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Section A—The Air Force Officer Promotion Program

1. A Part of Your Way of Life. You have chosen to serve your country as a member of the United States Air Force. In accepting your commission, you obligated yourself to distinctive professional responsibilities and a special way of life. The Air Force officer promotion program is an advancement program for officers established in law, modified over time, and carefully managed by senior Air Force officials. The Air Force promotion program is your program—you should understand it and be able to explain it to your family and friends, and discuss it with contemporaries, subordinates and supervisors.

2. Purposes of the Officer Promotion Program. The Air Force officer promotion program’s purpose is to select enough officers of the desired quality, in the proper grades, to carry out the mission. To do this, the Air Force should promote officers in sufficient numbers as vacancies occur, maintaining the strength of the Air Force in each grade and providing reasonable progression to retain a highly qualified and motivated officer force:

   2.1. Other objectives include:

        2.1.1. Providing reasonably stable, consistent, and visible progression patterns for all competitive categories.
2.1.2. Ensuring the best qualified officers are selected.

2.1.3. Providing for accelerated promotion opportunities for officers with exceptional potential.

3. Terms Explained: The following are terms used throughout this publication:

3.1. Active Duty List (ADL). A list of all officers serving on active duty, except for a few small categories excluded by law. A separate list is maintained for officers in each competitive category (paragraph 3.4.). Officers are carried on the list in order of seniority in the grade in which they are serving. Eligibility for promotion consideration is based on the officer’s competitive category and position on the list.

3.2. Best Qualified Method of Selection. Requirement that selection boards may recommend for promotion only those officers whose records, when compared with those of other eligible officers, reflect the greatest potential to serve successfully in the next higher grade. A numerical selection quota is applied. All selection boards, with promotion opportunity less than 100 percent, use the best qualified method of selection.

3.3. Central Selection Board. A board of officers convened under the authority of the Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) to consider ADL officers for promotion to the grades of captain, major, lieutenant colonel, colonel, brigadier general and major general. These boards are convened at HQ Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC), Randolph AFB TX.

3.4. Competitive Category. A grouping of officers who by law compete among each other for promotion. The categories are Line of the Air Force (LAF), Judge Advocate (JAG), Medical Corps (MC), Dental Corps (DC), Chaplain (CHAP), Medical Service Corps (MSC), Biomedical Sciences Corps (BSC), and Nurse Corps (NC).

3.5. Date of Rank (DOR). The date used as the primary means of indicating relative seniority among officers of the same grade and determining eligibility for consideration for promotion to the next higher grade. The DOR of officers promoted from promotion lists approved after 15 September 1981 is the same as the effective date of the promotion. **NOTE:** Service academy graduates are assigned the same date of rank on graduation and will be placed initially on the ADL in order of their graduation class standing.

3.5.1. Seniority of officers with the same grade and DOR is determined by the following criteria, respectively:

   3.5.1.1. Previous DOR (if applicable).
   3.5.1.2. Total Active Federal Commissioned Service.
   3.5.1.3. Total Federal Commissioned Service.

3.5.2. When the above criteria does not result in a determination of relative rank, Regular officers will precede Reserve officers.

3.5.3. Regular officers will rank among themselves based on the following in the order listed:

   3.5.3.1. Date of presidential nomination.
   3.5.3.2. Date of Regular Air Force appointment acceptance.
   3.5.3.3. Date of birth (earliest takes precedence).
3.5.3.4. Reverse social security number (SSN) (lowest takes precedence).

3.5.4. Reserve officers will rank among themselves in the order listed (distinguished graduates of commissioning programs taking precedence over other Reserve officers):

3.5.4.1. Date of birth (earliest takes precedence).

3.5.4.2. Reverse SSN (lowest takes precedence).

3.6. Effective Date of Promotion. The date specified in the order that announces the promotion. It is the date the officer is entitled to wear the insignia and receive the pay and allowances accompanying that grade. This is not the date an officer is notified of selection.

