a nuclear-trained submarine officer will normally be assigned to duty in a nuclear-powered submarine. SWO(N)s will normally be assigned as a division officer in a conventional surface ship for approximately 19-21 months. After completion of surface warfare qualification, they will enter the nuclear propulsion training program followed by a 26-28-month nuclear division officer tour. Nuclear-trained aviators AV(N)s will normally be assigned as the XO of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

(3) Return to Active Duty

(a) When previously qualified nuclear-trained officers initiate requests to return to active duty and are recommended by NAVPERSCOM, Submarine Officer Distribution Branch (PERS-42) for recall as nuclear-trained officers, OPNAV N00N will screen their records and determine whether nuclear AQDs may be restored. Restoration will not normally be approved in cases where these officers have been away from active duty for more than 36 months.

(b) NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will recall to active duty those officers approved by OPNAV (N00N) for a return to nuclear duties. Active duty must resume within 6 months of OPNAV (N00N) approval of the request. NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will reinstate the appropriate nuclear AQDs of those officers resuming active duty under this provision.

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(c) For officers participating in the Career Intermission Program (CIP), NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will coordinate requirements to manage the officer's return to active duty on an individual basis.

(d) For officers returning to active duty from programs other than CIP:

1. Depending on the time away from a nuclear billet, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) may order officers who are recalled to active duty for nuclear duties directly to an operating nuclear-powered ship for EOOW/PPWO requalification. The ship chosen will not be involved in new construction, overhaul, or an extended refit during the period of the officer's requalification. Officers participating in CIP are exempt from this policy if timing for their follow-on orders maintains their nuclear proficiency.

2. Each officer will be required to re-qualify as EOOW/PPWO within 6 months of reporting onboard. If an officer fails to re-qualify within these guidelines, nuclear AQDs will be removed, unless otherwise directed by OPNAV (N00N).

c. Nuclear-trained Chief Warrant Officers (CWO) and Limited Duty Officers (LDO). To be considered for assignment within the NNPP, CWOs and LDOs must meet the following requirements:

(1) Have been designated as nuclear-trained (enlisted) per paragraph 7d of this instruction at the time of original CWO or LDO appointment.

(2) Be nominated by CHNAVPER and have been successfully screened by OPNAV(N00N).

d. Engineer Officer of Nuclear-Powered Ships

(1) Qualification as ENG of a nuclear-powered ship is a requirement in the professional development of a nuclear-trained line officer. All nuclear-trained officers except, nuclear-trained aviators AV(N)s, LDOs, and CWOs, must complete this qualification prior to assignment as a department head (DH) or principal assistant (PA) of a nuclear-powered ship. This qualification is also a prerequisite for assignment for duty as ENG or XO of a nuclear-powered submarine and as an RO, reactor electrical assistant (REA) (A4W only), reactor training assistant (RTA), reactor controls assistant (RCA) and main propulsion assistant (MPA) on CVNs. A waiver to this qualification requirement may be approved by OPNAV (N00N) on a case-by-case basis for LDOs prior to assignment.

(2) Not all officers qualified as ENG will have the opportunity to serve as such.

(3) OPNAV (N00N) will examine all ENG candidates.

(4) To be eligible for examination for qualification as ENG, the officer candidate must:

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(a) Be currently qualified for duty in connection with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(b) Be currently qualified as EOOW/PPWO of a naval nuclear propulsion plant.

(c) When initial assignment is a naval nuclear-powered ship, officers must have served a minimum of 16 months, but no more than 20 months on board as a nuclear-trained officer at the time of the examination. Officers that have completed warfare qualification prior to reporting to their first nuclear-powered ship must serve a minimum of 12 months as a qualified EOOW/PPWO on board that ship.

(d) Have served at least 6 months (one patrol for fleet ballistic-missile submarine or guided-missile submarine, nuclear submarines) in pursuit of nuclear qualifications or standing watch on a ship's reactor plant that is routinely critical (e.g., the reactor is not in a long-term shutdown condition such as during new construction or overhaul).

(e) Have served a minimum of 1 year as a division officer in the engineering or reactor department of a naval nuclear-powered ship with no major collateral duties. For submarines, the qualifying division officer assignments are the officer assistants listed in reference (g) (i.e., MPA, electrical officer, RCA, chemistry and radiological controls assistant, and damage control assistant). On surface ships, qualifying division officer assignments must be authorized billets, which include personnel management, material management, and training duties. Billets involving only a portion of these duties (e.g., reactor training division officer or engineering administrative assistant) are not considered qualifying assignments.

(f) Be recommended for examination for qualification as ENG by the CO of the nuclear-powered ship or NPTU in which they are currently serving. The CO must state in his or her recommendation that the officer candidate possesses the requisite nuclear propulsion plant technical knowledge to serve as ENG based on the CO's personal involvement in the officer candidate's preparation for the ENG examination. This recommendation, accompanied by the candidate's duty history, must be submitted in writing to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) with a copy provided to OPNAV (N00N).

(g) All nuclear-trained officers who fail their first PNEO examination will normally return to naval reactors for reexamination between 3 and 9 months from the date of the first failure.

