



***THE
ENS-LCDR
ASSIGNMENT GUIDE***



Purpose This document contains the basic principles of the O4 and below assignment process. While primarily of interest to officers anticipating reassignment, our goal is for this information to be of equal value to commands, career counselors, and mentors. We have created this guide to:

- demystify the process;
- pass along some of the rules of engagement we follow;
- provide information that will help everyone involved in the process manage expectations; and
- help prepare you with some assignment process survival tips.

The Key Elements The governing principles for all officer assignments can be found in COMDT INST M1000.8, Military Assignments and Authorized Absences Manual. The Officer Assignments Branch Chief (opm-2) will be the final approval authority for all O4 and below assignments, based on recommendations by the individual Assignment Officers (AOs).

The Shopping List As a starting point, the Shopping List in each Assignment Year (AY) includes billets in which the incumbent officer is scheduled to transfer, separate, or selected for promotion and tour complete the following AY. Shopping Lists will be updated after the release of Selection Board results on or about 1 August.

The Shopping List of all the billets we believe will be open in the current AY is typically made available in early summer via message traffic, CG Portal OPM webpage and/or Direct Access. Commands are highly encouraged to review and verify the accuracy of this Shopping List. Discrepancies should be reported to OPM via the Command Concerns/Shopping List Validation process outlined in the AY Preliminary Shopping Release, Solicitation for Validation, and Command Concerns.

Once we receive everyone's validations, we will release Shopping Lists via ALCGOFF messages in early August. Changes to the Shopping List will also be communicated in subsequent ALCGOFF message updates and AY SITREPs. The greatest number of changes usually occurs after publication of the O5 and O4 Selection Boards and O5 Assignment Panel results. Other changes will likely occur as officers re-evaluate their career and personal

goals.

Shopping List updates give potential candidates a chance to consider new alternatives and frequently are issued simply to develop assignment contingency plans. Please keep in mind that it is inappropriate to subject the AO or any incumbent in an advertised billet to questions regarding why the billet will be vacant or what is happening with the incumbent.

Use the Shopping List to develop and/or update your e-Resume. If you are tour complete or desire a transfer in the current AY, ensure your e-Resume is submitted in accordance with the timeline in the AY Kick-off Message.

The e-Resume

The e-Resume is your primary, and in some cases may serve as the only needed, method of communication with your AO. You should not consider submitting your e-Resume as an entering position to begin an extensive, iterative dialog. Providing the most complete and accurate information up front allows us to provide the best possible service. Updates along the way, based on Shopping List changes or other new information, are always welcome. The bottom line is that your e-Resume should accurately reflect your personal preferences.

e-Resume Craftsmanship

A well-crafted e-Resume should allow flexibility and acknowledge an array of possible outcomes. If your e-Resume only lists five Commanding Officer billets, it will appear that you really haven't considered the possibility of being assigned as something other than a CO. The same applies to e-Resumes that list only an extension or only billets in a single geographic area. If you have an established specialty, but prefer an out-of-specialty assignment, please communicate that. You should, however, also tell us what your preferences are within your specialty in the event that your out-of-specialty desires can't be accommodated. A very narrow e-Resume (i.e., just one billet listed) makes our work almost as easy as a blank e-Resume as we presume you'll be equally thrilled with any assignment after the few preferences listed. A broad e-Resume (i.e., 10-15 or more diverse billets identified) tells us your preferences and addresses alternatives that you would like the Service to consider you for given your specialty background and/or experience.

The e-Resume allows officers to update their selections as often as they would like. You should update it based on changing circumstances (e.g., new solicitations, AO input). Take the time to develop a well-crafted e-Resume the first time and submit it prior to the submission deadline. The AOs will query Direct Access for billet candidates very soon after the deadline. Always remember that the e-Resume system is a passive system. If you submit an updated e-Resume after the deadline, ensure you notify the servicing AO via e-mail that you have done so. Otherwise, you may not be considered for the new

assignment(s) requested. This is absolutely critical since Direct Access does not provide an automatic notice that you have changed your e-Resume.

Use the comment section to amplify your assignment request. Let us know of your career desires, special considerations you want us to consider, etc. This is the vehicle to advise us of your desires and express your concerns. Use it!

e-Resume Due Date

Your e-Resume is due by **01 September**. (Note that e-Resume deadline for Special Assignments is typically earlier and will be posted in advance on CGMS). That's when we begin a broad assessment of program and unit needs across paygrades, evaluate tradeoffs, and take a vertical look at workforce issues before moving forward in our horizontal (by paygrade) Assignment Panels and decisions. We try to be as responsive as possible in adjusting to changes as they occur throughout this dynamic process. Delayed submission of an e-Resume will reduce your assignment options. You should notify your AO immediately via email of any changes to your e-Resume after the 01 September submission deadline.