3.7. Failed to be Selected. Officers considered for promotion In-the-Promotion Zone (IPZ) or Above-the-Promotion Zone (APZ) but not selected for promotion are commonly referred to as "non-selectees" or "deferred officers." Officers considered Below-the-Promotion Zone (BPZ) but not selected are not considered "failed to be selected for promotion." Paragraph 22, explains the consequences of nonselection.

3.8. Fully Qualified Method of Selection. One-hundred percent of total eligibles may be promoted to first lieutenant provided designated commanders determine they are fully qualified. The same is true to major for MC and DC officers and captain for all competitive categories if central selection boards determine they are fully qualified.

3.9. Phase Points. The average number of years and months of active commissioned service that most officers complete when promoted to a particular grade. The Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) guidelines are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Phase Point (years of service)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Lieutenant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>9 - 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Colonel</td>
<td>15 - 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>21 - 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.10. Promotion Board Quota. For any one board, promotion opportunity (as a percentage) multiplied by the number of officers eligible IPZ determines the promotion board quota.

3.11. Promotion List. A list of all officers approved for promotion within a competitive category to the grade of captain and above. Officers are placed on the promotion list in order of seniority on the ADL and promotion sequence numbers are assigned accordingly. A separate promotion list is used for each competitive category. **NOTE:** Sequence numbers are not assigned for promotion to captain or for MC and DC officers. These promotions occur at prescribed times based on DOR in the current grade.

3.12. Promotion Zones. Groupings of officers in the same grade who are eligible for promotion consideration in each competitive category on the ADL. There are three promotion zones:
3.12.1. Above-the-Promotion Zone (APZ). This zone represents the officer’s "late" consideration for promotion. These officers have previously failed IPZ selection to that grade (to include those removed from a promotion list to that grade) and are senior to officers being considered IPZ.

3.12.2. Below-the-Promotion Zone (BPZ). This zone represents the officer’s "early" consideration for promotion. Officers are eligible BPZ at the two boards immediately preceding the board in which they are considered IPZ. This applies for promotion to the field grades only. **NOTE:** There are no BPZ considerations for promotion to captain in all competitive categories or for promotion to major in the MC and DC. If a captain will be eligible IPZ for promotion by the calendar year 1998 major board, he or she will be eligible BPZ by the calendar year 1996 and calendar year 1997 major boards. Officers eligible BPZ are always junior to officers being considered IPZ.

3.12.3. In-the-Promotion Zone (IPZ). This zone represents the officer’s "on-time" consideration for promotion to the next higher grade based on his or her current DOR. The opportunity for being selected for promotion is the highest when officers are eligible in this zone.

3.13. Senior Rater. The official who completes promotion recommendation forms (PRF) on officers eligible for consideration by a HQ USAF Central Selection Board and also serves as a reviewer on officer performance reports (OPR). For majors and below, the senior rater must be at least a colonel (or equivalent) serving as a wing commander or equivalent. For lieutenant colonels, the senior rater must be a general officer (or equivalent) and will be the first general officer in the rating chain.

3.14. Special Selection Board. A board convened under the authority of the SecAF to consider officers for promotion to grades of captain through colonel who were not properly considered by one or more promotion selection boards. In addition, these boards can be convened to reconsider Regular Air Force Appointment, continuation, and selection for intermediate or senior service school. There are two bases for considering an officer by a special selection board:

3.14.1. Administrative error--It is determined an officer should have been considered but was not considered or was not considered in the correct promotion zone or competitive category.

3.14.2. Legal or material error--An officer is nonselected by a selection board, and it is determined:

3.14.2.1. The action by the board was contrary to law or involved material error of fact or material administrative error.

3.14.2.2. The board did not have the necessary information for consideration that should have been available if instructions and policies had been followed.