(5) If any of the above requirements cannot be met, a waiver may be requested from OPNAV (N00N), with the exception of serving on board as a nuclear-trained officer with greater than 20 months. A waiver for serving on board as a nuclear-trained officer with greater than 20 months may be requested by separate correspondence to the command's type commander (TYCOM) readiness and logistics department (i.e., N4). Waivers requested from OPNAV (N00N) should provide a detailed explanation of the circumstances involved and should accompany the CO's recommendation (described in paragraph 5d(4)(f)).

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(6) COs of nuclear-powered ships must consider the preparation of their nuclear-trained officers for qualification as ENG as one of their primary responsibilities. Officers should normally attain ENG qualification during their first engineering or reactor department assignment. In cases where officers are assigned to a second tour on a nuclear ship prior to achieving ENG qualification, they should qualify as ENG in about 6 months after qualifying EOOW/PPWO aboard the second ship.

(7) To assist in preparing for the ENG examination, COs should have their officers participate in a TYCOM-sponsored prospective nuclear ENG training program. This training program is to provide the officers with a location free of distractions and conducive to intensive study. Practice written and oral examinations should be included as part of the training. This training program must not serve as a substitute for the CO's personal involvement in the officer's preparations for the examination or displace, based on completion of the program, the need for the CO's evaluation of the officer's readiness.

(8) Until nuclear-trained officers complete qualification as ENG, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will normally detail these officers to billets where they will be involved in the supervision, operation, and maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant.

e. ROs of Nuclear-Powered Surface Ships. Normally, all prospective ROs must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by OPNAV (N00N) prior to reporting to their first tour as RO.

f. XOs of Nuclear-Powered Ships. All prospective XOs (PXOs), except for PXOs of CVNs, must have qualified as ENG of a nuclear-powered submarine prior to being assigned as XO of a nuclear-powered submarine. Normally, PXOs of CVNs must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by OPNAV (N00N) prior to reporting to their first XO tour of a CVN.

g. COs of Nuclear-Powered Ships

(1) Prospective COs (PCOs) of all nuclear-powered submarines must have served as XO of a nuclear-powered submarine.

(2) PCOs of CVNs must have served as XO of a CVN.

(3) PCOs of all nuclear-powered ships must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction, as specified and conducted by OPNAV (N00N), prior to reporting to their first command of a nuclear-powered ship.

(4) Officers ordered to a subsequent nuclear command tour will normally attend a refresher course conducted by OPNAV (N00N) if they have not previously commanded a ship with the same design reactor plant as that installed on their subsequent command.

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(5) All pre-command prospective submarine squadron deputies must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by OPNAV (N00N) prior to reporting to their assignment.

h. Other Senior Nuclear Officer Assignments

(1) All prospective CVN ROs and the Aviation TYCOM mobile training team (MTT) officers in charge (OIC) in Norfolk and San Diego must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by OPNAV (N00N).

(2) All prospective COs of moored training ships (MTS) must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by OPNAV (N00N) prior to reporting to their CO assignment.

6. Enlisted Personnel Qualification Requirements. To be considered as nuclear-trained, enlisted personnel must meet the following requirements:

a. Successfully complete 1 year of formal training as follows:

(1) Six-month academic course for enlisted personnel at NNPTC.

(2) Six-month operational course for enlisted personnel at one of the NPTUs.

b. Be assigned a currently effective NEC code for a submarine (N1XO or N1XS series) or surface ship (N2XO or N2XS series) nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisor as defined in reference (e).

7. Designation

a. Nuclear-Trained Officers. Upon successful completion of the formal course of instruction described in subparagraph 5b(1), officers will be assigned AQDs specified in reference (d). In addition, names of all officers who are currently designated qualified for duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants will be placed on an up-to-date list maintained by CHNAVPERS in cooperation with OPNAV (N00N). This list will be used to periodically verify the AQDs assigned to nuclear-trained officers. Only officers whose names appear on this list may be ordered to nuclear duty.

b. Nuclear-Trained Engineer Officers. Upon successful completion of the examination requirements for qualification as ENG outlined in subparagraph 5d, officers will be assigned the AQD specified in reference (d). In addition, names of all officers who are currently designated qualified for duty as ENG or RO of a naval nuclear propulsion plant or ship will be placed on an up-to-date list maintained by CHNAVPERS in cooperation with OPNAV (N00N). This list will be used to periodically verify the AQDs assigned to nuclear-trained officers. Only officers whose names appear on this list may be ordered to duty as ENG or RO of a nuclear-powered ship.

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c. Nuclear-Trained CWOs and LDOs

(1) Upon screening by OPNAV (N00N), nuclear-trained CWOs and LDOs will be assigned the AQDs, per reference (d), as specified by OPNAV (N00N). These officers will then be eligible to serve in billets designated for the associated codes.

