

WEIGHT AND BODY FAT PROGRAM STANDARDS MANUAL
MAJOR CHANGES
August 2012

Alternative body fat measurements discontinued. DoD has stated that no alternative body fat measurements (i.e. calipers instead of taping measurements) are authorized. Low cost methods such as calipers are inconsistent. Accurate alternative methods are expensive; allowing the use is unfair to junior personnel who may not be able to afford the cost. In the past, the Coast Guard has allowed members to submit requests for alternative body fat measurements which would be approved for one semi-annual weigh in only. To allow reasonable time to reach compliance for members who were repeatedly approved for alternative body fat measurements, members who were previously authorized alternative body fat measurements will be allowed to continue to submit waiver requests until September 30, 2012. No waivers may be requested or approved after April 2013.

Probation periods will now begin immediately. Previously, members were referred to medical to determine if weight loss is safe. The evaluation was required to be completed within 30 days of the weigh in. The probation didn't begin until after the evaluation. Medical has indicated that there is no need to delay the probation start date. The medical evaluation will still be completed, but probation will now begin as soon as a member is found to be non-compliant.

Increased guidance for resident training courses. The new manual now lists specific courses that require compliance prior to attending. C schools have been removed from the list due to the need for members to complete pipeline training. Students found non-compliant at the point of graduation (those who have gained weight while in school) may now complete training but certification, advancement, qualification and payment of bonus would be held until member is compliant.

Physical fitness requirements removed. All physical fitness requirements were removed from the Weight Manual and are expected to be included in the new Health Promotions Manual. Until other guidance is released, members on probation will be required to exercise three hours per week as directed by their UHPC.

PCS departure weigh-in. Members must now be measured 30 days prior to any PCS departure. Previously, the requirement was that CG PSC be notified prior to PCS departure if a member was on probation. No special weigh in was required. Despite this requirement, some non-compliant members have reported to new units and were then immediately separated. The new requirement to measure members before a move occurs will conserve government funds.

Change to attire for weigh-in. Added the option to weigh-in wearing authorized organizational attire (i.e. flight suit, business suit, coveralls). The alternative options increase convenience to the member and minimize mission impact.

Changed Commanding Officer's ability to authorize an abeyance in the middle of probation for up to 30 days. CO's instead will now have the option to extend the end of the probation by 30 days. The abeyance was previously allowed for any reason the CO felt a member may need additional time in the middle of the probation. It was often given for illness or injury. Granted an abeyance at the time of the injury/illness was a guess at how the situation would impact the member's ability to lose weight. Allowing an extension at the end of the probation allows command flexibility to consider how much effort of the member demonstrated in order to try come into compliance while at the same time they can also consider any extenuating circumstances.

BMI screening weights and maximum body fat percentages. BMI screening weights and new maximum body fat percentages were implemented in October 2009 and have been

announced in annual ALCOASTs. Minimum weights have been added to the manual for medical and accession use. All wrist measurements have been removed as BMI is based only on height. There is no change to the screening weights or to the maximum body fat percentages previously announced.

Revised body fat assessment procedures. Tension tape must be used for all body fat measurements; this requirement was previously announced in an ALCOAST. Three separate sets of measurements are now required for any determination of body fat as required by DoD to improve the consistency of the taping method. The three measurements will be averaged if they do not agree.

CG PSC-PSD listed as authorizing official for abeyance and exception requests. Change was announced in ALCOAST 119/11.

Strikes. The policy to separate members with three non-compliant semi-annual weigh-ins (strikes) was announced in a 2009 ALCOAST. Before the 2009 ALCOAST, separations only were required for

- failure to successfully complete a probation,
- exceeding maximum screening weight by more than 35 lbs and maximum body fat by more than 8%, and
- 3 probations within a 14 month period.

The 3 probations could be a result of any failed weigh-in, including semi-annual, resident training schools and command directed. The strikes were added as a new tracking method because some members had very long repeated probation periods and would not reach three separate probations in 14 months. The 14 month rule remains to capture repeated probations of short lengths. The intention of both the 3-strike and the 14 month rule is to prevent a pattern on non-compliance.