



Bottom Line: Up Front

Edition 03-11

This document is for information purposes and is designed to ensure that all personnel are aware of the many issues/changes that occur in our Navy. Although not inclusive, it is a great venue to share our best practices. If you have information, programs or best practices that you would like to share Navy-wide, send them via your applicable ISIC or Force Master Chief for inclusion. Thanks for your support and feedback.

MCPON RECOMMENDS:

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center

http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Healthy_Living/

See page 8 for more links of interest

Shipmates,

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Congratulations to our newest prospective Chief Petty Officers! This is an exciting time during our CPO 365 process, culminating with the prideful earning of your anchors. Right now, I hope that all of our future CPOs are feeling challenged and are learning from the positive influences and wealth of knowledge from our Chiefs Mess, which is 118 years strong. For the First Class Petty Officers who were not selected for Chief this year, Phase I of CPO 365 starts Sept. 17 - are you ready?

As we all know, our Navy is facing some challenging times ahead with the Enlisted Retention Board and budget constraints. What you may not know is our Navy has seen this before. It's important that we continue to communicate why we are conducting the ERB. The competition to stay in the Navy is intense as a result of record high retention and low attrition. To ensure the Navy is positioned to meet future mission requirements, we must balance the force by retaining Sailors in the right mix of ratings and paygrades. The ERB enables the Navy to manage manpower requirements in a fair and transparent manner.

Important dates to remember:

- Aug. 22, 2011: ERB Phase I Convenes (E4/E5)
- Sept. 26, 2011: ERB Phase II Convenes (E6/E8)
- October 2011: ERB Phase I Results Announced
- November 2011: ERB Phase II Results Announced
- Jan. 13, 2012: Operational Waiver Requests Due
- Jun. 30, 2012: Last Day to Separate (Unless Waived)
- Sept. 30, 2012: Last Day to Separate ALL Sailors Not Selected for Retention

No one is eager to separate Sailors who voluntarily took an oath to serve our nation and our Navy. The Navy will provide additional transition services to affected Sailors to help build on their skills, success, and training acquired during their Navy careers to succeed in the civilian job market.

MCPON

Visit MCPON's Facebook page at:
<https://www.facebook.com/MCPON?ref=ts>

What's Hot

BLUF: If you use Spice, you will be caught!

Sailors who are choosing to use and purchase "Spice," herbal products and other so-called designer drugs should know that Naval Criminal Investigation Services (NCIS) is setting up undercover operations for the purchase of "Spice," everywhere. Chances are that if you plan on buying this product, for personal use or otherwise, you will most likely be buying from an NCIS agent, be processed for punishment under the UCMJ, and quickly be processed out of the Navy.

[NAVADMIN 108/10](#) states the following on drug abuse:

"Drug abuse includes the wrongful use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of a controlled substance. Drug abuse also includes the unlawful use of controlled substance analogues (designer drugs), natural substances (e.g., fungi, excretions), chemicals (e.g., chemicals wrongfully used as inhalants), propellants and/or prescribed or over-the-counter drugs or pharmaceutical compounds with the intent to induce intoxication, excitement, or stupefaction of the central nervous system, and will subject the violator to punitive action under the UCMJ and/or adverse administrative action."

Some examples of substances mentioned above where the wrongful use constitutes drug abuse include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Products that contain synthetic cannabinoid compounds, such as "Spice," Genie, Blaze, Dream, Ex-Ses, Spark, Fusion, Dark Knight, Yukatan Fire, and K2.
- Natural substances such as salvia divinorum and mushrooms.
- Common items abused by inhaling or huffing, such as Dust Off, glue, paint thinner and gasoline.
- Over-the-counter products such as Robitussin and Coricidin HBP.
- Prescription medications such as Oxycodone, Vicodin, Adderal, and Valium.

"Spice" is a mixture of natural herbs and synthetic cannabinoids that when smoked produce a marijuana-like "high" that decreases motor skills, impairs coordination and concentration, and effects short-term memory and senses. The effects of these substances are unpredictable when combined with alcohol, and since the chemical blends are continuously manipulated and the strength of the synthetic chemical used is unknown, there is no way to know what you are getting in the drugs or what the long-term health risks are if used. Some of the side effects from these drugs included uncontrolled vomiting, excessive sweating, flushed skin, increased heart rate and high blood pressure, and loss of consciousness.

If this sounds like a good time to you, then go ahead and hand over your rank and paycheck, and possibly your life.