(2) In cases where a CWO or LDO is assigned to an OPNAV (N00N) activity, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will ensure a letter is placed in the individual's record. This letter will explain the unique circumstances of this tour outside of the normal CWO/LDO career path and that it should not adversely affect the suitability for promotion of the officer.

d. Nuclear-Trained Enlisted Personnel. The assignment of NECs for nuclear-trained enlisted personnel is generally covered in paragraph 6. Changes to these classification codes, including removal, will be processed per reference (e). OPNAV Nuclear Propulsion Program Manager (OPNAV N133) will exercise "by direction" authority for CHNAVPERS in the assignment, removal and change of nuclear NECs following published directives. Assignment of special NECs is covered in the following subparagraphs:

(1) Engineering Laboratory Technician (ELT). To be designated as an ELT (NECs N16O, N16S, N26O, or N26S) nuclear-trained enlisted personnel must, in addition to the 1-year course, successfully complete a formal 13-week course of instruction given at one of the NPTUs. Those ordered into this course of instruction are from the mechanical rating group.

(2) Special Categories. Two special category nuclear propulsion plant operator NECs (N59X and N89X) identify nuclear-trained personnel who are assigned to billets not associated with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. Personnel assigned to non-nuclear billets on nuclear-powered ships are included in this category. CHNAVPERS will assign these special classification codes to submarine (NEC N59X series) or surface ship (NEC N89X series) nuclear propulsion plant operators of all rating groups when they are sent to non-nuclear assignments. An individual assigned one of these special category NECs must not be used in connection with supervision, operation, or maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant without prior approval by CHNAVPERS.

(3) Other. Three additional NECs are key to the nuclear propulsion program and enlisted career management. To be designated as an RDMC, individuals must demonstrate the necessary skills and complete the TYCOM-directed shipboard qualification process to be awarded the NEC N31Z. To be designated as a nuclear qualified EDMC, individuals must demonstrate the necessary skills and complete the TYCOM directed shipboard qualification process to be awarded the NEC N32Z. To be designated an EWS and or PPWS, individuals must complete the EWS/PPWS qualification process in order to be awarded the N33Z secondary NEC.

e. Acquisition Corps (AC). Nuclear-trained officers selected to the AC do not require removal of nuclear AQDs, as nuclear-trained acquisition professionals are still assignable to nuclear billets.

f. Subspecialty Codes. CHNAVPERS will supervise assignment of nuclear propulsion operations subspecialty codes. The following guidance will be followed:



(1) Subspecialty code 5203P will be assigned to NNPP officers upon successful completion of the PNEO examination or naval reactors technical assistant (NRTA) qualification. OPNAV (N00N) will provide a list of officers passing the PNEO examination or completing NRTA qualification to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42).

(2) Successful completion of any two of the following tours qualifies NNPP officers for consideration as a proven subspecialist (subspecialty suffix-Q):

- (a) CO, XO, ENG, RO, assistant RO, or PA of a nuclear ship
- (b) Nuclear propulsion examining board
- (c) Radiological controls officer of a nuclear capable tender or shore-based support facility
- (d) OPNAV (N00N) staff
- (e) NNPTC or NPTU instructor
- (f) Squadron material officer
- (g) Force nuclear power or radiological controls officer
- (h) OIC nautilus museum
- (i) MTS CO
- (j) MTS XO
- (k) NPTU MTS engineer
- (l) NPTU site evaluation officer or NPTU plant XO
- (m) Commander, Naval Air Force Pacific Fleet (CNAP)/Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic (CNAL) MTT OIC
- (n) NRTA

8. Assignment to Duty

- a. All assignments of nuclear officers to nuclear billets will be made exclusively by PERS-42.
- b. Advance Notification of Intent to Order Officers. PERS-42 will obtain the concurrence of OPNAV (N00N) prior to issuing orders to move an officer to or from the following billets designated for nuclear-trained officers and billets supporting the NNPP:

- (1) COs (or OICs), XOs, ENGs, ROs, assistant ROs, and PAs of nuclear-powered ships;
- (2) Submarine department head and division officer assignments;
- (3) Radiological controls officers of nuclear capable tenders or shore-based support facilities;
- (4) All nuclear-trained officers on nuclear propulsion training activity staffs;
- (5) Senior TYCOM representative and the deputy shipyard commander at nuclear capable shipyards;
- (6) All nuclear-trained officers assigned to the staffs of submarine group and squadron commanders as chiefs of staff, chief staff officers (when filled by a CO submarine support (COSS)/XO submarine support (XOSS) officer), deputy commanders, and material/engineer officers;
- (7) All nuclear-trained officers assigned to the staffs of US Fleet Forces Command or Commander, US Pacific Fleet as members of the nuclear propulsion examination board;
- (8) All officers assigned as an aviation TYCOM assistant chief of staff for Nuclear Propulsion (N9), aviation TYCOM mobile training team OIC in Norfolk or San Diego, aviation force radiological controls officer, force reactor training assistant, force reactor mechanical assistant, and force reactor maintenance officer;
- (9) All officers assigned to duty with naval reactors;
- (10) Officers assigned as the submarine force nuclear power officer, theater nuclear power officer, submarine force radiological controls officer, or TYCOM material officer;
- (11) COs of submarine readiness squadrons, submarine tenders, regional support groups (RSG), and shipyards/refit facilities that perform or support nuclear work;
- (12) All officers assigned to the NAUTILUS Museum;
- (13) The Director, Nuclear Propulsion Program Manager (OPNAV N133) and all officers assigned to the staff of OPNAV N133;
- (14) Submarine Squadron Commanders;
- (15) Branch Head, Ocean Systems and Nuclear Matters Branch (OPNAV N311);
- (16) All officers assigned to new construction submarine increment A;
- (17) Manager, Nuclear Accessions (NSTC N91);

