

*The*  
**Reserve Chief Warrant Officer**  
**(CWO)**  
*Assignment*  
*Guide*



NOV 2007

**Purpose**

The reserve CWO assignment process is slightly different from assignments at the junior ranks. With that in mind, we have created this guidebook to:

- demystify the assignment process;
- pass along some of our rules of engagement;
- provide information to help everyone manage expectations;

As this is a constantly evolving process we appreciate any and all feedback in what would make this a better guide. If you have any questions or recommended changes, your point of contact is the current Reserve CWO Assignment Officer (AO) at (202) 493-1708.

**The Key Elements**

The reserve CWO assignment process is, to a large extent, not much different from what you've experienced in the past, in that the key elements are the shopping list and e-resume.

Due to the relatively small number (currently 158) reserve CWO billets, annual assignment panels will NOT be the norm; rather, assignment slates will be compiled and approved by CGPC-rpm based upon anticipated vacancies, service needs and member's e-resume desires.

## **The Shopping List**

The shopping list of all the reserve CWO billets expected to be available in the upcoming assignment season is initially published in late October via message traffic and in Direct Access (DA). As a starting point, the list includes all those billets where the incumbent will be tour-complete the following summer, billets where we have approved separation requests on file, and CWO billets where the incumbent will achieve either the maximum age or maximum years of service milestones for continued participation in the SELRES. In the initial message, we ask commands to carefully review the list, additions and deletions will occur.

Remember assignments in the reserve CWO community are based upon your specialty (a BOSN transfers to a BOSN billet). A BOSN can't be considered to fill a different specialty for example an ENG billet. However, any existing reserve CWO specialty is eligible for assignment to a general duty billet labeled as "CWO4".

In the months and weeks leading up to the advertised e-resume deadline we publish every billet we believe will be acted upon by the AO. In addition to updating the DA shopping list, we issue updates via message traffic. In this way the entire reserve CWO population is kept informed of billets that are open. Changes are announced in ALCGRSV message updates to the shopping list. The greatest number of changes normally occurs right after the shopping list comes out as commands verify billet changes and member rotations. Other changes will likely occur as members evaluate career and personal goals and billet growth due to Service needs.

## **E-Resume**

The e-resume is your primary and the only mandatory method of communicating with us. Give us complete information so we can best serve you. You should feel free to contact your AO to get advice, but the e-resume is the final, official statement of your desires. Judicious updates along the way, based on shopping list changes or other new information, are always welcome. An email to the AO letting him/her know you have updated your e-resume is the only way to ensure that your most recent e-resume is being acted upon. The bottom line is that your e-resume should accurately reflect your personal preferences.

Please use the shopping list when developing or updating your e-resume. If you are tour complete or desire a transfer in the current assignment season, we need your e-resume by the date listed in the Assignment Year kickoff message. If you send in a late e-resume, you are subject to a process that has already begun.

**E-Resume  
Craftsmanship**

A well-crafted e-resume should allow flexibility and acknowledge possible outcomes. If your e-resume that lists only one or two billets and nothing more, that tells us you haven't considered the possibility of not being assigned to those commands. The same applies to e-resumes that list only an extension, or only billets in a single geographic area. A very narrow e-resume makes our work almost as easy as a blank e-resume, because we will presume you'll be equally disappointed with any assignment after the few preferences you listed. A broad e-resume tells us your preferences and addresses alternatives that you believe the Service will consider you for, given your specialty background and/or experience.

Use the comments section to provide amplifying information. We do not need a formal resume as you would normally see in your civilian occupation. Let us know of your career desires, any special considerations, and anything from your civilian experience that makes you the right fit for a particular billet. This is your vehicle to advise us of your desires and express your concerns. Use it!

**Direct Access  
Information**

A word on Direct Access information in general. Yes, AOs do review that information and use it as well. Be sure that all the personal information, from security clearance to academic degrees to contact numbers, is correct. It is used to make assignments so make sure it accurately represents you.

**Extensions and  
Early Rotations**

Extensions are assignment decisions made by the AO and the CGPC-rpm, Division Chief. A request for extension is viewed as one of, hopefully, several assignment preferences.

How likely is it that you may be extended in your current billet? That depends on several factors. In some cases the 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 set rule of thumb since each case is different and decisions are based on a multitude of factors. A positive command endorsement will certainly influence assignment considerations. In addition, it is to your advantage to obtain a command endorsement.