Drug abuse goes against our Navy's core values and ethos, and it is a threat to lives, unit and mission readiness and morale. It is every Sailor's responsibility to deter drug abuse. If you do the crime, you will do the time ... remember zero tolerance and no second chances.

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center Launches Designer Drug Information Web Site

BLUF: This new Web site is helpful to educate Sailors on the harmful effects of "Spice" and other designer drugs. This is a good training tool for commands.

The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) launched a designer-drug information Web site Aug. 9 to inform and educate Department of Navy personnel on the dangers of designer drug use, and it is available at:

http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Healthy_Living/. The Web page is intended to provide a "one-stop-shopping" resource for visitors to the Web site and includes downloadable presentations and links to other drug-related Web sites.

The available presentations are well-suited for commands throughout the Navy and Marine Corps to use for general military training and other training venues intended to reach a broad audience ranging from leadership to the deckplate Sailor and Marine.

The NMCPHC Web page and leadership message provide background information on Spice and other synthetic designer drugs, including varieties, signs and symptoms of use and the negative health effects associated with use. It also increases emphasis on Zero Tolerance for possession and trafficking as well as the use of designer drugs. In the past year, hundreds of Sailors have been held accountable for use or possession of Spice or Spice derivatives. Service members can also be charged as part of the Zero Tolerance policy for failure to report an incident of abuse.

Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) Resources

BLUF: Don't miss out because you're not informed. Examine all the materials available to better your opportunity.

The new ERB Information Hub: The Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) convened for E4/E5 Sailors Aug. 22 prompting Navy Personnel Command (NPC) to create a new one-stop shopping ERB Web page linked on their homepage website, www.npc.navy.mil. The site is helpful to both commands and to Sailors and contains links to guidance and policy, quota information, timelines, frequently asked questions, ERB news stories and videos.

The economy has prompted record high retention and low attrition among active duty Sailors. As painful as it seems, the ERB is required in order to meet current and future planned end strength controls. The ERB focus is on 31 specific ratings that are more than 103-percent manned. The board will examine the performance of approximately 16,000 Sailors. An estimated 3,000 Sailors will not be retained on active duty, but Sailors who desire to stay will be encouraged to apply for a rating conversion or conversion/entry into the Selected Reserve. For those separating, extensive transition assistance will be in place in addition to the impressive VA Benefits and GI Bill for our veterans who've served honorably. Take the time to counsel affected Sailors early and often.

Senior Enlisted Continuation Board Announced

***BLUF: Don't wait to the last minute ... ensure your personnel records are updated.
Board correspondence is due Nov. 15.***

The fiscal year (FY) 2012 performance-based senior enlisted continuation board will convene Dec 5. According to [NAVADMIN 194/11](#), active, Full-Time Support and Reserve E-7 to E-9 Sailors with 19 years of service and three years' time-in-rate as of Sept. 1 will be considered by the board. Performance is the key. The board will focus on performance within the last five years or since advancement to current grade, whichever is later. Candidates' correspondence to the board must be received by Nov. 15. Any letters must be originated by the eligible Sailor. This date is also the last day for commands to resolve eligibility issues and problems.

Point of contact for Navy Personnel Command Board Execution and Retirement Programs is the NPC Customer Service Center at cscmailbox@navy.mil or 1-866-827-5672 and for Enlisted Continuation Board Post board matters (PERS-833) at (901)-874-3477 OR (901) 874-2096, or e-mail enlisted-postboard@navy.mil.

Minimalist Footwear Authorized

BLUF: You wanted flexibility ... now it's here.

[NAVADMIN 238/11](#) authorized the wearing of minimalist footwear with the Navy Physical Training Uniform (PTU) during command/unit directed Physical Training (PT), individual PT, and activities to include the semi-annual Physical Readiness Test (PRT).

Minimalist footwear is defined as shoes that allow the foot to function naturally without providing additional support or cushioning. Any shoe that is marketed as minimalist or barefoot-like footwear (current types such as the Vibram Five Fingers, Nike Free Shoes, INVO-8 Shoe, and Feelmax) are authorized for wear with the PTU.

These types of shoes aren't for everybody. It really boils down to the preference of the individuals and what works best for them. Educate yourself about minimalist shoes - and the style of running required while wearing them before you buy them!

For more information on uniforms and uniforms policy, visit the Navy Uniform Matters Web site at:
<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/uniforms/pages/default2.aspx>.

Latest Revisions to Post-9/11 G.I. Bill

BLUF: Stay up-to-date with your Post 9/11 G.I. Bill benefits ... changes took effect Aug. 1. Look for more changes in October.