Extensions

Extensions are assignment decisions made during the normal course of the assignment process. A request for an extension is simply viewed as one assignment preference. Again, you should provide other options in the event that the extension cannot be accommodated. A Command endorsement is required for all extension requests.

The likelihood of being extended in your current billet depends on several factors. In some cases, Service need may be best met by extending you in a billet. At other times, the Service need is best met by moving you to afford others the opportunity to serve in a desirable or developmental billet. There is no standard rule that can be applied. Each request is different and is evaluated on a case by case basis.

Early Rotations

All requests for an early rotation **MUST** have a command endorsement addressing backfill requirements. The purpose of a command endorsement is not to give an opinion of the suitability for the requested position(s), but rather to address the effect an early departure would have on continuity or the overall skill/experience level of a unit or staff. Conditional positive endorsements (*e.g.*, "I support early rotation for position X, but not for position Y") are not appropriate. It is important to keep in mind that if an early rotation is requested, you will be considered for all available assignments during that AY, not just your "dream job." Command approval of an early rotation does not guarantee reassignment.

On occasion, early rotations may be required when a specific specialty or

service need cannot be adequately satisfied using officers that are tour complete. An early rotation request while serving in a command position will normally be denied.

Special Need Program

Many officers have “special needs”. In this context, however, a Special Need is a specific term used to define any medical physical, psychological, mental, or educational disability involving an officer and/or family dependant. All active duty members who have family members with professionally diagnosed Special Needs are required to enroll their family members in the Work Life Special Needs program in accordance with COMDTINST 1754.7 (series). This ensures early identification of families with Special Needs and serves to minimize family stress and undue hardships as well as costly, disruptive off season reassignments. Enrollment in the program will create a special flag in Direct Access that is visible to the AOs. It only tells us that you have a Special Need but does not divulge any details. When we see that indicator, we work closely with the local Health, Safety, Work Life (HSWL) Special Needs Case Managers to ensure potential assignment outcomes are compatible with your Special Need. If your particular special need can’t be met in a specific area, you will not be assigned there. Please don’t wait to introduce this consideration until after you’ve received orders. This makes it more difficult to accommodate your needs.

Being enrolled in Special Needs does not give anyone the advantage for any particular assignment. We work to ensure access to appropriate care rather than a particular care provider.

Familiarize yourself with Work Life policies. We find many officers who should be enrolled in the program, but are not. The reason given most often is they don’t want to bother the Coast Guard, or they don’t want special treatment. Whatever the medical condition or other situation, the Work-life staff can confirm whether your needs can or cannot be met at your proposed assignment area.

OCONUS Assignments

OCONUS positions are considered earlier in the assignment season. We do this to give officers requesting these assignments extra time to complete the logistical issues associated with their move. This also allows AOs to consider larger candidate pools that have not served at an OCONUS unit while developing assignment recommendations. Some specialties have high numbers of OCONUS billets and require us to “recruit” candidates to fill these billets. For example, there are a large number of pilot billets in Alaska and some years there are not enough officers requesting these positions. Therefore, at the beginning of the assignment season the candidate pool of officers will include all pilots due for rotation that have not previously served

at an OCONUS unit.

If you are requesting an overseas assignment review Article 1.H.2 of Military Assignments and Authorized Absences COMDTINST M1000.8. Additionally, the following statement must be entered into the comment section of your e-resume:

“My family (if applicable) and I meet the criteria for overseas assignment as outlined in Article 1.H. of Military Assignments and Authorized Absences, COMDTINST M1000.8 (series). My spouse (if applicable) and I have reviewed the Command Checklist for Overseas Screening, the Financial Assessment Checklist and the Dependent Overseas Screening (if applicable) shown in Enclosure 1.H.1. and 1.H.2. of Military Assignments and Authorized Absences, COMDTINST M1000.8 (series).”

Other Concerns

Aside from Special Needs, among the most prevalent concerns many of us have relate to children in school, caring for aging parents, and spouse employment. While we are sympathetic to those concerns and will make every effort to accommodate these issues, everyone should understand that they are fairly common. As such, it becomes impossible to accommodate everyone’s situation.

