

BUPERS INSTRUCTION 1540.41A

From: Chief of Naval Personnel
To: All Ships and Stations (less Marine Corps field addressees not having Navy personnel attached)

Subj: QUALIFICATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL IN THE NAVAL NUCLEAR PROPULSION PROGRAM

Ref: (a) MILPERSMAN 1520-050, Nuclear Propulsion Training, Surface and Submarine
(b) OPNAVINST C3000.5E (NOTAL)
(c) BUPERSINST 1306.78
(d) Enlisted Transfer Manual (NAVPERS 15909E) Chapter 6, Nuclear Power Training
(e) NAVPERS 15839H, Manual of Navy Officer Manpower and Personnel Classification
(f) OPNAVINST 1220.1B
(g) Presidential Executive Order 12344 of 1 Feb 82
(h) MILPERSMAN 1212-010, Lateral Transfer and Change of Designator Codes of Regular and Reserve Officers

1. Purpose. To issue revised qualification requirements and assignment policies for personnel ordered to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. This instruction reaffirms previously published personnel aspects of the naval nuclear propulsion program, and states policies and practices of the Chief of Naval Personnel (CHNAVPERS). This is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. BUPERSINST 1540.41.

3. Background

a. References (a) through (g) provide guidelines for the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. Reference (a) issues general information and policy guidance relative to selecting and training naval personnel for the naval nuclear propulsion program.

b. Reference (b) assigns responsibilities to operational commanders, systems commanders and bureau chiefs and provides further guidance for operation of nuclear powered ships. By reference (b), one responsibility assigned to CHNAVPERS is to ensure that personnel ordered to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants are fully qualified and competent to perform such duty. To assist CHNAVPERS in carrying out that responsibility, the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion (N00N) is assigned responsibilities by references (b) and (g) to provide assistance and concurrence in the selection, training, qualification, and assignment of personnel who supervise, operate, or maintain naval nuclear propulsion plants.

c. By references (c) and (d), agreed to by the Department of Energy, CHNAVPERS published information regarding eligibility, selection, and other criteria for officer and enlisted personnel ordered into nuclear power training. The referenced instructions, together with provisions of this instruction, establish qualification requirements for naval personnel ordered to duty in connection with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

4. Officer Qualification Requirements

a. General

(1) Naval officers ordered to duty in connection with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants at sea, land-based nuclear prototype plants, and moored training ships must not only be nuclear trained, but must also be assigned appropriate Additional Qualification Designators (AQDs) per reference (e). Assignment of these codes is necessary to identify those who have been properly trained as well as to indicate that proficiency derived from formal nuclear power training courses has been effectively maintained.

(2) All nuclear trained officers, other than the commanding officer and executive officer, assigned to a nuclear powered submarine shall qualify as Engineering Officer of the Watch (EOOW) and should maintain watchstanding proficiency.

(3) Similarly, all nuclear trained officers, other than the commanding officer and executive officer, assigned to a nuclear powered surface ship shall qualify as EOOW or its equivalent, Propulsion Plant Watch Officer (PPWO). Officers assigned to non-engineering billets who have not qualified to be engineer officer of a nuclear powered ship and officers assigned to engineering billets (or the reactor department on nuclear aircraft carriers (CVNs)) must maintain watchstanding proficiency as EOOW/PPWO. The commanding officer may waive this maintenance of watchstanding proficiency requirement for officers qualified to be engineer officer of a nuclear powered ship and assigned to non-engineering billets which have significant requirements in direct mission support that preclude maintenance of qualification as EOOW/PPWO. Examples of these billets include operations/weapons officer, missile officer, battery control officer, navigator, and Combat Information Center (CIC) officer. The duties assigned section in the individual officer's fitness report should reflect qualification as EOOW/PPWO and the number of months during which qualification was maintained.

b. Nuclear Trained Officers

(1) To be considered as nuclear trained, officers must successfully complete 1 year of formal training as follows:

(a) Six-month academic course for officers at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command.

(b) Six-month operational course for officers at one of the Nuclear Power Training Units. Waivers of the above requirements will not be allowed except as specifically recommended by CHNAVPERS and approved by Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

(2) Following completion of the 1-year formal nuclear training program described above, a nuclear trained officer will normally be assigned to duty in a nuclear powered ship.

c. Nuclear Trained Warrant and Limited Duty Officers (LDO). To be considered for assignment within the naval nuclear propulsion program, warrant and limited duty officers must meet the following requirements:

(1) Have been designated as nuclear trained (enlisted) per paragraph 6 at the time of original CWO or LDO appointment.