For early rotations, it is required that your active command endorse your e-resume. The purpose of the command endorsement is not to give an opinion of your suitability for the requested billet(s), but rather to address the effect your early departure would have on unit continuity or the overall skill/experience level of the unit staff. "Conditional" positive endorsements (e.g., "I support early rotation for billet X but not for billet Y") are not appropriate.

Early rotations most often occur when a Service need cannot be adequately satisfied using CWOs that are tour complete. In unusual instances they are made to benefit the member's career development.

**Special  
Considerations**

All reserve CWO billets are seen as national fills and members are available for world wide assignment. This means that reasonable commute is not a driving consideration in the assignment process and reserve CWOs are expected to resolve any travel issues. At this level, and any level, a paid billet is a privilege and not a right. Over billeting in a paid status is only done in extraordinary circumstances, with over billeting in a non paid status the norm.

That said, we understand that reserve CWOs have a primary civilian occupation and family situations leading to special considerations unique to the Reserve program. CGPC makes every effort to take these into account, if the AO is made aware of them. Your best course of action is to be frank with your AO. This allows the best opportunity for you to understand the impact of your decisions on your Reserve career and keep your AO informed.

**Collocation**

Unlike the active duty assignment process, there is no specific collocation policy governing the reserve process. However, where there is a Reserve officer married to an active duty member; make the AO aware of the situation. In such cases, we will make every attempt to provide suitable options. Where no paid billet is available, we will make suggestions on how to mitigate any career impacts.

**The Assignment  
Process**

Armed with the shopping list and your e-resume, we can begin to develop all the information we will need to make assignment recommendations.

## **Strategizing and forming the Slate**

In the October Assignment Year (AY) kickoff message, we request units validate their advertised reserve CWO billets that are open in the upcoming assignment season. Units are provided a window of opportunity to provide the AO with their command concerns regarding the upcoming vacancy.

Once all the e-resumes are received, typically in early January, we start developing a slate, including the name of every officer requesting the billet on his or her e-resume, for each billet. We may place your name on a slate for billets even though you didn't include them on your e-resume. We typically do this in cases where we find you meet the criteria of the billet owner and an adequate pool of qualified CWOs was not obtained from those requesting the billet. Once we start developing candidate lists, we normally talk directly with the active duty executive officer that owns the billet. 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 issue** or lack of requisite experience, most CWOs 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. We do not pass what assignment preference the billet is on your e-resume, so please don't worry about billet placement in that regard.

## **Who's in Play?**

Who is really in play during an assignment season? The short answer is every tour complete SELRES reserve CWO, unless scheduled for retirement. If you're tour complete, you will get orders, even if selected to extend you or place you in a non paid status.

If you're not tour complete and you ask for early rotation, you may be reassigned. If you're not tour complete and you don't want to move, we may still propose to move you if a Service need requires. If you are serving on long term ADSW-RC or ADSW-AC you will only be considered for assignment to a SELRES position if you ask and will depend upon the ending date for your current ADSW-RC or ADSW-AC orders.

**Long Term  
Active Duty  
Orders**

Reserve CWOs on long term active duty orders, EAD, ADSW or USC Title 10 (T10), are not typically in play for selected reserve assignment.

In the case of those members involuntarily recalled on T10 by policy they should continue to encumber the selected reserve billet that they were in at the time of recall. Once they come off T10 orders, they should go back to that command and billet. At that point they would go through the normal assignment process.

For those CWOs on long term ADSW (sometimes also masked as voluntary T10), they are by policy removed from their selected reserve billet while on those orders. If, due to the duration of the orders, they are likely to come off orders in the assignment cycle, we recommend they compete in the process. Please let us know if you are in this situation as it is not always apparent you should be getting assignment consideration. If members come off ADSW after the assignment slate has been finalized, by policy they will be over billeted in a paid status until the next assignment cycle.

CWOs who have taken an extended active duty (EAD) contract are considered active duty CWOs. As such, they are under the active duty process for assignment until their contract ends. Officers who expect their EAD contracts to end in the current assignment year should seek out the AO for specific guidance.

**Hierarchy of  
Assignments**

Generally, assignments are considered “priority down” to ensure the most robust candidate pools of CWOs are considered for the highest priority billets. Priority positions at Naval Coast Warfare (NCW) assignments are the first to be completed, and so on.

**Pecking Order?**

Does all this mean that existing reserve CWO2s and CWO3s get assigned to billets after more senior CWO4s are assigned? No. The process is the same for all. Just remember though, we attempt to issue orders to fill every billet for which there is a vacancy, including those billets for which no one asks.