Collocation

The collocation policy allows married active duty members the opportunity to reside jointly whenever possible. IAW ALCOAST 055/13 (https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/library/generalmessages/General%20Messages/GENMSG2013/ALCOAST/055-13_alcoast.txt) collocation policy supports same sex domestic partnerships. Same sex Couples should familiarize themselves with the reporting requirements listed in ALCOAST 055/13 to ensure they understand and are compliant with policy. All couples should realize that the Service might not be able to co-locate them throughout their careers depending on Service needs and professional development. In cases where tour lengths are not aligned, Assignment Officers **may** adjust the tour length of one member to allow for both to transfer during the same Assignment Season.

Both married members and same sex domestic partnerships desiring collocation with their spouse/partner should tailor comments in their e-Resumes accordingly. We recommend that couples work together on their e-Resumes and give the Assignment Officers reasonable geographic and position options.

Assignment after Advanced Education

If you are looking for reassignment coming out of graduate school, there are several things to consider. As a return on investment for the Coast Guard, you can expect that you will do a staff tour associated with the advanced education

recently received. For example, officers competing for the Command and Staff course should expect assignment to a position in the Defense Operation Program. Many billets are tagged to have a graduate school “pay back” fill. While the program manager for your Training Allowance Billet will make a recommendation, the final assignment resides within opm-2. The best time to attend graduate school is coming off a primary specialty tour. This will allow payback assignment without leaving your operational specialty too long.

**Advanced
Education
Training
Allowance Billets
(TAB)**

The Coast Guard convenes postgraduate selection panels each summer to select officers to attend an advanced education program on a full-time basis.

These panels are held to select the best qualified candidates based on the precept. Each panel consists of three members: the cognizant AO; program manager representative; and an at-large member. Once the panel results are released, the primary selectee(s) should begin the process of applying to schools, which should be done in consultation with the program manager as many programs have preferred schools. Generally, we follow a “one-move” practice, which means you will either go to school where you are currently assigned or where it is likely you will be assigned upon completion of your education. Although this is not a strict rule and there are exceptions for a variety of reasons, it is something that we strive for. If you are an alternate, you should start the school application process as soon as you have been offered a TAB, which can only come from CG PSC-opm-1. This will ensure you receive orders in a timely manner.

If you are non-selected for promotion after you have been selected for an advanced education program, you will be removed from the list. If you are already in school, you will usually be removed from school and receive orders to another position.

**e-Resume Due
Date**

Please submit your e-Resume according to the timelines advertised by the AY Kickoff Message. That’s when we begin a broad assessment of program and unit needs across paygrades, evaluating tradeoffs, and take a vertical look at workforce issues before moving forward in our horizontal (by pay grade) Assignment Panels and decisions. We try to be as responsive as possible in adjusting to changes as they occur throughout this dynamic process. Delayed submission of an e-Resume may reduce your assignment options. You should notify your Assignment Officer immediately via email of any changes to your e-Resume after the submission deadline.

**The Assignment
Process**

Armed with your well crafted e-Resumes, we begin to process all the information we need to develop assignment recommendations.

Strategizing and Forming the Lists

Considerable time goes into laying groundwork. Commands are given the opportunity to submit command concerns early in the AY that will be considered by the AOs. Programs and units are contacted to discuss skills requested for incoming officers. The dialogue normally covers special concerns, priorities regarding billets, and information with which to reconcile questions on billets and the broad population of officers meeting specialty/billet needs.

We develop a list for each billet that includes the name of every officer requesting the billet on his or her e-Resume. We may place your name on a list for some billets even though you didn't include them on your e-Resume. We do this in cases where we find you meet the needs identified by the command/ staff office exercising cognizance over the billet and an adequate pool of qualified officers was not obtained from those requesting the billet.

In filling some O4 and below billets, we may talk directly to unit Executive Officers or appropriate Department Head. For other billets, we work through the incumbent's supervisor under the assumption that the supervisor will coordinate and validate input within their chain of command.

Who's in Play?

The short answer is every officer who is tour complete, has requested early rotation, or is more senior in rank than their current billet. Officers with approved retirement requests are not normally considered for reassignment. There is a general hierarchy. If you're tour complete, you will get orders even if approved for an extension. If you're not tour complete and you ask for orders, you MAY be reassigned. Fleet-ups or reassignment to another billet in the same geographic area are common examples. If you're a Lieutenant Commander (select), not tour complete, and serving in an O3 billet, you are normally more susceptible to an early transfer than a person already in an O4 billet. If you're not tour complete and you don't want to move, we may still propose to move you if Service needs require it. Examples would be where we have a billet need for your specialty (operational or technical) or experience that we can't satisfactorily meet with the pool of tour complete officers. This is why you should keep a current e-Resume on file. Fiscal constraints do come into play, but not such that they overwhelm our mission to best staff the Service for success.