**Section B—Promotion Eligibility**

4. **When Are You Eligible for Promotion?** How will you know if and when you are eligible for consideration for promotion? The answer depends on your current grade:

4.1. A second lieutenant will be eligible for promotion upon completing 24 months in grade. For other grades, the SecAF determines the specific eligibility criteria for BPZ, IPZ, and APZ consideration. Once the eligibility criteria are determined, the MPF gives each officer eligible for consideration an officer preselection brief (OPB) and officially notifies the officer that the board will consider him or her for promotion. In addition, the MPF makes a public announcement, through the base bulletin or paper, so all eligible officers, supervisors, and commanders are aware of the upcoming board.
4.2. In addition to meeting the basic eligibility criteria (time-in-grade), an officer must be on extended active duty at least 6 months before the central selection board convenes. This rule does not apply to MC and DC officers considered for major or other non-line officers being considered for promotion to captain.

4.3. Furthermore, officers with an established DOS or retirement are still eligible for promotion if their DOS or retirement is not within 90 days of the board convening date. Board members will give these officers fair and equitable consideration.

NOTE:
The Air Force permits most officers selected for promotion to withdraw their DOS or retirement and to accept the promotion with an appropriate Active Duty Service Commitment (ADSC).

4.4. In most cases, a central selection board will consider first lieutenants for promotion to captain after they serve between 9 to 21 months as a first lieutenant. If selected, officers are promoted to captain upon completing 24 months in the grade of first lieutenant.

4.5. Captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels are not eligible for IPZ consideration to the next higher grade until they serve 3 years in their current grade. Generally, a central selection board will consider officers for major IPZ after about 10 years’ service; for lieutenant colonel after about 15 years’ service; and for colonel after about 20 years’ service. Officers in these grades are normally considered for promotion BPZ 2 years before their IPZ consideration.

Section C—Promotion Opportunities and Selection Rates

5. What is Your Promotion Opportunity? What does promotion opportunity mean? It is the approximate percentage of officers in an accession year group that a central selection board will select for promotion after competing for promotion to the next higher grade in all three promotion zones—BPZ, IPZ, and APZ:

5.1. On approving the promotion eligibility criteria to each grade, the SecAF also specifies the promotion opportunity for each competitive category. Because reasonably stable, consistent, and visible career progression is an objective of the promotion program, promotion opportunities do not change much, if at all, from year to year.

5.2. Current promotion opportunities for LAF officers are 100 percent for captain; 90 percent for major; 70 percent for lieutenant colonel; and 50 percent for colonel. This percentage, applied to the number of IPZ eligibles, determines the maximum board quota. A percentage of the board quota is allocated to BPZ selections. Current BPZ percentages are 5 percent for major, 7.5 percent for lieutenant colonel, and 15 percent for colonel. NOTE: All BPZ and APZ selections are at the expense of IPZ selections.

5.3. For each board, promotion opportunity multiplied by the number of officers eligible IPZ determines the maximum number of officers the board can promote (i.e., maximum board quota). There is a limit on the number of officers that the board may select BPZ. This limit is determined by multiplying the maximum board quota by the BPZ percentage which SecAF has approved. If the full BPZ quota is used (and it normally is for Line officers), the number of promotions available for IPZ/APZ would be the board quota minus BPZ selections. EXAMPLE: The current promotion opportunity to major is 90 percent. If there are 3,000 officers eligible IPZ and 1,000 officers eligible APZ, the max-
imum number of officers that could be selected from the total of 4,000 would be 2,700 (90 percent X 3,000 = 2,700). The BPZ limit for major is 5 percent. If the board quota is 2,700, the maximum number that the board may select is 135 (.05 x 2,700 = 135). The number of promotions available for IPZ/APZ would be the board quota minus BPZ selections or 2,565 (2,700 - 135 = 2,565).

5.4. One common misunderstanding is that the selection rate is the same as the promotion opportunity. While promotion opportunity determines the maximum number of officers that a board can select, selection rates are the actual percentages of IPZ, BPZ, or APZ eligibles that were selected. Normally, the board selects for promotion some officers eligible BPZ and APZ, thus reducing the number of promotions available for officers eligible IPZ. Using the previous example: 90 percent x 3,000 = 2,700 (board quota: total available promotions); 2,700 x 5 percent = 135 (BPZ quota: maximum who can be promoted BPZ); 2,700 - 135 = 2,565 (available IPZ and APZ promotions); 2,565 - 300 (if 300 APZ eligibles were selected) equals 2265 (IPZ selects); 2265 divided by 3,000 (IPZ eligibles) = 75 percent IPZ selection rate.