(2) Be nominated by CHNAVPERS and have been successfully screened by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

d. Engineer Officer of Nuclear Powered Ships

(1) Qualification as engineer officer of a nuclear powered ship is an important step in the professional development of a nuclear trained officer. All nuclear trained officers (except nuclear trained aviators) must complete this qualification prior to assignment as executive officer of a nuclear powered ship. All officers so qualified may not actually have the opportunity to serve as engineer officer. Qualification is also a prerequisite for assignment to duty as engineer officer of a nuclear powered ship (except A4W plant aircraft carriers), reactor officer, reactor electrical assistant, and main propulsion assistant on CVNs or reactor control assistant on CVN 65. Engineer officer candidates will be examined by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. To be eligible for examination for qualification as engineer officer, the officer candidate shall:

(a) Be currently qualified for duty in connection with the supervision, operation and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(b) Be currently qualified as EOOW/PPWO of a naval nuclear propulsion plant.

(c) Have served a minimum of 2 years on board a naval nuclear powered ship as a nuclear trained officer. Officers who have completed warfare qualification prior to reporting to their first nuclear powered ship must serve a minimum of 1 year as a qualified EOOW/PPWO on board a nuclear powered ship.

(d) Have served at least 6 months (one patrol for a fleet ballistic missile (FBM) submarine) watchstanding on a ship's reactor plant that is routinely critical (e.g., the reactor is not in a long-term shutdown condition such as during new construction or overhaul). If this requirement for 6-months watchstanding duty associated with routine critical reactor operations cannot be met, a waiver must be requested from CHNAVPERS (Pers-42). The waiver request should explain the circumstances involved and should accompany the commanding officer's recommendation (described in 4d(1)(f)).

(e) Have served a minimum of 1 year as a division officer in the engineering or reactor department of a naval nuclear powered ship with no major collateral duties. For submarines the qualifying division officer assignments are the officer assistants listed in section 1.6 of OPNAVINST C9210.2 (NOTAL) (i.e., Main Propulsion Assistant, Electrical Officer, Reactor

Control Assistant, Chemistry/Radiological Assistant, and Damage Control Assistant). On surface ships the qualifying division officer assignments must be authorized billets which include personnel management, material management, and training duties. Billets involving only a portion of these duties (e.g., Reactor Training Division Officer or Engineering Administrative Assistant) are not considered qualifying assignments.

(f) Be recommended for examination for qualification as engineer officer by the commanding officer of the nuclear powered ship, or nuclear power training unit in which he is currently serving. The commanding officer shall state in his recommendation that the officer candidate possesses the requisite nuclear propulsion plant technical knowledge to serve as engineer officer, based on the commanding officer's personal involvement in the officer candidate's preparation for the engineer officer examination. This recommendation, accompanied by the candidate's duty history, shall be submitted in writing to CHNAVPERS (Pers-42), with a copy to Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

(2) Commanding officers of nuclear powered ships shall consider the preparation of their nuclear trained officers for qualification as engineer officer as one of their primary responsibilities. Engineer officer qualification should normally be attained by the officer during his first Engineering or Reactor Department assignment. In cases where an officer is assigned to a second tour on a nuclear ship prior to achieving engineer officer qualification, he should qualify as engineer officer in about 6 months after qualifying EOOW/PPWO aboard his second ship.

(3) To assist in preparing for the engineer officer examination, commanding officers may have their officers attend a type commander prospective engineer officer training program. This training program is to provide the officers with a location free of distractions and conducive to intensive study. Practice written and oral examinations may be included as part of the training. Attendance at the training program is optional. The training program is not a substitute for the commanding officer's personal involvement in the officer's preparations for the examination nor the commanding officer's evaluation that the officer is prepared for the examination.

(4) Until nuclear trained officers complete qualification as engineer officer, the Bureau of Naval Personnel will normally detail these officers to billets where they will be involved in the supervision, operation, and maintenance of a nuclear propulsion plant.

e. Reactor Officers of Nuclear Powered Ships. Normally all prospective reactor officers must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, prior to reporting to their first tour as reactor officer.

f. Executive Officers of Nuclear Powered Ships. All prospective executive officers, except for prospective executive officers of nuclear aircraft carriers, must have qualified as engineer officer of a nuclear powered ship prior to being assigned as executive officer of a nuclear powered ship. Prospective executive officers of nuclear aircraft carriers normally

must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, prior to reporting to their first executive officer tour of a nuclear aircraft carrier.

g. Commanding Officers of Nuclear Powered Ships

(1) Prospective commanding officers of all nuclear powered ships except CVNs shall have served as engineer officer, reactor officer (reactor electrical assistant or main propulsion assistant on CVNs or reactor control assistant on CVN 65), or as executive officer of a nuclear powered ship.

