

COVID-19

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Insights from the Career Management Team, Reserve Affairs (RA)

Career Corner

current topics >>>

COVID-19 Update:

Clarifying Guidance Concerning Telecommuting During Annual Training. Per MARADMIN 417/20: Performance of Annual Training (AT) at an alternate duty location, to include telecommuting, is authorized.

Key takeaways include:

- Commanders/OpSponsors can waive DD Form 2946 or the telecommuting requests.
- Telecommuting log must be completed to account for work being done.
- Commanders may institute restriction of movement (ROM) to minimize risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- RC members are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) while activated for AT regardless of location.



Reserve Command Selection Making a good first impression counts!

By LtCol K.M. Peterson

Every year, the Reserve Command Selection Board (RCSB) convenes to evaluate, screen, and slate eligible O5/O6 RC officers. The RCSB provides Marines with the best possible leadership to maintain a competent and well-balanced fighting force. As career counselors, we have the opportunity to review and analyze individual records and help candidates prepare so that their packages are competitive through the board process. We have the opportunity to participate as board recorders and advisors, and developed understanding to the nuances related to a successful command selection. While there are no shortcuts or “work arounds” to the selection process, Career Management Team (CMT) has several recommendations for Officers considering selection:

- 1) **Ensure your record is up-to-date and administratively complete.** A record with date gaps, missing fitness reports, expired physical fitness test (PFT) and combat fitness test (CFT) is a record that will not get an Officer selected for command. If you notice a discrepancy, get it fixed.
- 2) **Write a letter to the Board.** The letter is your one chance to communicate with the President and the members of the Board. It is an opportunity to justify any breaks in service or to provide clarification for any discrepancy.

- 3) **Know your Command potential.** While this may seem harsh, many Officers apply for command billets with very little chance of selection. You should have recent experience in your MOS. Simply put, if you are applying for Battalion Command, you need to have Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR) experience in that or a similar command with more senior billet experience (Operations or Executive Officer) preferred.
- 4) **Communicate with your Reporting Senior (RS) and Reviewing Officer (RO).** Ensure your RS and RO know your intentions for command screening. The Board will analyze your Fitreps’ Sections I and K and will expect to see recommendations for command. If your RS and/or RO do not know you are planning to submit a package for command, they may not provide a command recommendation. This puts you at a disadvantage.

Letters to the Board are crucial and provide an answer to questions that may arise. Make your briefer’s job easier!

Remember, the RCSB is a competitive process. The sooner you begin preparing, the better your chances will be.

set the record straight >>>

Prepping Your Record for the Board is Paramount

By LtCol C. N. Johansen

The first step to prepare for your board is putting your best foot forward by ensuring your record is complete, accurate, and current.

Current photo

Normally your photo is considered current if the photograph is no more than one year old (365 days) on the date the selection board convenes (MARADMIN 052/19). Due to COVID-19, MARADMIN 266/20 states that photos taken in calendar year 19 will be considered current for this year's board.

This is completely up to YOU to take initiative. How your record looks is a reflection of how much effort you put in.

Things to consider for your photo (MARADMIN 052/19):

- Ensure hair is neat and within regs
- Ensure ribbons and devices match your record and are placed appropriately
- Make sure your uniform is unwrinkled and has proper fit
- Make sure watches, rings, and eyeglasses are inconspicuous

To find a photo location Google, "Department of Defense (DOD) photographic unit studio" or use <https://vios.army.mil/> (CAC required) to find a location near you and make an appointment. Local Marine Corps Bases and Marine Corps Recruiting Command Districts are a resource for photos.

Accuracy

To ensure your record is accurate, start by doing the following:

1. Review your Master Brief Sheet (MBS) to make sure the admin section (top half) is accurate and that all supporting documentation is in your Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) in the correct folder.
2. Look at the bottom half of your MBS to make sure there are no date gaps.
3. Schedule an appointment with a Reserve Career Counselor by emailing SMB_MANPOWER_CAC@usmc.mil

How to make corrections

To make corrections to the top portion of your MBS, contact your admin section and provide supporting documentation. To make corrections to documents uploaded in your OMPF (add, move, or remove document), follow the directions on the "HOME" page of your OMPF which is accessible through Marine Online (MOL).



