



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ARMOR
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ATZK-AR

25 November 2019

MEMORANDUM THRU DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ARMOR
FOR CHIEF OF ARMOR, US ARMY ARMOR SCHOOL

SUBJECT: Information Paper – Results of FY 19 Master Sergeant Selection Board.

1. Purpose: To provide information to the Chief of Armor on the results of the FY19 selection list to Master Sergeant.

2. Summary: The Department of the Army selection board convened on 01 May 2019 at Fort Knox, KY to consider eligible Senior Noncommissioned Officers for selection to Master Sergeant. The eligibility criteria for promotion consideration to MSG were: "ALL SSD-IV AND SLC QUALIFIED SFC'S WITH A DOR OF 02 MAY 17 AND EARLIER WITH A BASD BETWEEN 07 DEC 97 AND 02 MAY 11 (INCLUSIVE)." The reference is MILPER Message 19-046.

Primary Zone: DOR is 07 FEB 16 and earlier

Secondary Zone: DOR is 08 FEB 16 thru 02 MAY 17 (Inclusive)

3. MSG Selection Information. The following is a profile of the Sergeant's First Class that were selected for promotion to Master Sergeant:

a. The total number of Sergeant's First Class considered for promotion was 456; number selected for promotion was 115. Armor selection rate was 25%; the total Army selection rate was 16%.

b. The average age of those selected for promotion within CMF 19 was 35.6 years. The oldest was 47 years of age and the youngest was 31 years of age.

c. The average Time in Service (TIS) for those selected for promotion was 15.4 years. The highest TIS was 20.9 years and the lowest was 12 years.

d. The average Time in Grade (TIG) for those selected for promotion was 2.7 years. The highest was 10 years and the lowest was 2 years.

e. All of the NCOs selected for promotion were high school graduates or equivalent. Of the 115 Armor NCOs selected for promotion, 86.9 % had some college. The following is the level of education for selectees:

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- (1) No college: 13% had no college (15 of 115)
- (2) Some College: 40% had some college (47 of 115)
- (3) Associates Degree: 30% had the equivalent of two year degree (34 of 115)
- (4) Bachelor's Degree: 14% had the equivalent of a four year degree (16 of 115)
- (5) Master's Degree: 3% had the equivalent of a six year degree (3 of 115)

f. The Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) of the selectees had an average of 271 points. The highest score recorded was 300 (total of 13), with the lowest being 146. Two SFC's with permanent profiles were selected for promotion. There were 90 (78.26%) SFC's with an APFT average of 260 points or higher that were selected for promotion.

g. Professionally developing assignments:

	Master Gunner	Drill SGT	Recruiter	Instructor	O/C	NCOA	AC/RC	ROTC
19K	8	4	4	2	12	1	2	1
19D	12	41	11	32	21	12	6	12
TOTALS	20	44	15	34	38	13	8	13
Percentage	17.39%	38.26%	13.04%	29.57%	28.70%	11.30%	6.96%	11.30%

h. The following data depicts attendance at professional development courses.

	Ranger	Airborne	Air Assault	Battle Staff	Cavalry Leaders Course	Army Recon Course	Master Resilience Trainer	Master Fitness
19K		2	2	4			6	1
19D	19	46	53	30	29	35	48	18
TOTALS	19	48	55	34	29	35	54	19
Percentage	16.52%	41.74%	47.83%	29.57%	25.22%	30.43%	46.96%	16.52%

i. Critical Leadership Time: The following chart below outlines the amount of critical leadership time as a PSG that each selectee completed prior to selection. The average time spent as a Platoon Sergeant was 28.4 months, with the highest being 69 months and the lowest being 0 months (1 x SFC).

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Platoon Sergeant Time	<24	24-36	37-48	>49
19K	7	6	4	2
19D	40	39	11	6
TOTALS	47	45	15	8
Percentage	40.87%	39.13%	13.04%	6.96%

4. General observations.

a. OCOA believes the selection board identified our best Sergeant's First Class for promotion to Master Sergeant. It is our opinion that the promotion board followed the branch guidance written in DA Pam 600-25 (Chapter 10, 10-10 , para I) which clearly states that a Sergeant First Class needs to have 18-24 months critical leadership time to be eligible for promotion to Master Sergeant. However, there were several instances where the board did not adhere to the exact guidance written in the DA Pam 600-25.

b. The chart below is a complete breakdown across CMF 19.