Command Screening Panel

Officer assignments are primarily performance based decisions. The best way to compete favorably for desired assignments is to demonstrate a pattern of sustained, high level of performance regardless of job assignment history. Command Screening Panels screen eligible officers for potential selection to **all** Commanding Officer positions. Personnel must screen for command in order to be considered for any Commanding Officer position. Timelines

concerning applications and screening can be found in the Schedule of Active Duty Promotion List (ADPL) and Inactive Duty Promotion List (IDPL) Officer Personnel Boards and Panels, PSCNOTE 1401.

Hierarchy of Assignments

Generally, assignments are worked “top down” to ensure the most robust candidate pools of officers are considered for the highest priority billets. Command cadre assignments and high profile billets requiring interviews (e.g., Military Aide to the President, Congressional Affairs, etc.) are the first to be completed. If you request these types of billets, be sure to review current ALCGOFF message traffic as well as the opm-2 website to ensure your e-Resume meets submission deadlines.

This means that officers selected for promotion to and junior officers within a given pay grade may be assigned before more senior officers in that pay grade. We will strive to eventually issue orders to fill every vacant billet, including those billets for which no one asks.

Career Progression

Officers should have a good idea of their desired career path going into their second tour since it is difficult (and sometimes impossible) to be “entry level” in any career path as an O3. Early goal setting and developmental planning, as well as good mentoring, are extremely important. Progression within a community is typically gained by seeking positions of greater responsibility while acquiring the skills and qualifications that will make you competitive for future positions within that community.

Resources to assist in career planning are available in the OPM Reference Library located on the CG PSC-opm Portal site ([https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/units/psc/psc-opm/OPM Reference Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx](https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/units/psc/psc-opm/OPM%20Reference%20Library/Forms/AllItems.aspx)). These resources are vital references as we move to a “Broadened Specialist” construct for careers. The concept is based on junior officers developing in-depth knowledge in one specialty and adding additional knowledge and skills as they become more senior.

Developing a Career as a Coast Guard Officer provides an overview of the unique characteristics of an officer’s career. This new document provides an overview of fundamental officer corps roles, leadership development, officer specialties, and expectations at major career milestones.

The Commandant’s Guidance to Officer Selection Boards and Panels contains expectations for the qualities needed in the officer corps (updated annually, please refer to the current version). It also contains specific guidance for boards considering officers for selection for promotion at all grades – from Lieutenant to Flag Officer.

Individual officers seeking career counsel can also contact the Officer Career Management Branch (opm-4). Their advice revolves around competencies and career paths, performance management, and career broadening strategies. Officers who wish to schedule an appointment can send an e-mail to ARL-PF-CGPSC-OPM-4 and they will be contacted shortly thereafter.

**Out of Specialty
Tours**

While the Broadened Specialist career is a relatively new concept, it is still possible and recommend to pursue out of specialty tours once you have gained proficiency in your primary specialty. Please keep in mind that this may be difficult due to the significant investment in training necessary in certain specialties. Officers seeking out of specialty assignments should plan to return to their community after that tour in order to maintain proficiency and still gain valuable out of specialty experience. The available number of officers with the same specialty background will determine if you are able to compete for assignments out of specialty. Some specialties do not have enough officers to fill their billets (e.g., Aviation, C4IT), therefore out of specialty opportunities may be difficult to arrange.

Additionally, many officers desire special staff assignments (e.g., Congressional Affairs, CGLO, etc.) that are often very competitive. Officers desiring to complete these rotational tours should review their career progression. It is generally best to apply for these positions after completing a tour in their primary specialty. This will enable you to go out of specialty and then return while still current. Assignments such as these enhance an officer's professional expertise through a broader understanding of the Coast Guard and how it fits into the national government.

**Assignment
Priority
Considerations**

Unlike enlisted assignments, the officer assignment process does not include formal recognition for officers who have completed tours of duty in hard-to-fill or particularly arduous assignments. As such, there is no automatic assignment preference afforded these officers like there is for enlisted personnel. This is not to say that completion of a tour of duty in an arduous duty assignment or hard-to-fill billet won't be taken into consideration. It will simply be included in the mix of other factors such as career progression, performance, skill sets, Service needs, paygrade, and personal desires. It should also be noted that there is no formal Humanitarian Assignments program for officers. Cases involving severe family hardships that do not fall under the Special Needs program (as discussed previously) will be considered as yet another factor in any given assignment.