Career path advice

SMCR vs IMA

By Col F. Delgado & Maj S. Johnson

Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR)

- **What it is:** Most traditional form of reserve duty.
- **What it is NOT:** ONLY one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer. There WILL be requirements outside of drill and you have to be prepared for this commitment.

It is imperative that you progress in your SMCR role and seek new and challenging opportunities. Critical Officer billets include Platoon Command, Company/Battery Command, Operations Officer, and Executive Officer roles. In most cases, you have to prove your aptitude in order to be assigned these billets.

How do I get a SMCR Billet? If you are currently in the SCMR/IMA, you can conduct an inter-unit transfer to open Billet Identification Code (BIC). Gone are the days of running Marines in excess simply to "stick around". If you are not currently in a SMCR/IMA unit, contact the Prior Service Recruiter for the unit.

Individual Mobilization Augmentation (IMA)

- **What it is:** A Marine Reservist that fills a critical billet in an Active Component organization.
- **What it is NOT:** Mobilization or temporary additional duty (TAD). Only in cases when the unit, like any other would need to mobilize the reserve component.

Reservists filling IMA BICs are drilling reservists. Their drill schedule may be non-traditional and dependent on the Command's need. Per the Marine Corps Order (MCO) and DoD Instruction, IMAs must complete a minimum of 12 days of AT. IMA is comparable to a "B-billet" for our active duty counterparts. The experiences can be career enhancing and developmentally stimulating depending. If you decide to do back to back IMAs, your military occupational specialty (MOS) credibility could come into question. Be sure to understand the timing, the billet, and the drilling expectations, as they are all very different. If you are in an IMA billet, you are still affiliated with the Select Reserve (SelRes) and therefore you still qualify for Tricare Reserve Select.

How do I get an IMA Billet? Each unit with IMA billets have a Reserve Liaison Officer (RLO). The RLO coordinates with the unit's Active and Reserve Component leadership that interviews, staffs and "hires" the IMA applicant. The RLO also helps hold the IMA Reservist accountable for fulfilling their annual requirements. PFT, CFT, height/weight, and Medical Readiness all fall on the Marine to complete. To apply for an open BIC, a reservist will submit their reserve qualification summary (RQS) and photo to the RLO directly, via a Prior Service Recruiter (directly place those in the IRR) or through their appropriate CMT Mentor.

It is important to understand IMA billets can be unfunded if vacant. This happens to better support new initiatives or during the sunset of old demands.

Where to next?

By Col C.J. Burke

The Career Management Team has four Colonels to serve as Career Mentors to assist and advise you on the many opportunities available in the USMC Reserves. If you want to discuss your Reserve career path our Mentors are here to support you. Mentors are designated to Command Element, Logistics Combat Element, Aviation Combat Element, and Ground Combat Element. To request a Mentor session please send an email with the subject "Mentor Request" with your MOS to: smb_manpower_cac@usmc.mil.

Essential Tips for Marines In-Zone Next Year

By MSgt J. Vasquez

Promotion opportunities happen 2 to 3 times a decade if you're lucky, so it's crucial to ensure Marines capitalize when it arrives. Listed below are just a few things Marines can do in preparation to make themselves more competitive.



1. Contact your Career Counselor!

Although a Marine's direct Leadership is always good to talk to, the Reserve Career Counselor has direct communication with the Board Members and can provide critical insight in regards to promotion trends, peer comparisons, and targets for improvement.

At a minimum, a Counselor should be contacted one year prior to the board convening to allow time to take corrective action, then follow-up thereafter. After selection, it's a good idea to request additional counseling to prepare the goals ahead before the next rank.

ask the Counselors

Q: *Should I address gaps in Reserve Service?*
A: *Yes! Letters provide insight that can help*

Any opportunity to clarify any potential discrepancies, derogatory information, or anything that can be misconstrued should be addressed. A Letter to the board provides the Marine an opportunity to offer context and paint a more complete narrative. A strong letter has the potential to leave a lasting impression and sets the stage for your briefing in a positive light. Do what you can to make your briefers job easier!