5.5. The IPZ selection rate for any one promotion board is usually lower than the promotion opportunity for that board.

Section D—Promotion Recommendation Form (PRF)

6. Line Officer Allocation Rates. Officers meeting a promotion board will have a PRF written by their senior rater that will be included in the Officer Selection Record (OSR). The senior rater can make one of three recommendations: "Definitely Promote" (DP), "Promote" (P), or "Do Not Promote This Board" (DNP). Historical DP allocation rates for BPZ eligibles, and IPZ and APZ eligibles are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Promotion To</th>
<th>DP Allocation Rate (Line Officers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BPZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Colonel</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXAMPLE: Current DP allocation rate to major is 65 percent for IPZ/APZ and 10 percent for BPZ. If there are 3,000 officers eligible IPZ and 1,000 officers eligible APZ, the total number of DPs for IPZ and APZ officers would be 1,950 (3,000 x .65 = 1,950). If there are 2,000 officers eligible BPZ, the total number of DPs for BPZ officers would be 200 (2,000 x .10 = 200).

7. Selection of Officers With "Promote" Recommendations. Since the number of officers that a board can select for promotion IPZ and APZ is greater than the number of DP recommendations, and since a "DP" is not a guarantee of promotion, each board will select for promotion some officers who receive a "Promote" recommendation. While the actual selection rate for officers with a "Promote" recommendation may vary from board to board, the anticipated selection rate IPZ for line officers who receive a "Promote" recommendation is:
EXAMPLE: If there are 3,000 officers eligible IPZ to major and 1,415 received "Promote" recommendations, approximately 566 of the officers with a "P" would be promoted (1,415 x .40 = 566).

7.1. It is a common misconception that a "DP" is a guarantee of promotion. While it should certainly enhance an officer’s opportunity, selection for promotion is ultimately the responsibility of the members of the promotion board, who will select officers based on the board members’ independent determination as to who is best qualified. The PRF is but one document in the selection record, though an important one, that selection boards will consider.

8. Competitive Category Exceptions. There are some exceptions for using PRFs in promotion boards. When the promotion opportunity is 100%, only "Do Not Promote This Board" PRFs are prepared. The reason is that the eligible officers compete on a fully qualified basis:

8.1. First lieutenants in the JAG competitive category do not receive a PRF. They are promoted after approximately 6 months of active duty and on a fully qualified basis.

8.2. In those cases where the board uses DP recommendations for non-line officers, the selection rates may differ from the comparable Line rates since the promotion opportunity for some non-line categories differs from the Line promotion opportunity.

Section E—Selection Boards

9. Scheduling Selection Boards. The convening dates for major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel selection boards vary from year to year. Boards are scheduled far enough ahead, and prior to exhausting a current list to ensure a promotion list for each grade is always available from which to promote. Each year the number of eligibles the board considers varies as does the number it selects. The larger the year group, the larger the number of selects; therefore, the longer it takes to pin-on. This is one of the main reasons promotion boards are convened at different times during the year:

9.1. Captain line and chaplain boards are held annually, captain BSC/MSC/NC boards are held semi-annually, and captain JAG boards are held quarterly. First lieutenants are normally promoted after 2 years in grade without regard to vacancies. Officers selected for major and above are promoted only as vacancies occur, except for MC and DC officers who are promoted after they complete prescribed periods of time.

9.2. Each year, HQ AFPC/Selection Board Secretariat publishes selection board schedules and updates them as necessary. Your MPF has a current schedule.
10. What Documents Do Central Selection Boards Consider?  When a central selection board considers you for promotion, board members review your HQ USAF Officer Selection Record (OSR) maintained at HQ AFPC, Randolph AFB TX:

10.1. Documents included in selection records are:

10.1.1. OPRs, officer effectiveness reports (OER), PRFs, training reports (TR), and supplemental evaluation sheets such as mandatory letters of evaluation (LOE). All OPRs, OERs, and TRs rendered since you were commissioned are included. PRFs exist in your OSR only for a particular board and are removed from the selection record after that board adjourns. The PRFs are forwarded to HQ AFPC/Master Record Division for placement on microfiche. Once filmed, the PRFs are destroyed.

