

*The*  
**Reserve Commander**  
*Assignment Guide*  
*Assignment Year 2016 (AY16)*



**CG PSC-RPM**  
**SEPTEMBER 2015**



## **Welcome!**

The 2016 Commander assignment season is underway! Congratulations to all the new IDPL O-5 selectees. For all veterans of this process, welcome back.

Due to the uniqueness of the Reserve O-5 assignment process, this guide was created to:

- explain the Reserve O-5 assignment process;
- pass along the rules of engagement; and
- manage expectations.

## **Who We Are**

The 2016 Reserve O-5 Assignment Team within CG PSC's Reserve Personnel Management Division (PSC-RPM) consists of:

- CAPT Rob Hanley, Division Chief and assignment officer (AO) for all CAPT Selected Reserve (SELRES) positions.
- LCDR Monique Roebuck, Assistant Division Chief and AO for all O-5 SELRES positions.
- LT Eric Meaders, PSC-RPM-2 O-5 AO Assignment Support.
- Ms. Walterella McNear, PSC-RPM-2, Assignment Support.

## **Key Elements**

The key elements are the Reserve Commander ALCGRSV Kickoff Message, Shopping List, e-resume, and the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel.

## **Kickoff Message**

The ALCGRSV Kickoff Message announces the Assignment Year (AY) 2016 Reserve Commander assignment season and provides important guidelines and information for Reserve officers competing for assignment, Reserve officers in unbudgeted positions, command cadres, supervisors, and the Reserve officer corps at large. The message also includes the AY16 Commander Plan of Action and Milestones; which stipulates key requirements and deadlines in the assignment season.

In addition, the Kickoff Message also provides guidance on submitting Command Concerns, which is an opportunity for commands to provide the AO their assignment needs. Failure to submit Command Concerns may result in gapped billets. Senior Reserve Officers (SROs) and Reserve Force Readiness Staffs (RFRS) continue to be a valuable resource in aiding unit commanders in maximizing their reserve force capability, which may include PAL validation and Command Concerns. PSC-RPM encourages early and active engagement with unit stakeholders in an effort to minimize billet gaps.

## The Shopping List

The Commander Shopping List consists of Reserve O-5 billets that are expected to be filled in AY16.

A “**Preliminary**” Shopping List will be available in DA on/about 1 September 2015, which will include:

- billets with incumbents who have a 2016 rotation date;
- billets occupied by commanders with approved separation requests on file;
- commander billets currently filled by officers of a different pay-grade; and
- vacant positions.

In the AY Kickoff message, we ask commands to carefully review the “**Preliminary**” Shopping List and **provide Command Concerns by the deadline stipulated on the message**. Receiving the Command Concerns by the deadline provides the AOs the opportunity to formulate substantive recommendations to the Assignment Panel.

Changes to the “**Preliminary**” Shopping List normally occur after the results of the AY16 Reserve Senior Command Screening Panel (RSCSP), which screens for O-5 PSU Commands and for O-6 Reserve Units augmenting Combatant Commands. Necessary changes to the list are also made based on unit validations and Command Concerns. As such, revisions to the list may be required on an as needed basis.

In November the Commander “**Shopping List**” will be released via ALCGRSV and will also be available on the PSC-RPM website and CG Portal site. The intent of the “**Shopping List**” is to provide you the opportunity to

consider new alternatives. Please don't subject your AO or the incumbent in an advertised billet with questions regarding why the billet will be vacant or what is happening with the incumbent.

### **Contacting Commands or Incumbents**

As you review the Shopping List, you may begin to create your own list of preferred billets. In this case, you'll likely want to get a better read for a particular command and the work involved. Contacting the chain of command that owns the billet or the current incumbent may provide you a better understanding of job expectations and tasks associated with the billet. It is important to note that the billet title may not accurately reflect the actual job description or task requirements.