2. Start early correcting and improving your record. Complete any required or optional career advancing courses as soon as possible, so the certificates post to your record prior to the board. Start auditing your record early to allow for delays in correction process.

3. Don't accept mediocrity.

Average performance in training and education is exactly that, average. Strive to improve in all areas. Top RS/RO profile performance should be your pursuit. First class PFT/CFT and expert marksmanship should be everyone's goal. Completing and excelling in education both military and civilian should be a top priority. Find your area of weakness and work to get better. Complacency and contentment can kill competitiveness. Accept the challenge to be better than you are, then go do it. I have counseled dozens of Marines who are hard workers in their MOS but disregard their greenside. I have seen top performers in every area yet they are content with remaining a Gray belt. It's the little things collectively that set you apart. When you are briefed, you want to make sure you have your best effort out there.



Performance Matters

For all boards, one of the most important factors is a Marine's performance. Yes, other items/areas matter as well, but Performance is critical. It is not always possible to change metrics on performance from one fitness report, however, showing progression and a willingness to improve from one report to the next is vital.

Professional Military Education

Bottom Line Up Front: Get your Professional Military Education (PME) done! The selection guidance (precepts) for many boards include a reminder of the importance of PME, whether resident or non-resident, in an officer's development. Officers are advised to ensure that course completion information is noted on their MBS and PME completion certificates are included in their OMPF to illustrate completion. In cases where an officer is PME incomplete, but completed one or more sub-courses of that PME. The officer may send communication to the President of the Board describing progress in completing the PME, and include documented evidence of any sub-course completion.

Civilian Education

Continued civilian education is an indicator of a Marine's desire to seek self-improvement. The commitment to better one's self through continued education shows desire, discipline, and dedication. With that being said, civilian education (Masters, Doctorate, etc.) is NOT weighed the same on boards as PME. If you are PME complete, by all means, pursue civilian education. Civilian education does not equal PME completion.

By Maj S. Johnson

finalthoughts...

“Understand that success is not an accident, but a planned event.” ~ Abhishek Ratna



From the General...

MajGen Helen G. Pratt
Director, Reserve Affairs



Marines, I am excited to announce that RA has established the Career Management Team (CMT). The Officers and Marines of the CMT are here to assist Reserve Component (RC) Marines with professional career development advice and guidance. The CMT facilitates BIC inventory management by assisting the RC and transitioning Active Component (AC) Marines with finding a billet that supports the needs of the Marine Corps and desires of the Marine.

The past few months have highlighted the dedication of the RC Marines to serve in any clime and place. The Marines of the CMT are a valuable source of information and they are here to support you throughout the remainder of your career in the RC. This is the first of many communications intended to keep you informed of valuable information and resources. We strive to ensure that we are providing the required support to accomplish the mission.

Semper Fidelis!

Coming soon >>>

In The Next Issue

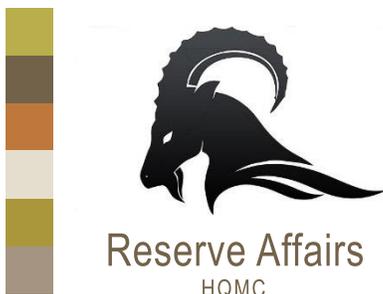
Enlisted Board Promotion

Actions after Non-Selection

MBS 101

Available Counseling Resources

Contact us at **703-784-1272** or [SMB MANPOWER CAC@usmc.mil](mailto:SMB_MANPOWER_CAC@usmc.mil)
www.manpower.usmc.mil/webcenter/portal/RAM4/pages_page13



3280 Russell Rd,
Quantico VA 22134

Career Management Team

POC:

Maj Jonathan Arnold
(703) 784-9746
Jonathan.arnold@usmc.mil

MSgt Justino Vasquez
(703) 784-1272
Justino.vasquez@usmc.mil

OMB: **SMB manpower CAC@usmc.mil**