**The Feedback
Loop**

As the process takes us into December and January, the interest (and anxiety) level is understandably heightened among officers in play for reassignment. You're certainly welcome to call and check on things, but we appreciate your

patience if the answer you get is “we don’t know yet” or “it’s too early to tell.” Certain parts of the slate are worked out before others, but there is usually some collection of billets for which the most likely outcome isn’t known until late in the assignment season. We try to strike a balance between getting information to you sooner and providing you with information that is not likely to change. We make every effort to keep you informed on where we are in working the slate via SITREPS and the CG PSC-opm Portal site.

Typically, in early January for LCDRs, and early February for LTs and below we start to get a sense of billets for which you may be most competitive. One caution: saying you are “competitive” is not an indication of what may eventually be seen at the conclusion of the assignment process. Being competitive normally means you are among the pool of a few candidates from which we think the billet will be filled. Remember, we are telling the same thing to a few other people. We will not tell you who they are. Just as we do not discuss your e-Resume with anyone but you, we will not discuss other officers’ preferences with you either.

**Unit
Engagement**

When the Assignment Officer identifies a candidate for an assignment, that candidate is proposed to the unit or office where that billet resides. For most billets, only one officer will be proposed as opposed to a list of officers to choose from. We do not supply a list of candidates and ask the receiving command to rank order them. The information we pass to the prospective receiving command is: your year group; specialty; assignment history; and relevant training, education, or experience. We will also provide general answers to questions regarding your record of performance.

In return, we ask for very simple feedback on each officer we propose. We ask the prospective receiving command to tell us whether they find our proposed candidate acceptable or not. Absent a disqualifying matter of record or lack of requisite experience, most officers are found acceptable. We don’t share details of these conversations with you, just as we don’t discuss details of your e-Resume with anyone else.

For billets that are Flag Officer/SES assistants, the principal’s preference is usually accommodated except where there is competition for the same officer.

**Agreements/Recalls &
Continuation**

Every year officers ask about “contracts.” More accurately they are called “Reserve Extended Active Duty (EAD) Agreements,” “Retired Recall to Active Duty,” or “Regular Officer Continuation.” The paragraphs below describe these three typical situations.

Reserve

Reserve Extended Active Duty agreements (EAD) apply to Reserve Officers

Extended Active Duty (EAD)

who are requesting to come onto active duty. Just like many other decisions, approving an EAD request is an assignment decision and officers must compete for a job and an EAD opportunity just like everyone competes during the assignment season. Specific eligibility requirements for EAD agreements can be found in Article 1.B of the Officer Accessions, Evaluations, and Promotions Manual, COMDTINST M1000.3 (series). and include:

- possessing unique skills, abilities, or professional qualifications to meet a Service need;
- paygrade O-3 and below; and
- having fewer than 11 years total active or commissioned Reserve officer service.

Keep in mind past performance also plays a major role in the decision to approve an EAD request.

Retired Recall to Active Duty

Retirees and others facing mandatory retirement are not eligible for EAD contracts. Their only way to return to active duty is by requesting a Retired Recall to Active Duty Agreement. Policies can be found in the Reserve Policy Manual, COMDTINST M1001.28 (series) This is typically used for a short duration to fill a specific Service need. You will actually retire from the Service and, if the recall is approved, return to work at the same rank. A crucial part of this approval is rank because the Coast Guard is limited, by law, to a certain number of O-4 and above officers. Officers in these ranks are considered “control grade” officers. In order for a retired recall request to be approved the following conditions must be met:

- There must be enough space in the controlled grade;
- The CG needs an officer with your rank and specialty;
- There exists a vacant billet at the unit you desire; and
- Your past performance warrants you coming back to the CG.

If you are successful in your bid for retired recall, you will be paid just the same as the day you left the Service. Impacts on your retirement benefits when you return to retired status depend on the length of time you serve in the retired recall capacity. Typically your base pay calculation does not change, only the percentage does. If interested, contact your AO or opm-1.

