



FLAG VOICE #548
One-Servicewide Exam (1-SWE)

27 May 2021

Over the past year, a group involving MCPO-CG, PSC, PPC, CG-133 and others evaluated the Coast Guard's Service Wide Examination (SWE) program to ensure it satisfies the needs of a modern talent management and personnel advancement system. This review identified areas for improvement to better align advancement and assignment processes, promote the upward advancement of junior petty officers, and reduce the volatility many of these petty officers experience during the assignment year. As a result, in May 2022, the Coast Guard will shift to offering a single, annual SWE competition for E-4s and E-5s – to be identified as 1-SWE. The intent of the 1-SWE initiative is to reduce stressors for these Petty Officers and place the SWE process for paygrades E-4 through E-7 on an annual cycle.

Current advancement, assignment and separation policies and practices can result in members receiving short-notice assignments to fill vacancies late in the assignment year. In some cases, members are excluded from competing for highly desired billets and advanced education opportunities as application windows expire prior to members being notified of their eligibility for advancement. These policies and practices often disenfranchise members, causing them to reconsider their motivation towards advancement, their willingness to accept reassignment and inevitably, and their desire to remain in the Coast Guard.

Along the path to ensuring we have a mission-ready total workforce capable of meeting today's challenges, as well as those of 2030 and beyond, the 1-SWE concept provides greater fidelity for junior enlisted talent management and should add greater predictability for advancements and retention. This includes maximizing advancement opportunities for junior enlisted personnel, while increasing certainty and stability during the assignment season.

I ask for your assistance in ensuring commands engage with our workforce to enhance their awareness of the 1-SWE initiative. More information is available through an Internal Comms Bulletin, MyCG and the Badge Network. Questions may be directed to CG-133, EPM or the PPC who serve as Tri-Chairs for the 1-SWE Integrated Product Team, and commands are encouraged to visit the PPC (Adv) Portal site for FAQs.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joanna M. Nunan".

Joanna M. Nunan
Rear Admiral, USCG
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