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(18) Senior Community Representative, United States Naval Academy, Nuclear Propulsion;

(19) Commander Naval Recruiting Command, Nuclear Programs Officer;

(20) Executive Staff Director, National Nuclear Security Administration;

(21) Director, Undersea Medicine and Radiation Health (BUMED 21);

(22) Submarine and CVN division officer assignments;

(23) Deputy Commander, Joint Base Charleston; and

(24) COs of fleet interactive display equipment-equipped submarine training facilities.

c. Notification of Intent to Order Officers. NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will provide the records of officers to OPNAV (N00N) prior to issuing orders to officers to the following billets:

(1) Naval aviators proposed for nuclear training,

(2) CHENGs,

(3) Officers without prior nuclear propulsion program experience proposed for assignment to duty at OPNAV (N00N), and

(4) Radiation health officers assigned to CVNs.

d. Rotating division officers onboard a nuclear-powered ship does not require NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) concurrence.

e. Tour Length Relief Policies

(1) Nominal and minimum tour lengths for officers on nuclear powered ships will be established to ensure COs and ROs have the necessary nuclear experience to supervise the operations of nuclear propulsion plants. OPNAV (N00N) will approve nuclear-trained officer nominal and minimum tour lengths.

(2) Officers assigned to nuclear shore billets under OPNAV (N00N) cognizance will serve a minimum of 24 months, regardless of prior duty assignment or location. Exceptions may be made on a case basis with the prior approval of OPNAV (N00N).

(3) The following relief intervals will be observed:

(a) Reliefs of the CO and XO, CO and RO, and CO and ENG (attack submarines, nuclear (SSN)) should be separated by at least 3 months.

(b) In CVNs, there will be a 3-month interval between the relief dates of the RO and ARO, and a 2-month interval between the RO and other PAs (regardless of the report dates).

(c) In CVNs and SSNs, reliefs of the CO, RO, and ENG will involve a 30-day turnover period.

(d) CO and ENG reliefs in two-crew ships during the refit/patrol period require a 30-day turnover period. CO and ENG reliefs during the pre-deployment training period or home-port training period require a minimum 10-day turnover period. These turnovers should not normally occur simultaneously.

(e) In non-operating nuclear submarines (e.g., new construction, overhaul, decommissioning), relief of the CO or ENG should not occur without specific OPNAV (N00N) concurrence.

(f) CO/MTS CO, and CO/senior evaluation officer (SEO) relief at NPTUs should be separated by at least 3 months.

(g) MTS CO/MTS XO and MTS CO/MTS engineer reliefs should be separated by at least 3 months.

(4) The following policies govern the assignment and concurrences for temporary reliefs:

(a) In the event the engineer officer of a submarine or a PA in a CVN requires or anticipates requiring a temporary relief greater than 30 days, commands will report the officer designated to be acting engineer officer or PA to immediate superior in command (ISIC), TYCOM, and PERS-42 for notification. This officer may be another engineer qualified officer from the same ship.

(b) In the event the CO, XO, or RO requires a temporary relief greater than 30 days, ISICs will report the officer designated to be acting CO, XO, or RO to TYCOM and PERS-42 for notification.

f. Advance Notification of Intent to Order Enlisted Personnel. NAVPERSCOM Nuclear Power/Submarine Assignment Branch (PERS-403) will obtain the concurrence of OPNAV (N00N) prior to issuing orders to enlisted personnel to instructor duty in the nuclear propulsion training pipeline.

g. Transfer of Nuclear-Trained Officers to Restricted Line. CHNAVPERS will inform OPNAV (N00N) before forwarding names of nuclear-trained officers to selection boards that may result in a change of designator. CHNAVPERS will inform OPNAV (N00N) before approving the contingent resignation of nuclear-trained officers that may result in a change of designator.

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(1) Generally, nuclear-trained officers will not be made available to change designators until they have completed a DH/PA tour. This includes lateral transfer and inter-service transfer requests.

(2) For nuclear-trained surface and submarine officers exercising their engineering duty option or information warfare (IW) option, the following applies:

(a) Officers executing their engineering duty option may redesignate upon completing their DH tour. Conversion to the conventional engineering duty officer (EDO) community will be at the option of the EDO community manager and the candidate. Officers may elect to remain within the submarine community throughout their entire career at no penalty.

(b) Submarine officers executing their IW option may redesignate upon completing their DH tour. Conversion to an IW community will be at the option of the IW community manager and the candidate. Officers may elect to remain within the submarine community throughout their entire career at no penalty.