### **The E-resume**

The e-resume is the primary method of communicating your assignment preferences to your AO. Please do not view submitting your e-resume as an entering position to begin an extensive and iterative dialog. However, we strongly recommend you share your draft e-resume with your family and discuss your goals and objectives with them before submitting your final e-resume.

Note - the current DA 9.1 version does not notify an endorser of an endorsement request. For that reason, you should notify your command when you submit an e-resume that requires their endorsement (i.e., for an extension/short tour request). This is to ensure that your e-resume endorsement is completed on time.

***DA 9.1 also does not allow late e-resume submission. Your e-resume must be submitted to PSC-RPM by 31 December 2015. However, earlier submission is preferred. It is critically important that the e-resume submission deadline is met.*** If you miss the deadline, you must let your AO know immediately via email and submit your assignment preferences on form CG-2002.

## E-resume Craftsmanship

A well-crafted e-resume allows for assignment flexibility and acknowledges possible assignment outcomes.

It is **not recommended** to submit an e-resume that only lists:

- one or two billets;
- an extension; or
- billets in a single geographic area.

E-resumes that reflect the above indicates that you haven't considered the possibility of not being assigned to those commands. In other words, a very narrow e-resume conveys nearly the very same message as a blank e-resume. Thus, we will assume you will be equally thrilled with any assignment if we are unable to offer any of the few preferences you provided.

**What is recommended** is submitting a broad e-resume that:

- communicates your preferences in priority; and
- addresses alternatives that you believe are appropriate based on your background and experience.

Additional things to note:

- Develop an e-resume that is concise.
- Situations involving exceptional personal requirements (i.e. co-locations, special needs, etc.), will be handled on a case-by-case basis to balance the needs of the Coast Guard and the individual.
- If you are married to an active duty service member, ensure that "dual military" is indicated at the top of the narrative section of your e-resume.
- A command endorsement by the unit Commanding Officer or his/her designee is required for all reserve officers requesting tour extensions or early rotations.
- When requesting an extension, always include other assignment options in the likely event the extension is not granted.
- E-resumes submitted with fewer than three assignment choices have resulted in the past with members being assigned to positions other than what they requested due to the limited choices of assignments provided.

The need to develop a well-crafted e-resume and ensure that it is submitted prior to the deadline cannot be emphasized enough. In addition, you must inform your AO via email each time your e-resume has been updated. This is critical since your AO will not automatically be notified by DA.

### **Information in DA**

The information available in DA is what your AO will utilize for assignment purposes. Therefore, it is important that your information in DA is current and accurate, such as:

- personal/contact information;
- academic degree(s);
- security clearance; and
- other pertinent information.

### **Extensions and Early Rotations**

A request for extension in your current billet requires a command endorsement and is viewed by PSC-RPM and the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel as one assignment preference on an e-resume and will be considered along with your other e-resume selections. The likelihood that you will be approved for extension depends on several factors. In some cases Service need may be best met by extending you in a billet, while other times the Service need is best met by transferring you to further enhance your career and affording others the same career development opportunity that you had been given. Extensions are considered “orders” and if you are granted an extension, it will be authorized for only one additional year.

A request for early rotation also requires a command endorsement. 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 of your early departure on the unit’s continuity or the overall skill/experience level of the unit’s 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 Service need cannot be met using officers that are tour complete. In keeping with the Commandant’s vision, “Service to Nation,” our general

position is to NOT rotate members early unless the needs of the Service clearly dictate otherwise. Sitting Commanding Officers are expected to complete their full tour of duty. Therefore, requests for early rotation will only be considered when there is a compelling Service need.

### **Geographic Diversity**

Geographic diversity is a career enhancing factor that you should take into consideration when making assignment decisions. For example, if you have been at the same Sector for the past 10 years, your expectations to remain at that Sector as the SRO would be unlikely as it would not benefit the command in the long-term and would do you a disservice.