10.1.2. An AF Form 11, Officer Military Record. This is a historical document for all officers commissioned before 5 April 1974. These forms are obsolete and have not been updated since April 1974.

10.1.3. Citations for approved US decorations. Special orders are used when a citation is not given for the decoration. Approved awards (e.g., AF Outstanding Unit Award, Humanitarian Service Medal, etc.) are not part of the OSR.

10.1.4. An officer selection brief (OSB). The OSB has the same data items as the Officer Pre-Selection Brief (OPB) that is provided to officers for review and update approximately 90 days before the board convenes. The OPB and instructions on how to correct errors are provided to eligible officers by the Promotions Unit at their MPF. An example is at Attachment 2.

10.1.5. A specialty board certification (letter or certificate) for members of the Medical, Dental, Nurse, and Medical Service Corps.

10.1.6. Operational deferment letters for Professional Military Education (PME).

10.1.7. A letter to the board from an eligible officer. The board permits letters from officers it is considering IPZ, APZ, or BPZ. Letters are in selection records while the board is in session. The Board Secretariat removes them after the results are approved and the letters are destroyed or returned to the officer upon his or her advanced request.

10.1.8. The commander’s letter recommending the board find an officer not qualified for promotion (NQP). Even though a commander may recommend to a board that it find an officer NQP, the board will still consider the officer. The commander must notify an officer in writing and give the officer a chance to comment if the commander takes action to recommend that a board find the officer NQP. A commander may submit an NQP letter on an officer after the PRF has been rendered if an officer’s actions subsequently cause his or her commander to consider it inappropriate to select the officer for promotion.

10.1.9. Court-martial orders containing or reflecting approved findings of guilt (mandatory and permanent filing).

10.1.10. Air Force Forms 366, Record of Proceedings of Vacation of Suspended Nonjudicial Punishment, 3070, Record of Nonjudicial Punishment Proceedings, and 3212, Record of Supplementary Action Under Article 15, UCMJ, regarding nonjudicial punishment (optional filing by the commander).

10.1.11. Letters of Reprimand (LOR) (optional filing by the commander).
10.1.12. An Air Force Form 330, **Records Transmittal/Request**, or similar document. This form reflects HQ AFPC efforts to obtain missing documents such as OPRs, OERs, citations, etc.

10.2. Your selection record is **you appearing before the board**. You should carefully review it before the board convenes. A copy of the documents listed in paragraphs 10.1.1. (except the PRF), 10.1.2., 10.1.3., 10.1.9., 10.1.10., and 10.1.11. are in your records at your MPF. Your command personnel record at your Major Command (MAJCOM) has a copy of the documents listed in 10.1.1. paragraphs 10.1.1. (except the PRF), 10.1.2., 10.1.6., 10.1.8., 10.1.9., 10.1.10., and 10.1.11. The specialty board certification (paragraph 10.1.5.) is filed only in your HQ USAF OSR, but you should have a personal copy. The OSB (paragraph 10.1.4.) is a temporary document; however, HQ AFPC does retain a microfiche copy of the OSB to document the information provided to the board.

10.3. Do not wait until just before the board convenes to review your records. When you receive notification from your MPF that a board will consider you, act quickly to ensure your records are accurate and up-to-date. If possible, you should review your HQ USAF OSR since this will actually meet the board. You may do this in person by visiting HQ AFPC at Randolph AFB TX, or by writing to HQ AFPC/Officer Selection Record Section, 550 C Street West, Suite 5, Randolph AFB TX 78150-4707, and requesting a copy of your selection record:

10.3.1. After the results of a promotion board are announced, if an officer believes he or she is the victim of an error or injustice, the officer may petition the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records. The governing directive is AFI 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records*. However, if the alleged error or injustice involves an officer evaluation system component, the officer should first pursue action under AFI 36-2401, *Correcting Officer and Enlisted Evaluation Reports*. Personnel at your servicing MPF can provide assistance.