(2) Prospective commanding officers of CVNs shall have served as executive officer of an aircraft carrier (normally nuclear powered) or as major department head of a CVN. Officers who serve as department head must qualify as PPWO but need not maintain proficiency.

(3) Prospective commanding officers of all nuclear powered ships must satisfactorily complete a course of instruction as specified and conducted by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, prior to reporting to their first command of a nuclear powered ship.

(4) An officer ordered to a subsequent command tour shall normally attend a refresher course, conducted by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, if he has not previously served a tour of duty aboard a ship with the same design reactor plant as that installed on his new command.

5. Enlisted Personnel Qualification Requirements. To be considered as nuclear trained, enlisted personnel must meet the following requirements.

a. Successfully complete 1 year of formal training as follows:

(1) Six-month academic course for enlisted personnel at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command.

(2) Six-month operational course for enlisted personnel at one of the Naval Nuclear Power Training Units.

b. Be assigned a currently effective Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) code for a submarine (335X or 336X series) or surface ship (338X or 339X series) nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisor as defined in the effective edition of Volume II of NAVPERS 18068 (Navy Enlisted Manpower and Personnel Classifications and Occupational Standards). Reference (f) provides further detailed guidance.

6. Designation

a. Nuclear Trained Officers. Upon successful completion of the formal course of instruction described in subparagraph 4b(1), officers will be assigned AQDs specified in reference (e). In addition, names of all officers who are currently designated qualified for duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants will be placed on an up-to-date list maintained by CHNAVPERS in cooperation with the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. This list will be used to periodically verify the AQDs assigned to nuclear trained officers. Only officers whose names appear on this list may be ordered to duty as defined in this paragraph.

b. Nuclear Trained Engineer Officers. Upon successful completion of the examination requirements for qualification as engineer officer outlined in subparagraph 4d, officers will be assigned the AQD specified in reference (e). In addition, names of all officers who are currently designated qualified for duty as engineer officer or reactor officer of a nuclear powered ship will be placed on an up-to-date list maintained by CHNAVPERS in cooperation with the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. This list shall be used to periodically verify the AQDs assigned to nuclear trained officers. Only officers whose names appear on this list may be ordered to duty as engineer officer or reactor officer of a naval nuclear propulsion plant.

c. Nuclear Trained Warrant and Limited Duty Officer

(1) Upon screening by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, nuclear trained warrant and limited duty officers (CWO/LDO) shall be assigned the AQD from reference (e) as specified by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. These officers shall then be eligible to serve in billets designated for the associated codes.

(2) In cases where a CWO/LDO is assigned to a Naval Reactors activity, Pers-42 will ensure a letter is placed in the individual's record. This letter will explain the circumstances of the extended tour and that it should not adversely affect the suitability for promotion of the officer.

d. Nuclear Trained Enlisted Personnel. The assignment of classification codes for nuclear trained enlisted personnel is generally covered in paragraph 5. Changes to these classification codes, including removal, shall be processed per reference (f). The Nuclear Propulsion Program Manager (N133) shall exercise "By direction" authority for CHNAVPERS in the assignment, removal and change of nuclear NECs following published directives. Assignment of special NECs is covered in the following subparagraphs:

(1) Engineering Laboratory Technician (ELT). To be designated as an engineering laboratory technician (NECs 3356, 3366, 3386 or 3396) nuclear trained enlisted personnel must, in addition to the 1-year course, successfully complete a formal 13-week course of instruction given at one of the nuclear power training units. Those ordered into this course of instruction are from the mechanical rating group.

(2) Submarine Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator-Welder. To be designated as a submarine nuclear propulsion plant operator-welder (NEC 3351), nuclear trained enlisted personnel must, in addition to the 1-year course, successfully complete a formal 10-week course of instruction given at one of the two Navy stainless steel welding schools: San Diego, California or Groton, Connecticut. Those ordered into this course of instruction are from the mechanical rating group.

(3) Special Categories. Two special category nuclear propulsion plant operator classification codes (NECs 3359 and 3389) identify nuclear trained personnel who are assigned to billets not associated with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. Personnel assigned to non-nuclear billets on nuclear powered ships are included in this category. CHNAVPERS will assign these special classification codes to submarine (NEC 335X/336X series) or surface ship (NEC 338X/339X series) nuclear propulsion plant operators of all rating groups when they are assigned

to non-nuclear billets. An individual assigned one of these special category NECs shall not be used in connection with supervision, operation, or maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant without prior approval by CHNAVPERS.