Officer Continuation

LT Continuation applies to officers on the ADPL only. The decision to offer an officer continuation is made as part of the selection board process. If the board fails to select an officer for promotion to LCDR for a second time, the board will then consider if the officer’s performance warrants the offering of continuation on active duty. The board will determine if the service record reflects that the officer performed well at the LT level, but has not yet

demonstrated the requisite performance required to serve in the next higher rank. If you are offered continuation, and you are tour complete, then you will be part of the assignment process like everyone else. Officers are typically offered continuation for a two year period of time. CG PSC-opm-2 will generally look to extend or re-assign in the local geographic area any officer that is serving on a continuation contract.

Retirement Requests

The best time to submit a retirement letter is late summer, prior to commencement of the AY. This allows the assignment process to effectively shop your billet and arrange for a timely, qualified replacement. Retirement requests can be submitted at any time during the year, but keep in mind the later in the assignment process, the more difficult it will be to meet requested dates and meet Service needs to fill the billet. Due to the lack of officer experience in certain specialties, our practice is to require 12 months notice. The officer will have input to the retirement dates (6-12 months out) until orders are issued, then RILO rules come in play (see below). Refer to the Military Separations Manual (COMDTINST 1000.4) Chapter 1 for retirement letter submission guidance.

Retirement In Lieu of Orders (RILO)

It is important to understand who is eligible to RILO and under what conditions.

- If you have 20 years of service, have no obligated service, and you prefer to retire instead of accepting orders, your request will normally be granted. Requests should be received no later than 5 days after orders have been cut in Direct Access.
- If you are selected for promotion, eligible to retire, and request to RILO, you must also ask to voluntarily have your name removed from the list of promotion selectees.
- If you are newly promoted, our personnel regulations require you to serve in grade for two years prior to retiring. If your two years of obligated service isn't up by 01 August, or if you have other obligated service (advanced education pay-back, OCONUS transfer, etc.), you are not eligible to RILO.
- You must have 10 years commissioned officer service time at time of retirement.

Please also note that all RILOs must take place by 01 August, but you can ask to retire earlier. If you prefer a later retirement date (perhaps to be eligible for a longevity pay raise or to better meet your personal needs), then you need to submit your voluntary retirement request in time for us to act on it prior to the

end of the assignment season.

Orders

Orders are issued in descending rank as the slates for each paygrade are approved. We start transmitting orders, starting with OCONUS transfers and other officers known to have early reporting dates. Usually the vast majority of OCONUS orders are issued in January/February and the majority of CONUS orders are issued in February/March.

We do not specify detaching or reporting dates. The majority of orders are issued with the following paragraph, "Firm reporting date to be coordinated between transferring and receiving commands. DIRLAUTH." While Direct Access requires an estimated report date in order to cut orders (typically 01July is entered as a default), commands are authorized to arrange exact dates among themselves.

**Security
Clearances**

Another issue involving orders is that of security clearances and polygraphs. Some positions require an increased security clearance and/or a polygraph that often has long lead times to complete. These requirements should be reflected in your orders but you should always check with your new command to verify if they are required. It is in your best interest to start the ball rolling at the earliest possible opportunity. The responsibility to start this process rests with the departing command.

**Off-Season
Assignments**

Although the vast majority of officer assignments are handled by the processes described above, each year circumstances arise which require off-season transfer decisions not previously contemplated.

When we become aware of an upcoming off-season vacancy, we advertise the billet in an ALCGOFF message, along with any other billets that stand a good chance of opening as part of a chain reaction. We consider the officers who respond to the solicitation along with any others we might have identified who also have the right seniority, skills, and experience. We consider the billet owner's input, current command endorsements, and our ability to minimize a chain reaction of assignments.

**Off-Season
Retirements**

Under CG Military Separations Manual (CIM 1000.4 series) policy, eligible officers may submit a request for retirement a minimum of six months and no more than twenty-four months in advance of the desired separation date. Requests within those parameters can usually be approved. In some cases, however, Service needs or circumstances at a unit do not permit approval of the requested date. One important consideration is our ability to backfill the retiring officer's billet. There are usually no easy backfill options when a

vacancy occurs outside the annual assignment process. For that reason, command endorsements on retirement requests must address backfill requirements. Retirement requests which would cause a vacancy off-season may face disapproval if an acceptable backfill arrangement cannot be found and the command is not willing to absorb a gap.

Conclusion

We hope you find this information useful in understanding your assignment process and that it helps reduce the associated anxiety. We recognize how important the outcome of assignment decisions is to each individual and to the Service. We look forward to serving you and hope that our messages, website, as well as personal contact keep you informed.