11. **What Criteria Do Boards Use to Select Officers for Promotion?** The Air Force does not select officers for promotion as a reward for past performance. It promotes officers based on their potential to successfully serve in the next higher grade and in positions of greater responsibility. The criteria the Air Force uses to evaluate each officer's relative potential is known as the "whole-person concept:"

11.1. Factors the SecAF approves include:

11.1.1. Job performance--the most important indicator of potential is performance in the job as PRFs, OPRs, OERs, TRs, and LOEs document. The most recent performance record is very important to the board; however, the board considers the entire performance record in making its assessment of an officer's potential.

11.1.2. Leadership--staff, operations, and command positions.

11.1.3. Professional qualities--expertise as a specialist, supervisor, operator, etc.

11.1.4. Breadth and depth of experience--where the officer is assigned, at what level, when, variety of jobs and tasks, etc. Breadth of experience is more appropriate for field grade officers. Lieutenants and captains should concentrate on depth of experience in their career area. Field grade officers need to place more emphasis on broader considerations--that is PME, advanced education, and breadth of duty experiences that may include command, career broadening assignments, and headquarters assignments.

11.1.5. Job responsibility--scope of responsibility, exposure, opportunity to make decisions, resources managed, etc.
11.1.6. Academic and professional military education--appropriate level, relationship to career field, and possible assignments, etc.  **NOTE:** Advanced academic degrees will be masked on the OSB for line officer promotion boards to the grade of captain and major.

11.1.7. Specific achievements--awards, decorations, special recognition, etc.

11.2. Each board member reviews the total selection record and makes a subjective evaluation by secret vote on the officer’s relative potential as a whole-person to serve in the next higher grade.

12. **Board Members.** The Air Force selects only highly qualified senior officers with extensive experience and mature judgment to serve as board members. Collectively, they represent the broadest practical scope of Air Force activities. To provide a balanced perspective on the Air Force mission, the Air Force selects officers who mirror, as much as possible, the officers they are considering with respect to race, sex, aeronautical rating, career field, and command of assignment. In addition, joint duty, and Reserve officers participate as board members when appropriate. It is important to understand; however, that while the Air Force uses these demographic characteristics in selecting board members, these officers do not represent or sponsor any particular officer group, interest, or command. Board members are required to perform their duties based on the best interest of the total Air Force and take an oath affirming that they will do so:

12.1. Board member names are available at your servicing MPF when HQ AFPC releases the board results.

13. **What Instructions Are Given to Board Members?** The SecAF convenes selection boards and the board members work for him or her. The Secretary provides guidance to the board members in the form of a Memorandum of Instruction (MOI). This MOI includes specific information concerning the board’s purpose, the tasks the board will perform, selection method, and the need to ensure the board provides all eligibles fair and equitable consideration. In addition, the MOI includes guidance to board members regarding their specific responsibilities during the board and instructions regarding unauthorized disclosure of the board’s proceedings and findings. While the basic data included in each MOI to a board is the same, each is tailored to fit the grade and competitive categories of the officers being considered. In a separate briefing, the Selection Board Secretariat, as the Secretary’s representative, tells board members to carefully review the officer's entire selection record using the whole-person concept. The Board Secretariat briefs board members on the following items:

13.1. **Board Specifics.** Members are briefed on the agenda the members will follow, pertinent historical facts regarding selection to that grade, eligibility criteria, significant changes affecting promotions, and the task they must perform.

13.2. **Facts About the Eligibles.** This portion of the briefing familiarizes board members with general characteristics about the eligibles.

13.3. **Selection Record.** The specific contents of the selection record and where each item is located within the record.