Consequently, if geographic stability is a special consideration for you, make sure that your AO is aware; with the understanding that this may make a difference between receiving a paid assignment and being placed in an IRR status.

### **Reasonable Commuting Distance (RCD)**

Every effort will be made to comply with the Reserve Policy Manual, COMDTINST M1001.28 (series) regarding RCD.

Funded SELRES O-5 PAL positions are a scarce resource that are diversely located. Due to these circumstances, RCD is not a primary consideration in the assignment process and incumbents who agree with an assignment outside RCD will be expected to accommodate individual travel requirements.

A member's decision to accept orders beyond RCD is voluntary. With this understanding, you will need to provide your AO a written statement (email is acceptable) certifying your willingness to accept orders outside RCD.

Encumbering positions with multiple commanders in SELRES status is only done in extraordinary circumstances. We understand that Reserve commanders have a primary civilian occupation and family situations leading to special considerations unique to the Reserve program. Ensuring that these factors are included in your



e-resume allows PSC-RPM to make every effort to account for these factors. Your best course of action is to be up-front with your AO. This allows your AO to best represent your situation to the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel.

**Co-Location**

Unlike PSC-OPM's active duty O-5 assignment process, there is no specific co-location policy governing Reserve assignments. However, if you are married to a military member, ensure that your AO is aware of the situation by indicating "Dual Military" at the top of the narrative section of your e-resume. In such cases, your AO will make every attempt to provide suitable recommendations; such as, suggestions on how to mitigate possible career impacts in cases where no paid billets are available.

**Residing  
Outside the U.S.**

Please refer to chapter 5 of the Reserve Policy Manual, COMDTINST M1001.28 (series), for policy on remaining in a SELRES status while residing outside the U.S., its territories, or possessions.

**Command Screening**

The criteria for AY16 command screening is available in PSCNOTE 1401 and will be published by ALCGRSV no later than 1 October 2015. Assignments to command Reserve Units augmenting Combatant Commands require screening for command.

**The RPM Process**

Equipped with the Shopping List and your e-resume, PSC-RPM will develop assignment slates. We also start developing a list (candidate pool) for each billet; noting the names of Reserve commanders and commanders-select who requested particular billets on their e-resume, as well as, those who may be most competitive based on their assignment history and background.

**Who's in Play?**

Every Reserve commander and commander-select, unless scheduled for retirement, is technically in play for each

assignment season. The primary candidate pool consists of Reserve commanders and commanders-select who:

- are tour complete;
- will change Reserve Component Category (RCC) to SELRES;
- are filling positions in which a paygrade mismatch exists between member and billet;
- are in unbudgeted or reprogrammed positions;
- are projected to be released from active duty (including Reserve Commanders and commanders-select who are serving on long-term ADOS); and
- are in billets with more than one member assigned.

Our intent is to transfer only tour complete O-5s, unless Service needs dictate otherwise. As such, if you are tour complete, you will receive PCS orders, even if the assignment panel elects to extend you or transfer you to the IRR. If you're not tour complete but you screen for command or request to go in play (and are approved), you *may* be reassigned and your billet will be shopped. If you're a Reserve Commander-select serving in a SELRES O-4 billet and not tour complete, you are normally more susceptible to an early transfer than a person already in an O-5 billet, unless you are a sitting commanding officer.

### **Assignment Considerations**

The Reserve Commander assignment process will take into consideration when a member has completed an arduous assignment (i.e., duty in hard-to-fill assignments/geographic locations, lengthy involuntary recalls). It will be a factor considered along with other factors, such as: Service needs, career progression, performance, skill-sets, and the member's personal desires.

Being that there is no formal Humanitarian Assignments program for Reserve officers, situations that involve severe family hardships would fall under special considerations and will be viewed as yet another factor in any assignment.