(c) Officers may apply to change their designator to 1460 and retain their nuclear AQDs. Officers who apply for redesignation to 1460 will be using their nuclear training and operational experience as EDO(N)s, both afloat and ashore, in support of the CVN and nuclear maintenance infrastructure. These officers will be assigned per the approved EDO(N) career path leading to assignment as CVN RO. Officers who apply for redesignation under this program are governed by normal lateral transfer and redesignation procedures contained in reference (c), MILPERSMAN 1212-010 and they must complete the additional rules:

1. Complete initial EDO qualification in a nuclear capable public or private shipyard,

2. Complete a tour as a CVN PA, and

3. Maintain proficiency as described in paragraph 8i below.

h. Transfer of Nuclear-Trained Officers Within the NNPP. CHNAVPERS, with concurrence of OPNAV (N00N), may transfer officers between communities of the NNPP without board action, including 1460 (nuclear), 1210, 1220, 1110, 1160 (nuclear), 6200, 1120, and 1170. In addition, officers may be released from their original community and accepted for training in the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program.

i. Maintenance of Proficiency of Nuclear-Trained Officer and Enlisted Personnel

(1) Subsequent to initial designation as a nuclear-trained officer or enlisted person as defined above, such personnel must maintain high standards of operational proficiency and personal integrity and have a sound understanding of the principles of reactor plant theory and operations. Maintenance of this level of theoretical and operational proficiency and reliability is

required for retention of their designation as being nuclear trained in an effective status. Inspections by operational commanders, periodic examinations by technical personnel representing OPNAV (N00N), and shipboard continuing training programs are all employed to help maintain and monitor the required operational proficiency.

(2) CHNAVPERS, with the advice of OPNAV (N00N), will preemptively screen records of personnel that were previously designated as nuclear-trained, who reenter the Navy after a period of broken service to determine eligibility for assignments involving the supervision, operation, or maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(3) CHNAVPERS, with the advice of OPNAV (N00N), will preemptively screen records and suitability of the assignment of nuclear-trained enlisted personnel to billets that do not involve the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. Assignments to these types of billets will typically be 3 years or less and would require a waiver from OPNAV (N00N) prior to personnel exceeding that time.

(4) Professional performance, qualification achieved, time away from operational reactor plant duty, and other factors will be considered when determining personnel eligibility for reassignment to nuclear duty. Personnel found eligible may be given a specific period-of-time subsequent to reporting to a nuclear billet to demonstrate achievement of the required level of proficiency commensurate to their rank or rate and rating.

(5) The statement “qualified for supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants” in the individual’s most recent permanent change of station orders certifies officers are eligible for assignment to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. For enlisted personnel, refer to reference (e) for detailing of Sailors with operational and non-operational NECs. In those cases where a specific period-of-time for re-qualification is required, it will either be stated in the orders or in an official letter to the CO.

(6) Personnel determined as not eligible for return to a nuclear billet will have their nuclear NECs or AQDs removed.

j. Removal of Nuclear NECs or Nuclear AQDs

(1) Personnel who do not maintain their proficiency as a nuclear-trained operator or who, for other valid reasons, are no longer considered suitable for assignment to duty involving supervision, operation, and maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant will have their nuclear NECs or AQDs removed. Those whose NECs or AQDs have been removed or are pending removal must not be assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(2) Recommendations for removal of nuclear NECs should be submitted per reference (e).

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(3) When nuclear NECs or AQDs are removed because of an integrity related issue, the CO will take appropriate action, per reference (h), to address required actions associated with the individual's security clearance.

(4) Removal of nuclear NECs or AQDs, except for normal separation (expiration of active obligated service, resignation, retirement), will be affected by CHNAVPERS with the concurrence of OPNAV (N00N). Removal of nuclear AQDs does not preclude assignment to a non-nuclear billet within the surface or submarine forces as the needs of the Navy dictate.

(5) In all cases, the final disposition of NECs and AQDs and the effective date of removal are at the discretion of OPNAV (N00N) as set forth in references (b) and (f).

(6) NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) is delegated overall responsibility for managing nuclear AQDs of submarine officers, SWO(N)s, EDO(N)s, AV(N)s, nuclear-trained LDOs, and nuclear-trained CWOs.

(7) Examples of situations that will result in the removal of nuclear AQDs include:

(a) Nuclear-trained officers detached for cause (DFC) will have their nuclear AQDs removed upon approval of their DFC. Their AQDs will be suspended while the DFC request is being processed. If the DFC is approved, the date of AQD removal will normally be that of the original suspension. If the DFC is not approved, the officer may retain their nuclear AQDs with no loss in continuity after OPNAV N133's review and OPNAV (N00N)'s concurrence.

(b) Officers refusing orders to any nuclear billet, CO, XO (including SWO XO-Special Mission (XO-SM), XO-Afloat, XO-Ashore, or CO-Special Mission (CO-SM) billets), or DH/PA will have their nuclear AQDs removed upon their refusal. For those officers serving in a nuclear-coded billet at the time of refusal, nuclear AQD removal will be deferred until completion of the current tour of duty in the nuclear-coded billet.