13.4. **Scoring Procedures.** The score board members give each selection record must reflect their assessment of the officer’s potential to serve in the higher grade relative to the records of other officers considered. The board members may consider only the record, not personal experience. To do so, board members need to make a whole-person assessment of each officer’s total record and assign a specific numerical value to each record, using a scoring scale from 6 to 10 that includes half-point
increments. Scoring is by secret ballot. Any time there is a difference of more than one and one-half points between two or more board members scoring the same record (known as a split vote), the record is taken back to the panel. Through discussion, the differences are resolved between the differing members to bring all scores within a one and one-half point range. For boards where promotion opportunity is 100% of the total eligibles, a "yes" or "no" scoring procedure is used. In this case, a split vote would occur anytime there was not a unanimous "yes" or "no" vote. In that case, the record would be brought back to the members for discussion. An example of the scoring scale is provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutely Superior</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding Record</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few Could Be Better</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Record</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Higher Than Average</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Below Average</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well Below Average</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest in Potential</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.5. Trial Run. The required practice scoring session that gives experience in applying the whole-person assessment and in using the 6- to 10-point, or "yes" or "no" scoring scale. The trial run’s objective is to help each member establish an individual scoring standard that the board members will apply consistently. More than one trial run may be conducted. Scoring "for the record" does not begin until the board president is satisfied that all board members are fully prepared.

13.6. BPZ Selections. Board members will determine, on the basis of the eligibles’ quality, whether to use the full BPZ quota. They should use the full BPZ quota only if the quality of all officers whom they select from BPZ is higher than the quality of those IPZ and APZ whom they would displace, since BPZ promotions come at the expense of APZ and IPZ eligibles.

13.7. Joint Duty. Board members appropriately consider performance in Joint Duty Assignments (JDA), that are accountable billets, for those officers who are currently serving in, or have served in, such assignments:

13.7.1. The qualifications of officers selected for assignment to JDAs and officers designated as Joint Specialty Officers (JSO) should be such that the following promotion objectives are met:

13.7.1.1. Officers, as a group, who are serving, or have served, on the Joint Staff are expected to be promoted to the next higher grade at a rate not less than the rate for officers in the Air Force in the same grade and competitive category who are serving, or have served, on the Air Staff.

13.7.1.2. JSOs are expected, as a group, to be promoted at a rate not less than the rate for officers in the Air Force in the same grade and competitive category who are serving, or have served, on the Air Staff.
13.7.1.3. Officers who are serving, or have served, in JDAs (excluding officers above) are expected, as a group, to be promoted at a rate not less than the rate for all officers in the Air Force in the same grade and competitive category.

13.7.2. The SecAF's MOI for promotion selection boards shall include, at a minimum, the following guidance: "You will give appropriate consideration to the performance in JDAs of officers who are serving in, or have served in, such assignments." Additionally, the records of all officers who are serving, or have served, in a JDA or who have been designated as JSOs will be clearly identified for board members.

13.7.3. For promotion boards, including special selection boards that consider officers serving or have served in JDAs, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall review the promotion board results to determine if joint duty performance was given appropriate consideration. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's written comments will be attached to the promotion board documentation and returned to the SecAF. These comments may include recommendations for appropriate action. The Secretary of Defense will resolve any disagreement between the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the SecAF.

13.8. Acquisition Corps. Board members consider performance of officers currently serving in acquisition assignments:

13.8.1. The law requires that the qualifications of officers assigned to these duties be such that those officers are expected, as a group, to be promoted at a rate not less than the Air Force average rate both IPZ and BPZ.

13.9. Skill Needs. To best satisfy Air Force needs, the Air Force uses a generalist-specialist (as explained below) team concept for Air Force officer career development. This concept is based on the following factors:

13.9.1. The Air Force must produce officers whose interests and capabilities become broader as they acquire experience and move up in levels of staff and command. This is an inherent function of a personnel system that must "grow" its own leaders.

13.9.2. While the Air Force must, for the most part, produce its own specialists (some of whom may remain in certain functional areas for a major portion of their careers), the movement between functional areas of rated officers and some officers who are not rated is essential if the Air Force is to develop the optimum capability of the total officer force.

13.9.3. All career officers should have a competitive opportunity to obtain higher grades and responsibilities commensurate with their performance and ability. In view of the generalist-specialist team concept, the Secretariat tells selection board members that Air Force skill requirements are for an officer force of specialists and generalists that should be selected for promotion on a best qualified basis.

