



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
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OPNAVINST 1534.1F
N095
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OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1534.1F

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: STRATEGIC SEALIFT OFFICER FORCE

Ref: (a) National Security Directive of 28 of 5 Oct 1989
(b) 46 U.S. Code Part B – Merchant Marine Service
(c) RESPERSMAN M-1001.5
(d) BUPERSINST 1001.39F
(e) MILPERSMAN 1611-010

Encl: (1) Strategic Sealift Officer Force Definitions
(2) Strategic Sealift Officer Force Capabilities
(3) Sea Service and Pilotage Service Retirement Points Credit

1. Purpose. To provide policy and assign responsibilities for the organization, administration, training, and mobilization of the Strategic Sealift Officer Force (SSOF). This instruction incorporates the responsibilities and authorities of organizations defined in separate policies. This is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 1534.1E.

3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction applies to offices, stakeholders, and personnel within, supporting, and supported by the SSOF.

4. Background. Strategic sealift is an essential component of the National Defense Strategy, providing the afloat mobility capability to project and sustain combat power globally. Per reference (a), the United States' national sealift objective is to ensure sufficient military and civil maritime resources will be available to meet defense deployment, and essential economic requirements in support of the national security strategy. To meet this directive, the Department of Defense (DoD) depends on a combination of government and commercially owned vessels, all of which rely on a limited pool of civilian merchant crews to activate, operate, and sustain. In order to maintain the sealift capability to meet national security objectives, and to mitigate the risk of a civilian crewing shortfall, the Navy maintains the SSOF (formerly titled Merchant Marine Reserve) per reference (b).

5. SSOF Definitions. See enclosure (1).

6. Mission. The SSOF must provide warfare qualified Navy Reserve Officers with civilian credentials and military training to support the activation, operation, and sustainment of the United States organic Strategic Sealift Fleet and in support to Maritime Domain Operations, and the Maritime Industrial Base throughout the continuum of conflict.

7. Responsibilities

a. Office of the Chief of Navy Reserve (CNO N095)

(1) Serve as the Resource Sponsor responsible to man, train, equip, and administer the Navy Reserve, including management of Navy Reserve resources to maintain readiness for current and future Navy requirements.

(2) Financial management authority and responsibility for validated mobilization training.

(3) Administer placement of Navy Reserve Force manpower requirements within authorized levels as prescribed by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and in coordination with Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS), administer training and distribution of Navy Reserve Force personnel.

(4) Develop recruiting and retention initiatives and provide management guidance to field activities. In addition, assist Commander, Navy Recruiting Command with Reserve specific issues.

b. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics (CNO N4)

(1) Serve as Resource Sponsor for Navy logistics that support the Maritime Sustainment vectors of Refuel, Rearm, Resupply, Repair and Revive across the logistics continuum.

(2) Will establish 1665 designated definite recall billet(s) to support their sealift requirements.

(3) Provide financial management, analyses, requirements validation and oversight of resources with the Strategic Sealift Fleet, providing strategic mobility through prepositioned ships in the Maritime Prepositioning Force, and the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) managed Ready Reserve Fleet (RRF)

(4) Coordinate, plan, and direct analyses, assessments, research, and development on combat and sea-based logistics, sealift, and maritime industry issues and sealift procurement policy to meet wartime requirements.

(5) Validate requirements and allocate resources to provide operationally suitable logistics support to Commander, Military Sealift Command (COMSC) operated strategic mobility.

(6) Assess strategic sealift readiness.

(7) Coordinate sealift programs with Office of Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), other services, and intergovernmental agencies.

(c) COMSC

(1) As the Navy Component to USTRANSCOM, serves as the Sealift Operational Commander and force employer responsible for training the Strategic Sealift Readiness Group (SSRG).

(2) Will establish 1665 designated definite recall billet(s) responsible for training and mobilization preparedness of the SSRG and selection of Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO) liaison officers assigned to Federal and State Maritime Academies (SMA).