There is only one time where the pecking order will come into play. Existing CWOs receive assignments prior to newly appointed CWOs receiving consideration for assignments. Billets remaining vacant following approval of the assignment year slate will then become appointment opportunities for the spring Reserve CWO Appointment Board.

The AO will make CWO Appointment and billet offers to candidates based upon the specialty precedence order established by the CWO Appointment Board.

**Geographic  
Diversity**

Remember that at the reserve CWO level, all billets are viewed as national. At the CWO level, expect to travel if you want to stay in a paid billet. If geographic stability is a special consideration for you, make sure your AO knows this. Also understand that this may make a difference between being placed in a paid billet or being placed in a non-paid status.

**Assignment  
Priority  
Considerations**

Like the active duty assignment process, the reserve CWO assignment process does not make formal recognition for CWOs who have completed tours of duty in hard-to-fill assignments or lengthy involuntary recalls. This is not to say that completion of a tour of duty in an arduous assignment or hard-to-fill geographic location won't be taken into consideration - it will. It will simply be included in the mix of other factors such as career history, performance, skill sets and Service needs, other personal desires of the member, and so on. It should also be noted that there is no formal Humanitarian Assignments program for reserve CWOs. Cases involving severe family hardships would fall under special considerations and will be viewed as yet another factor in any given assignment.

**Assignment  
Notification**

We attempt to notify each person who is tour-complete or likely to be reassigned of where we have you on the approved slate. The slate is approved by the CGPC-rpm Division Chief. Individual telephonic notification will be made by the AO. Hence the crucial need for you to keep personal contact information up to date in Direct Access.

**RILOs**

Following the telephonic notification the typical one month Request for voluntary action In-Lieu of Orders (RILO) period begins.

It is important to understand the RILO parameters...and the difference between the active duty RILO process and the Reserve RILO process.

- Unlike the active duty RILO which is strictly a request for retirement, the Reserve RILO encompasses one of three choices: retirement, non paid assignment to a command, and transfer to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).
- Under the RILO process Reserve retirements or changes in status will typically be effective 1 July.

Please note that all these options have varying career impacts. While we fully understand that the reserve career is typically your secondary or tertiary life consideration, these decisions should not be done in a vacuum.



It is in your best interest to call your AO and get a complete understanding of options, outcomes, and down range ramifications.

**Post-RILO**

Shortly after the one month RILO period expires, the AO considers RILO-caused vacancies and other new developments, and attempts to work out alternative daisy chains for each new vacancy. The AO presents recommended solutions to the CGPC-rpm Division Chief, providing information on each CWO involved in the same way as in the initial session.

Those CWOs who are reassigned during the post-RILO session are also afforded a one month RILO period. Backfill actions resulting from post-final report RILOs are addressed as off-season transfers.

**Orders**

Approximately the end of April we start transmitting orders. Any questions regarding status of those orders should be directed to the CGPC-rpm, CWO AO.

**DIRLAUTH**

The majority of CWO orders are issued with the following paragraph, "Firm reporting date to be coordinated between transferring and receiving commands DIRLAUTH." While DA requires that an estimated report date be entered into the system in order to cut orders, typically 01July200X is entered as a default, commands are authorized to arrange exact dates, i.e., direct liaison authorized.

**Security  
Clearances**

Another issue requiring timely action once orders are cut is your security clearance. Some positions require an increased security clearance that requires lengthy lead times to complete. 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  
Assignment  
Process**

Although the vast majority of Reserve CWO assignments are handled as described above, each year circumstances arise which require off-season transfer decisions. In off-season assignment decisions, we follow many of the same steps.

When we become aware of upcoming off-season vacancies, we consult with the billet owner to see if it needs an immediate fill. Typically most billets will remain vacant and will be filled in the next assignment cycle.

If an immediate fill, we advertise the billet in an ALCGRSV message. We consider the names of CWOs who respond to the solicitation, along with others we might have identified who also have the right skills and experience. We consider the billet owner's input, current command endorsements, and our ability to minimize a chain reaction of assignments.

Reserve CWO off-season recommendations are developed by the AO and approved by Commander, Coast Guard Personnel Command (CGPC-rpm).

**GOOD LUCK!**

We hope you find this information useful in understanding the reserve CWO assignment process and that it helps reduce the associated stress. We recognize how important the outcome of an assignment decision is to each individual and to the Service. We look forward to serving you and hope that our messages, voice mails, website, as well as personal contact, keep you well informed. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact your Reserve CWO AO at (202) 493-1708.