### **Hierarchy of Assignments**

Generally, assignments are considered "top down" to ensure the most robust candidate pools of officers are considered for the highest priority billets. The missions

and deployable nature of Deployable Specialized Forces (DSF) units (Port Security Units, Strike Teams) require these units to be staffed to the maximum extent possible. Members residing within RCD of DSF units should expect one or more assignments to these units during their career.

Following DSF assignments, priority is given to operational commands followed by staff assignments. Careful consideration is given to match members to billets so that Service needs, unit needs, professional development and member desires are maximized.

Note - your AO will attempt to fill each vacant billet; to include billets that may not be the most desired.

## **Career Progression**

Reserve career paths generally fall into one of two communities: (1) the Sector operational community; and (2) the Joint Forces/Interagency community.

The challenge at the commander level is to show you can function in either community at a level of ease and effectiveness expected of senior officers. Early goal setting, planning, and good mentoring are important.

If your Reserve career has predominantly been at a Sector/District community, commander is typically the last opportunity for officers to break into the Joint Forces/Interagency community. Therefore, commanders and commanders-select are encouraged to actively seek opportunities to broaden their expertise if they would like to remain competitive for promotion.

Additional Resources:

- (1) *Developing a Career as a Coast Guard Officer* provides an overview of the unique characteristics of an active duty officer's career including fundamental officer corps roles, leadership development, officer specialties, and expectations at major career milestones. This document is available on the PSC-OPM website: [http://www.uscg.mil/opm/opmdocs/Developing\\_a\\_Career\\_as\\_a\\_CG\\_Officer.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/opm/opmdocs/Developing_a_Career_as_a_CG_Officer.pdf)
- (2) *The Commandant's Guidance to Officer Selection Boards and Panels* contains expectations for the qualities needed in the officer corps as well as specific

guidance for boards considering officers for promotion to all grades. This document is available on the PSC-OPM website at:

<http://www.uscg.mil/psc/opm/Opm1/Opm1docs/Commandant's%20Guidance%20to%20PY16%20Officer%20Selection%20Boards%20and%20Panels.pdf>

### **Long-term Active Duty**

Long-term active duty is defined as active duty other than training of more than 180 consecutive days. Reserve officers contemplating long-term ADOS shall coordinate with their AO early in the process. Requests for active duty must be approved by your parent command and you must notify your AO when you take on Long-Term ADOS orders.

By policy, SELRES members who serve on Long-Term Non-contingency ADOS (sometimes also called “voluntary T10”), are removed from their SELRES position while in this active duty status. Regardless of the date of termination of their Long-Term Non-Contingency ADOS orders in 2016, Reserve officers desiring a SELRES position upon release from active duty (RELAD), must submit an e-resume in order to compete for a SELRES assignment.

Members involuntarily recalled under Title 10 U.S.C. § 12302 (also referred to as “Invol T10” or Long-Term Contingency ADOS) or serve on Short-Term ADOS shall continue to encumber the SELRES position assigned at the time of recall. Once RELAD, these members return to their SELRES status, unless otherwise subject to reassignment.

In general, members serving on Long-Term Non-Contingency ADOS orders that terminate at any time during 2016, or are otherwise subject to reassignment upon RELAD in 2016, are encouraged to apply for assignment. Members who do not apply for assignment should expect a status change to the IRR and may participate in the AY17 assignment cycle; unless the member competes successfully for an off-season assignment.

### **Extended Active Duty (EAD)**

Reserve commanders or commanders-select serving on EAD are considered “active duty” officers for purposes of assignments and PSC-OPM serves as their AO while on

EAD. Reserve officers who expect their EAD contracts to expire at anytime in 2016 should submit an e-resume to PSC-RPM to compete for a SELRES assignment. Members who do not apply for assignment should expect a status change to the IRR and may participate in the AY17 assignment cycle.

Additionally, commanders and commanders-select considering EAD orders shall coordinate with their Reserve AO early in the process. Requests for active duty must be approved by your parent command and you must notify your reserve AO when you take on EAD orders.