CMF 19 Breakdown	AR Branch SFC Population	Total Considered	Selected
19K	630 (43%)	165 (36%)	19 (17%)
19D	830 (57%)	291 (64%)	96 (83%)
TOTALS	1460	456	115

c. These NCOs selected and completed tough demanding assignments. They had numerous professional developing assignments throughout their careers. They served the Armor Force well as Master Gunners, Drill Sergeants, Observer Controller/Trainers, Instructors, and in many other critical assignments. There were 55 of 115 (47.83%) selected that have served in multiple professional developmental assignments during their career. Also, 64 of 115 NCOs selected had a minimum of one professional developmental assignment coupled with one professional developmental school. An example would be serving as a Drill Sergeant but also attending / graduating Cavalry Leader Course. Additionally, 34 of those selected for promotion had served in a 1SG position, with 13 serving over 10 months successfully. Those serving successfully in positions as 1SGs were looked favorably upon by the board. There were 14 NCOs that did not have the branch development time as a SFC (18-24 months as described in DA PAM 600-25, 11 AUG 2011) needed. OCOA believes that time is needed to be successful at the next level.

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d. 12 of 115 of the selectees (10%) were currently serving in Security Forces Assistance Brigades. However, 7 of the 12 (58%) have been there six months or less. The other five SFC's have just arrived on station.

e. Armor NCOs across all brigade combat teams formations compete equitably for promotion. The key for selection remains excellence in key leadership positions as evidenced by multiple NCOERs, supported by sustained performance in the generating force. Below is a breakdown for selectees across the brigade combat teams as well as the numbers for those selected serving in CTC and TRADOC assignments.

ABCT	49
SBCT	22
IBCT	29
CTC	05
TRADOC	05

5. The Armor proponent highlights the following from the field After Action Report:

a. Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER)

(1) Discussion: Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER). The new NCOER created a more accurate assessment of an NCO's performance/potential and made it easier for board members to identify the best qualified NCOs for promotion. Raters and senior raters are held accountable while limiting their ability to overinflate evaluations. NCOs who consistently received "Far Exceeded" and "Most Qualified" evaluations were viewed more favorably. The board found that in some units, it appears senior enlisted leaders are not actively performing the "undocumented" review of NCOERs within their organizations. Per AR 623-2, para 2-18a, every NCOER should receive an undocumented review the by 1SG, SGM, or CSM to ensure accountability of Soldiers' NCOERs and to oversee the performance of junior NCOs.

(2) Recommendation: The senior enlisted leadership within organizations should ensure NCOERs are being reviewed effectively and consistently. Investment in leader development through effective writing for evaluations is important. More effort should be put into writing clear, accurate assessments of an individual's performance and potential to ensure the best candidates are selected for promotion.

b. Rater and Senior Rater Comments.

(1) Discussion: Senior rater comments were often ambiguous, unclear and sent a confusing message to board members. This applied more with company grade officers and civilians serving as senior raters. Senior raters neglected to enumerate

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which made it difficult for board members to evaluate the potential of a candidate. Moreover, senior raters' narrative often did not support the respective rating (i.e. a "Most Qualified" rating with weak or no enumeration). The most competitive files contained a consistent pattern of outstanding performance in leadership, staff, and broadening assignments where the rating officials justify comments with qualitative and quantitative bullets. Additionally, clear enumeration by senior raters with caveat was most useful in determining the quality of performance. For example, "# 1 of 7 SFCs" was generally viewed more favorably than "one of top three, out of pool of six SFCs I senior rate". Rater and senior rater comments are extremely useful when supported block checks with specific qualitative and quantitative bullets are presented. The narrative was amplified when accompanied with a supportive box check.

(2) Recommendation: Raters and senior raters need to understand the importance of the NCOER when assessing candidates' potential for promotion. Clear enumeration can substitute where a voter profile is insufficient. When considering an exclusive narrative, concise enumerations were viewed more favorably than percentages and also clearly stating the NCO's promotion potential. Field grade officers need to teach, coach, and mentor company grade officers and/or civilians in drafting evaluation narratives. Senior enlisted leaders should continue to emphasize to organizational leaders the significance and importance of the quantifiable narrative assessment. Overall, hard enumeration in the senior rater narrative, up front, sent the clearest message.

c. Soldier Record Brief (SRB).