Revisions to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill policy were released Aug. 4, providing Sailors, veterans and their families updated information on their educational benefit options.

Most of the changes took effect Aug. 1, prior to the beginning of the fall term. Changes include:

- All public school in-state tuition and fees are covered.
- Annual tuition has been capped at \$17,500 for private and foreign schools.
- Tuition payment tiers now apply to active duty personnel.
- The post-9/11 G.I. Bill will now only pay the net cost for tuition and fees - that is, it will only pay what scholarships, grants and loans do not cover.
- Housing stipends will not be paid during semester breaks.
- Monthly living stipend will be paid based on rate of pursuit.
- Entrance exam fees may now be reimbursed.
- Active duty members and spouses can receive book and supply stipend entitlements.
- Non-degree programs, on-the-job training, apprenticeship training, flight programs and correspondence training are now eligible for benefits.

For a complete list of revisions please read [NAVADMIN 235/11](#), and more information on these changes can be viewed on the Post 9/11 GI Bill website at http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/post_911_gibill/Post911_changes.html.

Navy Evaluation Instruction Updated

BLUF: This impacts advancement so let's ensure we understand the changes.

The update cancels BUPERSINST 1610.10B and incorporates several NAVADMINs affecting performance evaluations and fitness reports. The changes cover new E-5 promotion recommendation rules, Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) documentation requirements, and a new billet sub-category for performance reports. NAVFIT98A Version 29 was rolled out to the Fleet incorporating the new rules. Workstations on the unclassified Navy/Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) automatically received this new version in 2010. For non-NMCI users, the upgrade is available for download from the Navy Personnel Command (NPC) Web site. To access the [BUPERSINST 1610.10C](#) and for more information on evaluations, please visit the NPC Web site at: <http://www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/PerformanceEvaluation/>.

Enlisted Early Transition Program

BLUF: The Enlisted Early Transition Program has been extended to Sept. 30, 2013.

[NAVADMIN 142/11](#) announced the extension of Enlisted Early Transition Program (EETP), or “Early Out” to Sept. 30, 2013. The major update to the program is that Sailors can now apply for a voluntary early separation up to 24 months prior to their End of Obligated Service as Extended (SEAOS) and all separations must be effective no later than Sept 15, 2013. A few items of importance to understand:

The Commanding Officer has final disapproval authority and need not send any requests he/she cannot support. Certain ratings will not be approved; see the NAVADMIN for these rates.

The Montgomery GI Bill, Post 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008, and veteran’s benefits will remain in place for qualified Sailors separating under the EETP. For specifics refer to the NAVADMIN. Separation incentives will not be offered.

EETP is a separate program from the Early Career Transition Program (ECTP - [NAVADMIN 088/11](#)). EETP involves requesting separation from the Navy up to 24 months from EAOS as extended while ECPT involves transitioning to the SELRES to complete their service requirement.

Critical Paperwork

BLUF: Reminder to update your critical paperwork in order to take care of yourself and your family in the event of a tragedy.

All Sailors should verify their death gratuity beneficiary designation as soon as possible. A change made to the law for death gratuity payment to eligible beneficiaries allows 100 percent of a Sailor's death gratuity to be designated in 10 percent increments to one or more beneficiaries. Access the Electronic Service Record on the Navy Standard Integrate Personnel System and verify designations. To initiate changes, contact your personnel office.

Also review your Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance beneficiaries and Page 2 as well. Note there has been a change to the SGLI and FSGLI forms. It is imperative for you to review these forms because they have significant changes such as medical history for family members.

Additionally, ensure that Page 2s are up to date at every major milestone: marriage, divorce, births, PCS, etc.

Advancement Exam Preparation

BLUF: Advancement Exams are just around the corner. Visit the Navy Advancement Center's NKO Web portal to ensure you're ready!

That time of year is fast approaching ... advancement exams! If you haven't already, you can download your bibliography from the Navy Advancement Center's (NAC) NKO Web Portal at:
[https://www.nko.navy.mil/portal/careermanagement/navyadvancementcenter/home/advancementexamstrategyguide\(aesg\)](https://www.nko.navy.mil/portal/careermanagement/navyadvancementcenter/home/advancementexamstrategyguide(aesg)).

Bibliographies for individual rates/ranks are made available six months prior to exam dates, and each are specific for that exam cycle. Each reference from the list on the bibliography is generated from a question that will be on the exam. Through Advancement Examination Development Conferences (AEDCs), CPO Fleet Subject Matter Experts (FSME) assigns a specific reference to every question in the exam bank.

