



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army Directive 2019-15 (Enlisted Centralized Selection Boards)

1. References

- a. Army Regulation (AR) 140-111 (U.S. Army Reserve Reenlistment Program), 2 March 2018.
- b. AR 600-8-19 (Enlisted Promotions and Reductions), 25 April 2017.
- c. AR 601-280 (Army Retention Program), 1 April 2016.
- d. AR 614-200 (Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management), 25 January 2019.
- e. AR 635-200 (Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations), 19 December 2016.
- f. U.S. Army Talent Management Strategy (Force 2025 and Beyond), 20 September 2016.

2. This directive revises Army policy for enlisted Soldiers in the Regular Army and U.S. Army Reserve Active Guard Reserve Program as it pertains to the conduct of enlisted centralized selection boards.

3. Since their inception in 1969, the Army convenes annual enlisted centralized selection boards to assess the potential of noncommissioned officers (NCOs) for promotion. To capitalize on the additional capabilities a centralized selection board process offers, the Army will expand the application of order of merit lists (OMLs) that the boards generate to inform a myriad of human resource management decisions that will improve readiness, NCO professional development, and the professionalism of the NCO Corps. As we approach the 50th anniversary of the board process, we are making several changes that will facilitate an annual assessment of talent (that is, skills, knowledge, and behaviors) that will maximize the potential of our greatest assets—our people.

4. The following changes recognize and capitalize on the unique talents that NCOs possess. This talent management effort will facilitate accomplishment of the Army's strategic objectives to improve readiness and sustain a workforce of trusted professionals by employing NCOs to the maximum effect while mitigating a mismatch

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of people and requirements. The changes will be effective upon modification of the automation processes and personnel systems of record (on or about concurrent with the fiscal year 2020 board cycle).

a. The Army will conduct four talent assessment boards annually (one each quarter) by rank (staff sergeant through command sergeant major) with the objective to assess and rank the talent of eligible NCOs in accordance with Army doctrine and proponent guidance. The Army Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-1 will announce board dates and eligibility criteria. Soldiers eligible for consideration cannot opt out of consideration.

(1) These boards will assess the talent (skills, knowledge, and behaviors) of individuals under consideration and generate OMLs. The OMLs will inform a myriad of human resource decisions, including but not limited to:

(a) scheduling for attendance at professional military education to bolster mental agility and conceptual thinking,

(b) order of selection for effective dates of promotion to satisfy requirements and improve readiness,

(c) consideration for potential nomination as a nominative command sergeant major or sergeant major and selection for and slating against valid command sergeant major requirements to facilitate the optimal level of individual performance by ensuring individuals are employed within their talent set,

(d) assignment to key developmental positions or against strategic broadening opportunities to deliberately manage the talents each individual Soldier possesses instead of simply distributing people, and

(e) retention or denial of continued service on a selective basis to sustain the professionalism of the NCO Corps.

(2) Individuals will learn their OML standing through the online Army Career Tracker. Based on the annual assessment, they will be able to identify how they compare with NCOs of the same grade in their military occupational specialty. The communication between the Army and affected NCOs will be private. Official board results will be published without OML rankings, but those NCOs found most qualified will be annotated accordingly. All NCOs the board assessed as otherwise qualified for potential promotion (subject to requirements) will be identified within the official board results. Those NCOs not qualified for promotion will be informed separately.

(3) To improve personnel readiness, individual selection for promotion will be accomplished on a monthly cycle (based on individual eligibility and OML standing), identifying the best-qualified NCOs for promotion to satisfy requirements. The DCS, G-1 will no longer publish an annual list of Soldiers for promotion to NCO ranks of sergeant first class and above.

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b. The DCS, G-1 will impose a Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) bar to continued service against any Soldier (Regular Army and Army Reserve (Active Guard Reserve) only) who fails to qualify for promotion upon attaining primary zone time in service/time in grade eligibility because he or she did not complete the mandatory Structured Self-Development (SSD)/Distributed Leaders Course (DLC).

(1) The HQDA bar to continued service puts a Soldier on notice that his or her continued service may not be in the Army's best interest. Upon imposition of the HQDA bar, the company, detachment, or comparable commander of the unit to which the Soldier is assigned or attached for duty and administration will counsel the Soldier about the requirement to qualify for promotion board appearance by completing SSD/DLC. The commander will review the bar to continued service at least every 3 months after the date of imposition and 30 days before the Soldier's scheduled departure from the unit or separation from the Army.

(2) Upon completion of each 3-month review, the unit commander will use DA Form 4856 (Developmental Counseling Form) to inform the Soldier that the bar has been reviewed and will remain in effect unless the Soldier completes SSD/DLC. The commander also will notify the Soldier that, upon completion of the fourth 3-month review, separation proceedings will be initiated unless the Soldier has completed SSD/DLC and qualified for promotion. The HQDA bar to continued service will be removed when the Soldier meets the SSD/DLC requirement.

c. These boards will have access to data not currently considered when a board sees a Soldier's Army Military Human Resources Record. The inclusion of this additional data, such as suspension of favorable personnel actions (flags), Immediate Reenlistment Eligibility Prohibition codes, and information indicating a Soldier is ready to deploy, improves a board's ability to assess each Soldier's qualifications (against Army standards), deployability (enhancing readiness), and, ultimately, overall contributions to the professionalism of the NCO Corps. The DCS, G-1 will announce this expanded capability before implementation.

d. Board OMLs will be used to inform NCOs of selective continuation in certain skills or potential denial of continued service when an NCO's performance is deemed substandard. By incorporating continuation and denial of continued service processes predicated on qualitative grounds, strength limitations, reduction in force, or budgetary constraints to an annual OML process, the Army will increase readiness and reinforce the professionalism of the NCO Corps. The Army DCS, G-1 will announce this expanded capability before implementation.

5. The DCS, G-1 is the proponent for this policy. The DCS, G-1 will incorporate the provisions of this directive into references 1a through 1e within 2 years from the date of this directive, concurrent with implementation. The DCS, G-1 will issue guidance to facilitate implementation.

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6. This directive is rescinded upon publication of the revised regulations.



Mark T. Esper

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