7. Assignment to Duty

a. Advance Notification of Intent to Order Officers. CHNAVPERS will obtain the concurrence of the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, prior to issuing orders to officers to the following billets designated for nuclear trained officers:

(1) Commanding (or officer in charge), executive, engineer, and reactor officers.

(2) Radiological control officers of nuclear capable tender or shore-based support facilities.

(3) All nuclear trained officers on nuclear powered training activity staffs.

(4) Senior type commander representatives at nuclear capable shipyards.

(5) All nuclear trained officers assigned to the staffs of surface or submarine groups and squadron commanders as senior nuclear training and readiness officers or as material/engineer officer when nuclear powered ships are assigned.

(6) All nuclear trained officers assigned to the staffs of fleet commanders in chief as members of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Examination Boards.

(7) Senior nuclear training and readiness officers on surface force and aviation type commander staffs.

(8) All officers assigned to duty with the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

(9) The Program Manager and all officers assigned to the staff of the Program Manager.

(10) Officers assigned as the senior type commander ship material officer, force nuclear power officers and force radiological control officers.

(11) All officers assigned to Submarine NR-1.

(12) All officers assigned to SSN 571.

(13) Reactor training assistant and station officer on CVN 65.

(14) Naval aviators proposed for nuclear training.

(15) Commanding officers of NSSFs, ASs, ADs and shipyards which perform nuclear work.

(16) Reactor electrical assistant and the main propulsion assistant on CVNs and the reactor control assistant on CVN 65.

(17) Submarine squadron commanders.

(18) The Ocean Policy (NPW) Section Head (N312Q).

b. Transfer of Nuclear Trained Officers to Restricted Line. CHNAVPERS will inform the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, before forwarding names of nuclear trained officers to selection boards for change of designator. Nuclear trained Surface Warfare Officers (SWO(N)) may apply to change their designator to Engineering Duty Officer and retain their nuclear AQD (EDO(N)). Officers who apply for redesignation under this program are governed by normal transfer and redesignation procedures contained in reference (h) and the following additional rules:

(1) SWO(N)s who apply for redesignation to EDO(N) will be using their nuclear training and operational experience as Engineering Duty Officers, both afloat and ashore, in support of the CVN and nuclear maintenance infrastructure. These officers will be assigned in accordance with the approved EDO(N) career path leading to assignment as CVN Reactor Officers. Additionally, they will:

(a) Complete initial EDO qualification in a nuclear capable public or private shipyard.

(b) Complete a tour as a CVN principal assistant.

(c) Maintain nuclear proficiency as described in paragraph 7c.

(2) EDOs with prior surface nuclear experience on CVNs may apply for AQD restoration in writing to CHNAVPERS (N133), with a copy to the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. They will be considered individually based upon their ability to serve as a CVN Reactor Officer.

c. Maintenance of Proficiency of Nuclear Trained Officer and Enlisted Personnel

(1) Subsequent to initial designation as a nuclear trained officer or enlisted person as defined above, such personnel must be required to maintain high standards of operational proficiency and personal integrity and have a sound understanding of the principles of reactor plant theory and operations. Maintenance of this level of theoretical and operational proficiency and reliability is necessary to maintain their designation as being nuclear trained in an effective status. Inspections by operational commanders, periodic examinations by technical personnel representing the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, together with continuing on board training programs, are all employed to help maintain and monitor the level of operational proficiency in this regard.

(2) CHNAVPERS, with the advice of the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion will cause records of the following personnel to be screened to determine their eligibility for nuclear assignment prior to their again being assigned to duty involving the supervision, operation, or maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(a) Personnel designated as nuclear trained but serving in a billet that is not on a nuclear powered ship and that is not involved with the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(b) Personnel previously designated as nuclear trained who re-enter the Navy after a period of broken service.