When FSMEs choose questions for exams, they are then added to the individual bibliography. FSMEs then decide if chapters or sections of the entire publication should be published for a specific reference. The FSMEs decide for each rating how specific or detailed the references are in the bibliographies. You will also see on the NAC Web portal a link for "Topics" next to the BIB link.

Exams are developed from the Occupational and Professional Military Knowledge Topics and Subtopics. The information is listed alphabetically, not in order of importance. This is key information on your exam because it gives you insight to how FSMEs from individual ratings categorize information. Within each Topic you can see how FSMEs break down the information. Both Topic and Subtopic lists are great tools for your exam preparation.

Remember, advancements are based on vacancies, and that your final multiple is compared to your peers in rate. Both your performance and exam score are the keys to moving up. Good luck on your preparation and taking your exam!

NOTE: Certain ratings must maintain continuous security clearance eligibility. A favorable investigation adjudication must be issued from Department of Navy Central Adjudication Facility (DONCAF) prior to the regularly scheduled examination date. An interim Security clearance is NOT a formal determination by an adjudicative authority and therefore does not satisfy this requirement.

Sailors in the following ratings who do not meet this requirement are ineligible for advancement and shall not be administered an examination: AC, AE, AG, AO, AT, AWF, AWO, AWR, AWS, AWV, AZ, CTI, CTM, CTN, CTR, CTT, EOD, ET, FC, FT, GM, HT, IC, IS, IT, ITS, LN, MA, MC, MN, MT, ND, OS, QM, SB, SO, STG, STS, AND YN, as well as all nuclear-trained personnel.

For more information, see [NAVADMIN 133/11](#).

TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery

BLUF: TRICARE has made it easier to get medications either by phone or internet.

Today, people are always looking for opportunities to save time and spend less money. TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery allows beneficiaries to do this by delivering maintenance medications safely and securely to their home through the U.S. mail. Pharmacy home delivery is available to many categories of beneficiaries, including active duty service members deployed overseas.

Beneficiaries of the TRICARE military health plan can obtain 90 days of home-delivered medication with no copayment and can get free vaccinations at participating pharmacies without seeing a doctor.

For beneficiaries who use TRICARE pharmacies, the retail cost of generic medications will increase from \$3 to \$5 for a 30-day supply, and brand-name medications will increase from \$9 to \$12 for a 30-day supply.

For more information on Pharmacy Home Delivery, visit:

<http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/Prescriptions/PharmacyProgram>

For more information on vaccinations, visit:

<http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/Prescriptions/Medications/Vaccines>

Exceptional Family Member Enrollment Available on NFAAS Web site

BLUF: Navy Family Accountability and Assessment Web site has made EFMP enrollment easier and faster.

Enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) will soon be available in the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS). NFAAS EFMP module Phase I is being released to enable an electronic process to expedite the submission, review and final designation of enrollment forms for new enrollees.

Additionally, the EFMP module will enable case managers at Fleet and Family Support Centers to track information and referral requests, and to develop and manage individualized service plans for new enrollees.

The EFMP module will be available online at the NFAAS Web site at:

<https://navyfamily.navy.mil>, and the NFAAS users guide is available via the help tab.

Navy EFMP information is available online at the NPC EFMP website at:

www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/efm

Links of Interest

The appearance of external links in this document does not constitute official endorsement on behalf of the MCPON, U.S. Navy or Department of Defense.

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center:

http://www.nmcphc.med.navy.mil/Healthy_Living/

The Online Helpline provides live, confidential support, 24/7: <https://www.safehelpline.org/>

Navy Personnel Command: <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/Pages/default.aspx>

G.I. Bill Benefits and updates:

http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/post_911_gibill/Post911_changes.html

The Navy Reserve Homeport: <https://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/Pages/default.aspx>

Suicide Prevention: http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/suicide_prevention/Pages/default.aspx

TRICARE online: <https://www.tricare.mil/>

Naval Safety Center: <http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/>

NKO Advancement Center:

[https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil/portal/careermanagement/navyadvancementcenter/home/advancementexamstrategyguide\(aesg\)](https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil/portal/careermanagement/navyadvancementcenter/home/advancementexamstrategyguide(aesg))

Retirement and Transition information: www.turbotap.org

To request a retirement letter from MCPON's office:

The link below is to NPC's web site where you can request a retirement letter from MCPON. Please allow eight weeks for process and delivery.

<http://www.public.navy.mil/BUPERS-NPC/CAREER/CAREERCOUNSELING/Pages/FLTRESRetirementSBP.aspx>