### **The Feedback Loop**

We recognize that your anxiety level may be heightened as the assignment process goes into late January and February. You're certainly welcome to call and check on our progress. However, please understand if we tell you "we don't know yet" or "it's too early to tell" – that is exactly what we mean. Certain parts of the slate are worked out before others, but there are always billets that will not be determined until just before the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel. At many junctures of the process we are simply in a "holding pattern" awaiting feedback from a senior officer or awaiting a single assignment that will affect others. Regardless, if you call us, we will reveal what we can.

By approximately mid-February we will have a sense of the billets for which you may be most competitive. **One caution:** saying you are "competitive" is not an indication of what we may eventually see before the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel. Being competitive normally means you are among the pool of candidates likely to be recommended to the panel. Remember, we are providing the same information to your peers and information on who is part of the candidate pool will not be disclosed.

Just prior to the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel convening date, we will attempt to notify you of our assignment recommendation. It is always essential that you make sure your contact information is up-to-date in DA. You may send us an e-mail with your contact information; particularly if you are on travel.

You should note that it is possible that the assignment panel may not agree with our recommendation. Also, the panel's recommendation is subject to Assistant Commandant for Human Resources (CG-1) approval. For these reasons, do not be surprised if your final assignment differs from what we initially proposed.

We normally stop all communications with officers in play the day before the panel convenes and do not return or make calls while the panel is in session. If you do get a call from us during that time frame, it is usually at the panel's direction. After the panel recesses and reports out, we do not discuss their deliberations; similar to all board deliberations, it is confidential.

## **The Panel**

The Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel convenes in early March 2016. People present in the room are the panel members, your AO, and PSC-RPM staff.

Our proposals to the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel are based on our best match assessment of Service needs, unit needs and your individual needs - in that order. We strive to optimize overall Coast Guard staffing to maximize mission execution. This often drives us to find a compromise or balance between Service needs, unit needs and your needs/desires.

Besides our proposals, we make available to the panel:

- your e-resume;
- letters from candidates to the panel president;
- screening panel results;
- the names of all personnel asking for a billet;
- your Employee Summary Sheet (ESS); and
- a characterization of your Service record.

We specifically note whether or not a billet is on your e-resume and whether you find the assignment acceptable or unacceptable - and why. Similarly, we present differing views when they may arise. We explain our rationale for an assignment proposal and alternatives if requested.

The panel typically meets for one to two days before issuing their initial report and recesses for two weeks during the Reserve Retirement In Lieu of Orders (RILO)

period. The post-RILO session is much shorter, and yields the final report after a day. Assignment decisions made after the final report are made under the off-season assignment process.

### **Retirement In Lieu of Orders (RILO)**

When the panel's initial assignment recommendations are approved by CG-1, an ALCGPSC message is released and the two-week Reserve RILO period begins. It is important to understand the RILO parameters.

- Unlike active duty RILO, which is strictly a request for retirement, the Reserve RILO encompasses: (1) RET-1 retirement request status – Reserve members who have completed the requisite qualifying years of creditable service, and applied for and are receiving non-regular retired pay at, or after age 60; or (2) RET-2 requirement request status – Reserve members who have completed the requisite qualifying years of service for non-regular retired pay and are not yet 60 years of age or have not applied for non-regular retirement pay.
- If you have 20 years of service, have no obligated service requirements, and prefer to retire instead of accept orders, your request will normally be granted.

All Reserve RILOs must take place no later than 1 October. You can ask to retire earlier if desired. If you prefer a later retirement date (perhaps to be eligible for a longevity pay raise or to better meet your personal needs), then you need to submit your voluntary retirement request in time for us to act on it prior to the panel convening date. Submitting your retirement request as early as possible, and preferably before mid-January, will allow us the time we need to shop and fill your billet.

NOTE: There is a new policy for declining orders, ALCGRSV 017/15; as described in the upcoming section below.