(3) Professional performance, qualification achieved, time away from operational reactor plant duty and other factors will be considered. Personnel found eligible for reassignment to nuclear duty may be given a specific period of time subsequent to reporting to a nuclear billet in which to demonstrate achievement of the required level of proficiency commensurate to their rank or rate and rating. Certification that officers and enlisted personnel are eligible for assignment to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants is accomplished by the statement "qualified for supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants" in the individual's most recent permanent change of station orders. In those cases where a specific period of time for requalification is required, it will either be stated in the orders or in an official letter to the commanding officer. Personnel determined as not eligible for return to a nuclear billet will have their enlisted classification or officer additional qualification designator removed.

d. Removal of Nuclear Enlisted Classification or Nuclear Officer Additional Qualification Designator

(1) Personnel who do not maintain their proficiency as a nuclear trained operator or who, for other valid reasons, are no longer considered suitable for assignment to duty involving supervision, operation, and maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant will have their nuclear NECs or officer AQDs removed. Those whose NECs or AQDs have been removed, or are pending removal, shall not be assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

(2) Recommendations for removal of nuclear NECs should be submitted per the provisions of reference (f).

(3) Recommendations for removal of nuclear officer AQDs should be submitted by letter to CHNAVPERS (N133) via chain of command with a copy to the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion for information. The recommendation letter should reference this instruction; it should not refer to other correspondence concerning additional administrative actions being taken in the case of the subject officer; and it should contain the following information in four paragraphs:

(a) A recommendation that the officer concerned be removed from the nuclear propulsion program and that his/her AQD for that duty be removed according to the provisions of this instruction.

(b) A brief statement of the reason for removal of the AQD (e.g., unreliability, inability to qualify EOOW/PPWO).

(c) A brief justification for the reason stated. This paragraph should include the steps taken to evaluate and assist the officer in completing or maintaining qualification; a statement as to whether or not the officer has performed his duties to the extent of his ability, and if not, what corrective measures have been taken. In cases involving unreliability, a description of the specific circumstances which resulted in the determination should be included.

(d) A statement that the officer has been removed from all duty involving the supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants, and the date this action was taken.

(4) Removal of nuclear NECs or officer AQDs, except for normal separation (EAOS, resignation, retirement) will be effected by CHNAVPERS with the concurrence of the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion. Removal of the nuclear AQD does not preclude assignment to a non-nuclear billet within the surface or submarine forces as the needs of the Navy dictate.

(a) Nuclear officers detached for cause (DFC) will be removed from the nuclear propulsion program and have their nuclear AQDs removed upon approval of their DFC. Their AQDs will be suspended while the DFC request is being processed. If the DFC is approved, the AQDs removal date will be that of the original suspension. If the DFC is not approved, the officer will retain his nuclear AQDs with no loss in continuity.

(b) Nuclear trained officers refusing orders to a nuclear billet will be removed from the nuclear propulsion program and have their nuclear AQDs removed upon approval of their written refusal.

(c) Nuclear trained officers requesting early termination of their nuclear assignment will be removed from the nuclear propulsion program and have their nuclear AQDs removed upon approval of their written request.

(d) Nuclear trained officers failing final screening or who are descreened for commanding officer, executive officer, or department head will be removed from the nuclear propulsion program and have their nuclear AQDs removed. If serving in a nuclear billet, this action will normally occur at completion of the current tour of duty.

(e) Nuclear trained officers who are not commander command or CVN Reactor Officer served and are serving in a non-nuclear billet for greater than allowed by the approved career path will, after record review, be removed from the nuclear propulsion program and have their nuclear AQDs removed unless specifically waived by the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion.

(f) Nuclear trained officers who are recommended for removal from the nuclear propulsion program due to performance or for medical reasons will have their nuclear AQDs removed after record review.

(g) Nuclear trained officers who are approved for designator change to restricted line or staff corps other than SWO(N)s converting to EDO(N)s as described in paragraph 7b, shall have their nuclear AQDs removed upon detachment from their last assigned nuclear duty or approval of their designator change, whichever is later.

(h) Nuclear trained officers who fail their engineer officer re-examination shall have their nuclear AQDs removed, normally upon completion of their tour at that command. At the option of the commanding officer, the officer may continue to stand watch as EOOW/PPWO and engineering duty officer and may continue to serve as a nuclear division officer. If circumstances warrant, the commanding officer will be directed by CHNAVPERS (Pers-42) to immediately terminate the officer's propulsion plant involvement.

(5) CHNAVPERS (Pers-42) will periodically screen the records of nuclear trained officers and, with the concurrence of the Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion, remove technical qualifications in compliance with this instruction.

(6) Those officers removed from the nuclear propulsion program will be notified in writing by CHNAVPERS (Pers-42) setting forth the circumstances for such action.

8. Action. Addressees will ensure that personnel assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants are qualified following the requirements contained in this instruction. Should cases arise where personnel ordered to such duty by the Bureau of Naval Personnel are not qualified, the circumstances should be brought immediately to the attention of CHNAVPERS (Pers-42).

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