(1) Discussion: SRB and Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR) records were inconsistent. The board witnessed multiple discrepancies between assignment history, duty position, civilian and military education, and certifications and awards. The board viewed the SRB as a word picture of an NCO's current state of readiness. NCOs who failed to update their records to accurately depict the duty description on their SRB and multiple duty locations confused the board members as to their actual position.

(2) Recommendation: Leaders should ensure NCOs understand the impact of these erroneous entries and take a more proactive approach to ensure their NCOs periodical review/update of their records. Ultimately, the individual NCO is responsible for updating their files and ensuring the accuracy of their records. It is important for NCOs to understand the difference between the performance section and the service section of the AMHRR. Additionally, NCOs should seek a mentor to assist in validating their file. Leaders continue to ensure Soldiers of all ranks should take personal ownership of their SRB and other supporting documentations in their overall files. Soldiers should continue to update and certify their files as it sends a clear message to the board, when being considered for promotion.

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d. The Department of the Army (DA) Photo.

(1) Discussion: The DA Photo is the candidate's "hand-shake" to the board. It is usually the first document which appears in the board file and, as a result, is the candidate's first impression to the board. Several candidates had expired photos. When a photo was present, inconsistencies often existed between the DA Photo, SRB, and AMHRR. In such cases board members could potentially doubt the integrity of the NCO. Current DA Photos on file that captured a professional military appearance were viewed favorably. Board members' cited the importance of a DA Photo being consistent with the SRB and Soldier's AMHRR, as the DA Photo is the first impression to the board members. Several files had DA Photos that were older and thus often missing awards, photos with SSG rank, or missing photos which were viewed less favorably.

(2) Recommendation: Continue to emphasize the importance of a current DA Photo to the field, as it is the first impression of a Soldier's file to the board members. NCOs who desire advancement to the next grade should maintain updated photos, and ensure all awards on the record match those on the uniform, and discrepancies should be addressed when applicable via a letter to the board president. Make a great first impression and take an updated photo. Current photos are viewed more favorably than older or expired photos. Soldiers should review AR 670-1 and inspect their uniform prior to taking a DA Photo.

e. Personal and Professional Development (Professional Military Education (PME) and skill producing schools).

(1) Discussion: Many NCOs are not pursuing professional development opportunities in either the institutional or self-development domain. NCOs pursuing higher levels of civilian education and technical certifications were viewed favorably by board members. Additionally, NCOs recognized as distinguished honor graduates or commandants list during PME were viewed more favorably by board members. The vast majority of NCOs displayed the right mix of training and education for their MOS-specific and general military education courses (e.g. Master Fitness Trainer, Master Resilience Trainer, Battle Staff, Cavalry Leaders Course, etc). Also, other broadening assignments and positions of trust were viewed favorably as well to include Equal Opportunity Advisor, Instructor/ Writer, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Recruiter, Drill Sergeant, and others. Additionally, specialized training such as Master Gunner demonstrated an above average level of expertise / intellect and is an indicator of a high level of competency.

(2) Recommendation: Education matters; Soldiers should continue to take advantage of military and civilian education opportunities which exist for personal and professional development. To ensure the continued health of the CMF, leaders and NCOs must educate themselves on the promotion selection criteria in DA PAM 600-25

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and Enlisted Centralized Promotion Board Supplement Smartbook (milsuite information system). Leaders at all levels must be knowledgeable of promotion standards and CMF talent management in order to advise and mentor our future leaders.

f. Soldier Readiness and Physical Fitness.

(1) Discussion. Deployment readiness remains a crucial factor for consideration for promotion. Board members observed instances of senior NCOs either failing the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) or containing out-of-date APFT data on the SRB. NCOs with low or failing APFT scores were viewed less favorably.

(2) Recommendation: Senior NCOs are expected to remain physically fit and ready. Concise bullets on the front side of the NCOER that discussed their PT performance or improvement to fitness were viewed more favorably. NCOs must recognize that they must work beyond their own personal readiness challenges in order to effectively lead their formations.

6. Conclusion or general comments. Secondary zone candidates were highly competitive and often outperformed their peers competing in the primary zone.

7. Point of contact is the undersigned at todd.r.crawford.mil@mail.mil, or (706) 545-7725.

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