

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR CENTRALIZED SELECTION LIST

Under the new noncommissioned officer career management system, command sergeants major and sergeants major will be centrally selected for command and key billet assignments.

All eligible Soldiers should have received an AKO e-mail asking them to go online to make their selection preferences: whether or not you wish to compete for a command sergeant major position; in which of four categories you wish to compete; and rank your unit preferences in those categories.

BRIGADE BOARDS: SELECTION PREFERENCE

Opened July 16 and closes Sept. 15.

MY BOARD FILE

My Board File requirements will be outlined via a MILPER message. The window for viewing *My Board File* will run from Aug. 6 to Oct. 2 for brigade boards.

BOARD DATES

Brigade-level:

- Oct. 5-11: Operations support, force sustainment
- Oct. 5-13: Maneuver, fires and effects
- Dec. 6-10: ARSOF

Battalion-level

- Jan. 6-14: Operations support
- Jan. 6-21: Force sustainment
- Jan. 6-24: Maneuver, fires and effects

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- You **MUST OPT OUT** if you do not wish to compete for CSM; otherwise, you will be considered for selection in all categories for which you are eligible. If selected, that Soldier **MUST** accept the position or retire.
- Soldiers **MAY RECEIVE UP TO THREE CPD NOTIFICATIONS** in a given year; most immediately, Soldiers may be eligible to compete on the **ARSOF** board in December and the battalion board in January. Soldiers **MUST RESPOND** to all three notifications and **OPT OUT** if they do not wish to compete.
- Soldiers who do wish to compete should **PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO** their **PHOTOS** and **NCOERs**. By regulation, a photo is required every five years or within 60 days following promotion. NCOERs must be accurate and up-to-date.

Army Human Resources Command
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By Cindy Ramirez

The window of opportunity is open for qualified Soldiers interested in serving as command sergeants major, as the Army's new noncommissioned officer career management system is in full swing.

"We've tested the system, and we're ready," said Sgt. Maj. Laura A. Frady of the Command Slating Branch, Human Resources Command. "It's a new era for our senior NCOs, and we're looking forward to the opportunities this will afford our best-qualified Soldiers."

Under the new system, Soldiers compete for positions for which they are eligible and rank their preferences accordingly. The Army will hold annual boards to select candidates to serve as brigade or battalion command sergeants major.

The selection preference window for the October brigade selection boards opened in July and is available through Sept. 15. Board appointments will take effect in fiscal year 2012.

Eligible Soldiers should have received an Army Knowledge Online e-mail reminding them to go online and make their selections, including whether they wish to decline competing for a position. Once they complete the application, candidates will be able to view their *My Board File* on AKO through Oct. 2 to make any necessary adjustments.

"This is their window to really have input into their future with the Army, to compete for positions which they may not have considered in the past," Frady said.

PREDICTABILITY & STABILITY

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston said this more competitive career management system provides Soldiers greater opportunities to serve in top leadership positions.

"This move to a central selection process represents part of an evolutionary change to senior NCO management," Preston said. Primarily, he said, "We want to provide more predictability and stability

OPPORTUNITY

to Soldiers and their families when they're going to move from one position to another.”

Preston acknowledges the system is not without its critics, especially those who are concerned about “packing up and moving” after they've served at one station for several years. Many others are “very, very supportive of the system and the opportunities and planning time it provides them.”

The majority of feedback, however, has been “in the middle, in between those two bookends,” Preston said. “Many of them are optimistic and in a wait-and-see mode.”

The same type of management system is being implemented for the selection of other leadership positions such as sergeants major and master sergeants, Preston said.

“I think overall what it's going to do is better place senior NCOs in those assignments where they can not only best serve the Army, but where they can best develop themselves professionally,” he added.

OF SPECIAL NOTE

Following an after-action review earlier this summer of the central selection automation, process and procedures, Preston sent out a memo highlighting some observations and recommendations for candidates and their commandants. Most notably, Preston touched on the need for candidates to ensure their photos and NCO Evaluation Reports are accurate and up to date.

- **Photos:** Discrepancies included ribbons not properly displayed, poorly fitted uniforms, outdated rank insignia or no photo.

- **NCOERs:** Discrepancies included gaps in rated periods, dramatic height or weight changes between reports, inaccurate duty or job titles, and conflicting or missing physical fitness test information.

SELECTION BOARDS

The selection preference window for the October brigade selection boards opened in July and is available through Sept. 15. Board appointments will take effect in FY 2012.

“Your photo and your record is yours; they are a reflection of you,” Preston said. “Current photos and an up-to-date record tell the board something about you.”

Human Resources Command officials also remind Soldiers they should note the following on their application if applicable:

- **High School Stabilization:** Soldiers with children in high school get special consideration to remain in their assignment or duty area to allow their children to graduate from their current high school.

- **Exceptional Family Membership**

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Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston



- **Program enrollment:** Soldiers who care for spouses, children or other family members with special needs, such as medical disabilities, are given special consideration for assignments with access to needed services.

- **Text box:** Make note of other information that should be taken into consideration, such as health issues (former airborne but no longer able to jump), family status (married to another Soldier or military service member), etc.

COMPETE OR OPT OUT

Just as important as ensuring candidates have their records in order is that Soldiers who do not wish to compete for command sergeant major positions must decline consideration. If Soldiers fail to opt out, they will be considered for selection in all categories for which they are eligible, and if selected, must accept their new assignment or retire.

Soldiers may receive up to three eligibility notifications in a given year and must apply or decline consideration for each. Following the brigade boards in October, Soldiers may be eligible to compete for

battalion-level positions in January. The Army Special Operations Forces Board for ARSOF, and Special Mission Unit assignments for both the brigade and battalion levels will be held in December.

“It's vital that Soldiers who don't want to be considered opt out or they may be appointed without their input,” said Master Sgt. Anthony Difondi of the Command Slating Branch. “And with all the options out there, they should take time to consider numerous possibilities.”

Appointments will be made in four categories: operations, strategic support, recruiting and training, and installation. A key billet category may be added in the future, officials said.

Current command sergeants major who are not selected will be laterally appointed to sergeant major and moved to sergeant major positions.

SEEK OPPORTUNITIES

Difondi said Soldiers should not “limit themselves” by applying in just one category. “The more categories they opt to compete in, the more chances they have to be selected.”

That's a sentiment echoed by Preston, who says aside from diversifying Soldiers' personal experience, the system allows for best-qualified candidates from all military occupational specialties and backgrounds to be in leadership positions that strengthen the Army.

“Seek out those kinds of opportunities that expand on the breadth of experience within your career,” Preston said. 📄

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