(c) Submarine officers who refuse orders to a major command, once the slating process has commenced, will have their nuclear AQDs removed upon their refusal. For those officers serving in a nuclear-coded billet at the time of refusal, nuclear AQD removal will be deferred until completion of the current tour of duty in the nuclear-coded billet.

(d) Nuclear-trained officers requesting early termination of their nuclear assignment will have their nuclear AQDs removed effective the date of their request for early termination.

(e) Nuclear-trained officers failing final screening for CO, XO, or DH/PA will have their nuclear AQDs removed on the first day of the fiscal year following the screening board or if the officer is in a nuclear billet, upon detachment from the nuclear billet, whichever is later.

(f) Submarine DH-screened (uncommitted to DH assignment) and XOSS officers will maintain their nuclear AQDs until they reach 1 October of 8 and 15 years of commissioned service (YCS), respectively, or until the first day of the month after exceeding 3 years out of a nuclear billet, whichever occurs first. XOSS officers who serve or are identified to serve in a

Project-XO tour may retain their nuclear AQDs beyond 15 YCS and for a period of 5 years upon successful completion of a Project-XO tour or until 21 YCS, whichever occurs first. COSS officers will maintain their nuclear AQDs until they reach 1 October of 21 YCS, with the following exception: Nuclear AQD removal for COSS officers who complete a CO tour in a nuclear shore command billet (defined as a CO special mission billet that requires the SN1 AQD) will be deferred until the first day of the month following 3 years after completion of their nuclear shore CO tour, or until they reach 1 October of 21 YCS, whichever occurs later. For DH-screened (uncommitted to DH assignment), XOSS, or COSS officers serving in a nuclear-coded billet on 1 October of the 8, 15, or 21 YCS point in service, respectively, nuclear AQD removal will be deferred until completion of the current tour of duty in the nuclear-coded billet, except for nuclear shore CO served officers as previously stated in this section. Nuclear shore CO-served officers serving in a nuclear-coded billet 3 years after completion of their CO tour will retain their nuclear AQDs until completion of their current nuclear tour. DH-screened officers committed, with contract or acceptance of orders, to a DH tour are eligible for waivers past 8 YCS.

(g) Those SWO(N) and EDO(N) officers who successfully serve as ARO will maintain their nuclear AQDs until the first day of the fiscal year of their 21st YCS or until the first day of the month after exceeding 3 years out of a nuclear billet, whichever occurs later. A SWO(N) officer who serves their CO-SM tour following ARO will maintain their nuclear AQDs until the first day of the month after exceeding 3 years out of their CO-SM tour.

(h) SWO(N) officers who screen or serve CO-SM, XO-Afloat, XO-Afloat\* or XO-SM, but do not serve ARO will maintain their nuclear AQDs until they reach 21 YCS or until the first day of the month after exceeding 5 years out of a qualifying nuclear billet, whichever occurs first. Those officers who fail to screen for ARO (i.e., 'not cleared') will have their nuclear AQDs removed on the first day of the fiscal year following the ARO selection board. If serving in a nuclear-coded billet, they will lose nuclear AQDs and eligibility for a nuclear officer continuation bonus upon detaching from the nuclear billet or on the first day of the fiscal year after the ARO screening board, whichever is later. ARO-Alternates not activated (i.e., not used) will have their nuclear AQDs removed at the end of the next fiscal year following the ARO selection board.

(i) For officers who fail twice to select (2 X FOS) for promotion, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will review their records and recommend retention or permanent removal of the officers' nuclear AQDs and forward this recommendation to OPNAV (N00N) for final resolution. If the determination is made to remove an officer's nuclear AQD, the removal will be effective upon the first day of the fiscal year following the board or if the officer is in a nuclear billet, upon detachment from the nuclear billet, whichever is later. This requirement does not apply to ARO served or serving officers.

(j) Submarine officers out of nuclear billets for greater than 3 years (not applicable to afloat commander command served officers) will have their nuclear AQDs removed on the first day of the month after exceeding 3 years out of a nuclear billet, unless specifically waived by OPNAV (N00N).



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(k) SWO(N)s out of nuclear billets for greater than 5 years (not applicable to SWO(N)s who are commander command afloat served or serving officers) will have their nuclear AQDs removed on the first day of the month after exceeding 5 years out of a nuclear billet, unless specifically waived by OPNAV (N00N).

(l) AV(N)s out of nuclear billets for greater than 5 years (not applicable to aviators who have completed a CVN XO assignment) will have their nuclear AQDs removed on the first day of the month after exceeding 5 years out of a nuclear billet, unless specifically waived by OPNAV (N00N).

(m) EDO(N)s out of nuclear billets for greater than 4 years (not applicable to EDO(N)s that have completed an RO tour) will have their nuclear AQDs removed on the first day of the month after exceeding 4 years out of a nuclear billet, unless specifically waived by OPNAV (N00N).

(n) Nuclear-trained officers who are medically disqualified from nuclear field duty or submarine duty for submarine officers who will not be performing nuclear duties will have their nuclear AQDs removed by NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) on the date of final medical disqualification, with the concurrence of OPNAV (N00N).