(3) In consultation with MARAD, CNO N4, and other Sealift Stakeholders, develop the technical training necessary for the SSRG to meet shipboard and shore side command and control requirements for sealift mobilization scenarios, train officers in current contested environment operations, and organize to ensure the SSRG is ready to meet sealift activation timelines and Naval Transportation Support Center current operations. SSRG capabilities are further outlined in enclosure (2).

(4) Develop and execute mobilization training plans for the SSRG.

(5) Coordinate with the Naval Service Training Command (NSTC) and Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC) to develop curriculum to prepare midshipmen for the operational requirements of a SSO.

(6) Coordinate with CNO N095, CNRFC and MARAD to ensure that outreach, marketing, recruiting and promotion of all SSOF accession pipelines are sufficient to meet mission needs.

(7) Coordinate with MARAD for the mobilization planning and assignment of SSOs to RRF ships.

(8) Establish Memorandum of Agreement, if necessary, with MARAD to ensure the timely and adequate manning shortfalls are adequately filled during an emergency affecting national defense.

(d) CNRFC

(1) Serve as Administrative Control for mobilization and administrative readiness for the SSRG and Selected Reserve (SELRES) SSOs through subordinate commands.

(2) Establish 1665 designated definite recall billet(s) to manage the SSRG.

(3) Liaise with COMSC to assist in establishing training and readiness requirements for the SSRG.

(4) Serve as SSRG fund manager and approver for Active Duty for Training (ADT).

(5) Establish, align and issue SSO warfare insignia, per reference (c).

(6) Provide administrative support to SSRG members and monitor member compliance with reference (d).

(7) In consultation with Navy Personnel Command (NPC), issue retirement points for credible sea-service, merchant mariner licensing, training and correspondence courses, per reference (c) and as further outlined in enclosure (3).

(8) Develop personnel processing procedures for mobilization and demobilization of SSRG personnel.

(9) In consultation with NPC, initiate separation or take other action, per reference (e), against any SSO who fails to meet minimum requirements.

(10) In coordination with COMSC, share compliance information with MARAD for SSOs that do not meet minimum Navy requirements.

(11) In coordination with COMSC, prepare and submit the annual SSRG training budget to build mobilization readiness.

e. Navy Reserve Centers. Per reference (c), provide administrative and mobilization support to SSRG members.

f. Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education (CNO N1)

(1) Provide oversight and overall procedural guidance for the management and mobilization policies, procedures, and systems to address the unique needs associated with the management and training of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) within the SSOF.

(2) Provide oversight and overall procedural guidance to ensure Strategic Sealift Midshipman are tracked, administered and trained to become gained and affiliated into the Ready Reserve SSOF immediately upon commission from the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) or SMA.

(3) Coordinate with CNO N095 to assign a Training and Administration of the Reserve (TAR) Officer as Commanding Officer of the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps unit at the USMMA and realign TAR Officer billets to the USMMA and each SMA as necessary to support operations and align with Navy Reserve priorities.

g. NSTC

(1) Maintain a Department of Naval Science at the USMMA and at each approved SMA.

(2) Administer and align the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program (SSMP) with the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps.

(3) Establish academic and physical fitness eligibility standards for entrance and continued participation in the SSMP.

(4) Process applications and appointments for the SSMP and maintain administrative control of midshipmen.

(5) Serve as primary waiver authority for age waivers and serve as authority in conjunction with Bureau of Medicine and Surgery for all medical waivers for all SSMP applicants and appointments.

(6) Separate or take administrative action against strategic sealift midshipmen who fail to fulfill requirements.

(7) Coordinate with COMSC to develop curriculum to prepare midshipmen for the operational requirements of an SSO.

(8) Process commission applications for all graduating strategic sealift midshipmen and assist with obtaining security clearances and accession into the SSRG.

(9) Ensure all commissioning documents and administrative requirements needed at the unit level are completed expeditiously and submitted to the appropriate entities to support member transition into the SSRG.