### **Post-RILO**

Shortly after the two-week Reserve RILO period expires, the panel reconvenes, usually with one or more panel members participating via phone conference. By that time we have considered RILO-caused vacancies and other new

developments, and have worked out alternative assignment recommendations for each new vacancy. We present recommended solutions to the panel which includes information on each officer involved; as it was presented in the initial session. Panel decisions are announced in an ALCGPSC message, which constitutes the final report.

Officers who are reassigned during the post-RILO session are also afforded a two-week RILO period. Backfill actions resulting from post-final report RILOs are addressed as off-season transfers.

### **PCS Orders**

We will make every effort to issue new PCS orders by the end of May. The majority of PCS orders are issued with the following paragraph, "Firm reporting date to be coordinated between transferring and receiving commands, DIRLAUTH."

Due to DA requiring an estimated report date to be entered in order to cut orders, you can expect a default report date of 1 October. However, commands are authorized to arrange exact reporting dates with you. This is important when changes of commands are involved or where an OER end-of-period is affected.

### **Declining Orders and Status Change**

When making assignment decisions, AOs consider many factors including:

- Service needs;
- Command Concerns;
- career development;
- member's desires;
- RCD; and
- the limited number of SELRES positions in certain geographical locations.

Due to new policy described in ALCGRSV 017/15, members who decline orders are subject to a status change to the IRR, Standby Reserve, or may request retirement or separation as appropriate.

Members who do not successfully compete for assignment in AY16 can expect a status change to the IRR and may



compete for assignment in AY17. Members who fail to meet the e-resume deadline can expect a status change to the IRR and may compete for assignment in AY17.

### **Off-Season Assignments**

Although the vast majority of Reserve Commander assignments are handled through the panel process described in this guide, circumstances may arise that require off-season assignment decisions that were not considered by the panel. PSC-RPM will normally announce off-season assignments for unit Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, Senior Reserve Officer (SRO) and other critical reserve positions at major commands.

When we become aware of an upcoming off-season vacancy, we advertise the billet in an ALCGRSV message.

The names of officers who respond to the solicitation, along with others who may be most competitive based on their seniority, skills, and experience, are considered. We also take into consideration current command endorsements, and the best course of action that will minimize a chain reaction of assignments.

### **Off-Season Retirements**

Per chapter 8 of the Reserve Policy Manual, COMDTINST M1001.28 (series), officers may submit a request for retirement up to one year in advance of the desired retirement date. We request a minimum of six months and no more than twelve months in advance of the desired transfer to RET-1 or RET-2. Retirement dates of June through October are within the reasonable parameters to afford commands a minimum gap. Earlier requests typically will result in an extended gap, whereas, later requests normally will result in double encumbering the billet.

Off-season Reserve commander retirements can cause churn and impact unit and Service readiness. All Reserve commanders desiring to retire are strongly encouraged to submit retirement requests prior to the convening of the Reserve O-5 Assignment Panel or within the Reserve RILO period following the panel results.

Requests received with voluntary retirement dates of June through October will normally be approved if made within the above parameters. However, Service need or circumstances at a unit may not permit approval of the requested date. One important consideration is our ability to backfill the retiring officer's billet. There are usually no easy backfill options when a vacancy occurs outside the annual assignment process. For that reason, command endorsements on retirement requests must address backfill requirements. Requests for retirement made outside of the assignment process will likely be disapproved if the command is not willing to absorb a gap.

We strongly recommend you plan your retirement to coincide with the assignment season so we have the best opportunity to approve your desired date and backfill your billet.

## **Conclusion**

We hope you find this information useful in understanding the Reserve O-5 assignment process. We recognize how important the outcomes of assignment decisions are to each individual and to the Service. We also hope our messages, PSC-RPM website, CG Portal site, as well as correspondences, will keep you well informed as we seek to meet Service need by balancing the needs of the unit and your individual desires.

All the best to you this assignment season!