(o) Nuclear-trained officers who are selected for lateral transfer, a program resulting in a change of designator to the Restricted Line or Staff Corps or programs that result in joining another community in which an officer no longer executes the submarine or surface career paths to CO while retaining their parent, nuclear community designator as part of executing the program (e.g. permanent military instructor), will have their nuclear AQDs removed upon detachment from their last assigned nuclear duty or date of selection or Senate confirmation (if applicable), whichever is later. Date of selection is normally regarded as the date of a naval administrative (NAVADMIN) or naval message announcing the selection board results. SWO(N)s converting to EDO(N), as described in paragraph 8g, retain their AQDs.

(p) Nuclear-trained officers who fail to qualify as ENG will have their nuclear AQDs removed, normally upon completion of their tour at that command. At the option of the CO, the officer may continue to stand watch as EOOW/PPWO and EDO and may continue to serve as a nuclear division officer. If circumstances warrant, the CO will be directed by NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) to immediately terminate the officer's propulsion plant involvement. AQD removal, as a result of failing to qualify as ENG, will be submitted to OPNAV (N00N) for information.

(q) Officers who fail to complete a training pipeline (e.g., Submarine Officer Advanced Course, PXO, PCO) become unqualified for the intended follow-on at-sea assignment and will have their AQDs removed effective the date of disenrollment from training or upon completion of a follow-on tour requiring nuclear AQDs.

(r) Officers who fail to qualify "submarines" or "surface warfare." AQD removal, as a result of failing to qualify as "surface warfare," will be submitted to OPNAV (N00N) for information.

(8) Examples of situations that warrant further consideration and review for removal of AQDs include:

(a) Personal or Performance-Related Issues. Commands will inform NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) (in a timely manner) when any officer with a nuclear AQD or accepted for nuclear training has a significant personal performance or disciplinary issue (e.g., detached from command for non-performance of duty) is being considered for non-judicial punishment (NJP), is suspended or decertified from the Personnel Reliability Program, has a security clearance suspended or removed (other than as a routine administrative action), or is implicated in significant civil criminal activity).

(b) If formal DFC processing is in progress, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42), with OPNAV (N00N) concurrence, will temporarily suspend the officer's nuclear AQDs effective the date the officer was removed from duties in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. If sufficient justification is present, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) may recommend to OPNAV (N00N) permanent removal of the officer's nuclear AQDs prior to the final adjudication of the DFC. If a formal DFC is upheld by the chain of command, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will recommend to OPNAV (N00N) the permanent removal of the officer's nuclear AQDs, if not previously removed. If formal DFC is not upheld by the chain of command, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will make a recommendation concerning restoration of AQDs and inform OPNAV (N00N) before issuing permanent change of station orders to the officer in question.

(c) In the event of performance-related issues that may result in NJP or significant civil action, but not in DFC, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will make a recommendation to OPNAV (N00N) regarding retention or suspension of the officer's nuclear AQDs. If AQDs were suspended, following completion of the NJP proceeding or civil action, NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will review the officer's record for possible restoration or permanent removal of the officer's nuclear AQDs and forward this recommendation to OPNAV (N00N) for final disposition. The effective date of AQD suspension/removal will normally be the date the officer was removed from duties in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(d) In the cases where AQD suspension or removal is being considered, commands should make a recommendation on AQD retention or removal to OPNAV (N00N) via NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) using the guidelines of paragraph (7) above.

(9) Recommendations for removal or suspension of nuclear AQDs should be submitted by letter to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42), via chain of command, with copies to OPNAV (N00N) and OPNAV (N133) for information. Enclosure (1) provides a sample AQD removal letter. The recommendation letter should reference this instruction, it should not refer to any other correspondence concerning additional administrative actions being taken in the case of the subject officer, and it should contain the following information in four paragraphs:

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(a) A recommendation that the officer concerned be removed or suspended from the NNPP and his or her AQDs for that duty be removed or suspended according to the provisions of this instruction.

(b) A brief statement of the reason for removal or suspension of AQDs (e.g., unreliability, inability to qualify EOOW/PPWO).

(c) A detailed justification for the reason stated. This paragraph should include the steps taken to evaluate and assist the officer in completing or maintaining qualification, a statement as to whether or not the officer has performed his or her duties to the extent of his or her ability, and if not, what corrective measures have been taken. In cases involving unreliability, a description of the specific circumstances which resulted in the determination should be included. All pending and approved punitive actions taken against the officer should be included.

(d) A statement that the officer has been removed or suspended from all duty involving the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants and the date this action was taken.

(10) Recommendations for retention or restoration of nuclear officer AQDs will be submitted by letter to NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42), via the chain of command, with copies to OPNAV (N00N) and OPNAV (N133) for information. Enclosure (2) provides a sample AQD retention/restoration letter. The recommendation letter should reference this instruction and contain the following information in four paragraphs:

(a) A recommendation that the officer concerned be retained in the NNPP and his or her AQDs for that duty be retained or restored according to the provisions of this instruction.