8. Records Management

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a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please, contact the local records manager or the OPNAV Records Management Program (DNS-16).

9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, Office of the Chief of Navy Reserve (OPNAV N0951) will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, DoD, Secretary of the Navy and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



J. B. MUSTIN
Chief of Navy Reserve

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via Department of the Navy Issuances website, <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/doni/default.aspx>.

STRATEGIC SEALIFT OFFICER FORCE DEFINITIONS

1. SSOF: U.S. Navy Reserve officers who maintain U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Deck or Engineering credentials for unlimited tonnage or horsepower. These officers support the activation, operation, and sustainment of U.S. organic strategic sealift vessels or support expeditionary logistics and the Navy and Maritime industrial base. The SSOF includes commissioned officers (designated 1665) in the SSRG of the IRR, the SELRES, or in a temporary active-duty status.
2. SSRG: SSOs in a non-drilling IRR status make up the SSRG. SSRG members must maintain a USCG unlimited deck or engine Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) with Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping (STCW) endorsements. The SSRG administrative and mobilization readiness is managed by Commander, Navy Reserve Forces and operational control is Military Sealift Command (MSC).
3. SELRES SSO: SSOs in a SELRES status are in a paid drilling status with their supported Active component. SSOs in the SELRES must maintain a USCG unlimited deck or engine officer MMC. SSOs may serve in 1665 coded mobilization billets, or other eligible officer billets per billet screening and assignment procedures. SELRES SSOs are managed by their assigned Navy Reserve Activities and train to their mobilization billet.
4. SSMP: An education and training program administered thru NSTC, the USMMA, and SMAs. The SSMP is designed to qualify participants for commissioned service in the SSOF. Program administration, eligibility, participation requirements, and training are directed by NSTC instruction.
5. SSOF stakeholders: Commands and offices with responsibilities for the activation, operation, resourcing, and sustainment of strategic sealift may be stakeholders of the SSOF.
6. MARAD: The United States MARAD is an agency of the United States Department of Transportation that supports the technical aspects of America's maritime transportation infrastructure (ships and shipping, port and vessel operations, national security, environment, and safety), promotes the use of waterborne transportation and seamless integration of infrastructure with other methods of transportation. MARAD also maintains a fleet of cargo ships in reserve to provide surge sealift during war and national emergencies.
7. MMC: MMC is a credential issued by the USCG under the STCW guidelines to United States seafarers to show evidence of a mariner's qualifications. It is the standard documentation required for all crew members of U.S. ships with a Gross Register Tonnage of over 100 and for all vessels required to operate with a licensed Master, regardless of size.
8. MSC: MSC is one of three component commands reporting to USTRANSCOM for defense transportation matters. MSC has the responsibility for providing sealift and ocean transportation

for all U.S. military services as well as for other government agencies. It is a component of the United States Navy and provides fleet logistics support and special mission support to the Fleets.

9. RRF: Initiated in 1976 as a subset of the Maritime Administration's National Defense Reserve Fleet program to support the rapid worldwide deployment of U.S. military forces. MARAD's RRF consists of sealift ships providing a mix of capabilities. As a key element of DoD strategic sealift, the RRF primarily supports transport of Army and Marine Corps unit equipment, combat support equipment, and initial resupply during the critical surge period before commercial ships can be marshaled.

10. International Convention on STCW for Seafarers: Sets qualification standards for masters, officers and watch personnel on seagoing merchant ships. STCW was adopted in 1978 by conference at the International Maritime Organization in London and entered into force in 1984. The Convention was significantly amended in 1995.

