MCPON Delbert D. Black

1967-1971

JANUARY 1967

Establishment of the office of Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of Naval Personnel January 1967

The office of Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA) was established in January 1967. Master Chief Gunner's Mate Delbert D. Black was selected for the position. Master Chief Black served as SEA to the Chief of Naval Personnel. The SEA position was established to provide as a direct line of communication to the Chief of Naval Personnel for enlisted Sailors.

The idea of a Senior Enlisted Advisor was a result of input received during the mid-1960s by the Secretary of the Navy's Retention Task Force. Feedback indicated there was a major concern about the lack of a direct link between the Department of the Navy and the individual Sailor.

In the fall of 1966, BuPers solicited nominees from the fleet and shore establishment for the new "Leading Chief Petty Officer of the Navy" billet, as it was referred to at the time. The E8 and E9 Selection Board reviewed the records of the nominees and selected eleven finalists. Next, a special selection board consisting of a Rear Admiral, two Captains, and a Lieutenant Commander reduced the number of candidates to three. The final selection was made by VADM Benedict J. Semmes, Jr., Chief of Naval Personnel.

Initially, the SEA position was a Master Chief billet with no distinguishing insignia or rating badge. However, within a few months the SEA title was redesignated as Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON). A MCPON rating badge was adopted consisting of a Chief Gunner's Mate rating badge with three stars.

1968 MCPON Black talking with Sailors.

1968 MCPON Black re-enlists in a ceremony presided over by Vice Admiral Charles K. Duncan, Chief of Naval Personnel

25 September 1967 Long Beach Naval Shipyard MCPON Black departs USS Bon Homme Richard CVA-31 after meeting with the crew and having lunch with the Chief Petty Officers.

1968 MCPON Black meets with Sailors in Vietnam

NAVAL HISTORY & HERITAGE COMMAND