(b) A brief statement of the reason for retention or restoration of AQDs (e.g., NJP dismissal, completion of outlined corrective actions).

(c) A detailed justification for the reason stated. This paragraph should include the steps taken to evaluate and assist the officer in completing or maintaining qualification and a statement as to whether or not the officer has performed his or her duties to the extent of their ability. In cases involving unreliability, a description of the specific reasons why the CO feels this officer can overcome previous concerns. All pending and approved punitive actions taken against the officer should be included.

(d) A positive statement that the officer will remain an asset to the NNPP.

(11) NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) will periodically screen the records of nuclear-trained officers and, with the concurrence of OPNAV (N00N), remove nuclear AQDs in compliance with this instruction. Final adjudication of nuclear AQDs is at the discretion of the Director, NNPP per references (b) and (f).

(12) Those officers removed from the NNPP will be notified in writing by NAVPERSCOM (PERS-42) setting forth the circumstances for such action.

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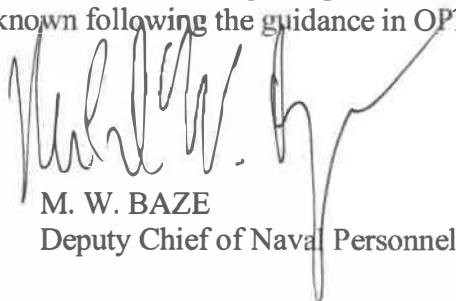
9. Action. Commands and activities must ensure that personnel assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants are qualified following the requirements contained in this instruction. Should cases arise where personnel ordered to such duty by NAVPERSCOM, Career Management Department (PERS-4) are not qualified, the circumstances should be brought immediately to the attention of CHNAVPER.

10. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned for the standard subject identification codes (SSIC) 1000 through 13000 series per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration (DON/AA), Directives and Records Management Division (DRMD) portal page at <https://portal.secnave.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this policy or the records disposition schedules, please contact your local records manager or the DON/AA DRMD program office.

11. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, BUPERS-3 will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, current content, and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



M. W. BAZE  
Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel

Releasability and Distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via BUPERS Web site: <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/BUPERS-Instructions/>.

21 Jan 2025

Sample AQD Removal/Suspension Letter

1540

Ser/###

DD Mmm YY

From: Commanding Officer, USS SUBMARINE (SSN 799)  
To: Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-42)  
Via: (1) Commander, Submarine Group ZERO  
(2) Commander, Submarine Squadron ZERO

Subj: RECOMMENDATION FOR REMOVAL/SUSPENSION OF NUCLEAR ADDITIONAL  
QUALIFICATION DESIGNATORS ICO RANK FIRST MIDDLE LAST, USN,  
1120

Ref: (a) BUPERSINST 1540.41F

1. Recommend removal/suspension of (Rank/First Name/M./Last Name) from the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and that his or her nuclear additional qualification designator(s) (AQD) for that duty be removed or suspended according to the provisions of reference (a).
2. This recommendation is made as a result of cause (e.g., unreliability, inability to qualify as engineering officer of the watch or propulsion plant watch officer).
3. A detailed justification for the reason stated. This paragraph should include the steps taken to evaluate and assist the officer in completing or maintaining qualification; a statement as to whether or not the officer has performed his or her duties to the extent of his or her ability, and if not, what corrective measures have been taken. In cases involving unreliability, a description of the specific circumstances which resulted in the determination should be included. All pending and approved punitive actions taken against the officer should be included.
4. RANK Last has been removed/suspended from all duties involving the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants as of DD Month YYYY.

C. O. CAPTAIN

Copy to:  
OPNAV (N00N)  
OPNAV N133

Enclosure (1)

21 Jan 2025

Sample AQD Retention/Restoration Letter

1540

Ser/###

DD Mmm YY

From: Commanding Officer, USS SUBMARINE (SSN 799)

To: Commander, Navy Personnel Command (PERS-42)

Via: (1) Commander, Submarine Group ZERO  
(2) Commander, Submarine Squadron ZERO

Subj: RECOMMENDATION FOR RETENTION/RESTORATION OF NUCLEAR  
ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION DESIGNATOR(S) ICO RANK FIRST MIDDLE  
LAST, USN, 1120

Ref: (a) BUPERSINST 1540.41F

1. Recommend retention/restoration of (rank/First Name/M./Last Name) in the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and his or her nuclear additional qualification designator(s) for that duty be retained or restored according to the provisions of reference (a).
2. This recommendation is made as a result of cause (e.g., NJP dismissal, completion of outlined corrective actions).
3. A detailed justification of this recommendation. This paragraph should include the steps taken to evaluate and assist the officer in completing or maintaining qualification and a statement as to whether or not the officer has performed his or her duties to the extent of his or her ability. In cases involving unreliability, a description of the specific reasons why the CO feels this officer can overcome previous concerns. All pending and approved punitive actions taken against the officer should be included.
4. (Rank/Last Name) remains an asset to the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and should be retained or restored for duty involving the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

C. O. CAPTAIN

Copy to:  
OPNAV (N00N)  
OPNAV N133

Enclosure (2)