STRATEGIC SEALIFT OFFICER FORCE CAPABILITIES

1. Strategic Sealift is a shared effort between DoD, MARAD and industry to sustain military operations globally. To meet the campaign needs of US Combat Commanders, the DoD maintains an organic surge sealift fleet that enables DoD to project power to support national security.
2. As an element of National Security Policy, National Security Directive 28 ascribes: *The United States' national sealift objective is to ensure that sufficient military and civil maritime resources will be available to meet defense deployment, and essential economic requirements in support of our national security strategy.*
3. Meeting this directive requires appropriately sized commercial and U.S. government-owned sealift fleets, a supporting shore side industrial base, and qualified personnel to activate, operate, and sustain the ships. In the modern maritime ecosystem, qualified mariner shortfalls are exasperated by austere and contested maritime spaces beyond the scope of commercial civilian operations. To augment manpower, the US Navy maintains the SSOF. This cadre of licensed mariners are warfighter qualified Navy Reserve officers that mobilize to man, operate and sustain sealift thru the continuum of conflict.
4. The SSOF is comprised of SSOs who serve within the IRR and the SELRES, providing strategic depth across the Joint logistics enterprise.
5. The SSOF will provide warfare qualified Navy Reserve Officers with civilian credentials and military training to support the activation, operation, and sustainment of the United States organic Strategic Sealift fleet, in contested environments, and in support of Maritime Domain Operations and the Maritime Industrial Base throughout the continuum of conflict.
 - a. Operators. The SSOF must provide properly USCG licensed and credentialed officers as crew for strategic sealift vessels to meet wartime sealift requirements. The SSOF provides an organic option to assure trained and ready manpower and leadership are available when civilian mariner resources are not. SSO crews will be resilient and warfighter qualified to operate in the most current contested maritime environment throughout the continuum of competition to conflict.
 - b. Liaison Officers. The SSOF must provide specially trained tactical advisors to enable command and control and advise and assist civilian mariner crews and increase survivability in contested and conflicted environments.
 - c. Shore side. The SSOF must provide shore side sustainment support to the Navy and Joint Logistics enterprise to enable Refuel, Resupply, Rearm, Revive and Repair efforts, provide Maritime Domain Awareness expertise to the Fleets, the Joint Logistics Enterprise and augment the Maritime Industrial Base.

SEA SERVICE AND PILOTAGE SERVICE RETIREMENT POINTS CREDIT

1. Credit for Extended Sea Service. SSOs who maintain afloat experience on commercial ships and attain advanced USCG unlimited tonnage and horsepower credentials are critical to mission success. Sailing SSOs have time and access constraints that may preclude them from voluntary participation; therefore, CNRFC may credit compliant SSRG officers with retirement points for sea service provided that:

- a. 180 or more cumulative days at sea were obtained in the previous anniversary year for 35 points.
- b. Less than 180 cumulative days but greater than 90 days in the previous anniversary year for 17 points.
- c. Days at sea were documented by USCG discharge papers or letter of sea service from COMSC (time employed aboard Ready Reserve Force ships, even in reduced operating status, count as a day for day rate for credit).
- d. Extended Sea time points will not be awarded to any officer unless in compliance with SSOF requirements as outlined in, ref (e).

2. Credit for Harbor Pilots. SSOs that are employed as harbor pilots obtain critical ship handling experience on commercial vessels. Harbor pilots do not obtain discharges but serve onboard ships during times of pilotage. CNRFC may credit harbor pilots with 20 retirement points per anniversary year provided that:

- a. The harbor pilot is compliant with all other SSOF requirements.
- b. The officer is a current member of a recognized pilot organization.
- c. Pilotage for any of the time is obtained onboard an unlimited tonnage vessel; and be determined by days on board or trips completed while piloting a vessel, as documented by the member and verified by CNRFC.
- d. Standby time will not count.
- e. 20 points per anniversary year may be issued for qualifying service of at least 100 days or 180 trips completed.
- f. Each request for pilotage retirement points is accompanied by a letter from the pilot organization stating that the individual is a member in good standing and a copy of the State issued license or certification is provided, as applicable.

g. Final determination as to the amount of time to be recognized per each request for pilotage will be made by CNRFC.

3. Waiver: Credit for extended sea service or pilotage service does not waive SSOs from performing annual requirements including the required 2 weeks of ADT unless granted a written waiver by CNRFC.