13.10. Academic and Professional Military Education. These accomplishments serve as an indicator of initiative and should be assessed in terms of how they enhance the officer's performance and potential to assume greater responsibility. The key is the right level of PME at the right time. That is, Squadron Officer School for captains, intermediate service school for majors, and senior service school for lieutenant colonels and colonels. While important, completing PME or advanced academic education is not a pass-fail requirement, especially since all officers do not have the same opportunity to do so (see 11.1.6, paragraph 11.1.6). NOTE: Although advanced academic degree information is
masked at the central selection board for line officers competing for captain and major, it is available to senior raters and MAJCOM Management Level Reviews.

14. **Board Members’ Responsibilities.** The following is extracted from the instruction the Secretariat provides each board: "Central selection boards are convened by the SecAF to select the best qualified individuals for promotion. You must act in the best interest of the Air Force and not any particular command, specialty, or group. While you are here, you are working directly for the SecAF under the supervision of the board president who is a nonvoting member. Each of you is responsible for maintaining the integrity and independence of this selection board, and to foster the careful consideration, without prejudice or partiality, of all eligible officers."

15. **Disclosing Information.** The Secretariat also provides the following instructions to each board: "The names of the officers comprising the membership of the board will be publicly released when the results of the board are announced. However, the score given any particular record is privileged information and may not be disclosed. Names of individuals selected or not selected, or any statistical data pertaining to board results will not be maintained by you nor will your knowledge of the same be disclosed to anyone, including your superior officers and commanders, prior to public release. After public release there is no prohibition to disclosing information on the overall numbers considered, the manner in which the board was organized, the general procedures it followed, or the number and grade of its membership."

16. **The Oath.** Following the MOI to the board, each member takes the following oath: "I solemnly swear that I will, without prejudice or partiality, having in view both the special fitness of the officers and the efficiency of the United States Air Force, perform the duties imposed upon me."

17. **How Does the Board Determine Who is Selected?** Each selection record is scored on a 6- to 10-point scale using half-point increments; i.e., 6, 6.5, 7, etc. As soon as each of the panel members score all records allocated to a panel, scores are totaled and aligned in a relative order of merit. Each panel receives a proportionate share of the board quota based on the number of records it scored. The quota is then applied going from the top of the relative order of merit listing down until the quota is exhausted:

   17.1. Often the score category at which the quota is exhausted contains more records tied at that score than the quota can accommodate. That score category is referred to as the "gray." Board members rescore these records to determine whom they should select. For example, with a quota of 50, if 45 records fall into score categories above the gray-score category and 10 records are in the gray-score category, the board members will rescore the 10 gray records to determine which five records in the gray-score category they will select.

18. **Other Functions of Selection Boards.** Boards convened to select officers for promotion also perform other functions:

   18.1. By law, all promotion boards must also identify officers whose records indicate that they should be required to "show cause" for their retention in the Air Force. If approved by SECAF, HQ AFPC provides the names of officers the board identifies to the proper MAJCOM commanders for appropriate action.
19. **Safeguards.** Proper consideration for advancement to higher grades is a very important event in an officer's career. Accordingly, the Air Force has the following safeguards to ensure that boards consider all eligible officers on a fair and equitable basis:

19.1. **General Notice.** At least 30 days before the board convenes, the law requires public announcement of the names and dates of rank of the most junior and senior officers the board considers IPZ in each competitive category and the date the board convenes.

19.2. **Officer Preselection Brief (OPB).** Based on approved eligibility criteria, you should receive an OPB about 90 to 120 days before the board convening date. The OPB contains information the board will consider. You should promptly follow the instructions provided along with the OPB to ensure your OSR at HQ AFPC at Randolph AFB is current.

19.3. **MPF Verification.** In addition to the computer-generated OPBs, each MPF is required to perform data verification checks to ensure they provide an OPB to all officers eligible for consideration by an upcoming board.

19.4. **Senior Officers Serve as Board Members.** Only knowledgeable senior officers serve as board members. Collectively, these officers possess great professional diversity and include both generalists and specialists. A breakdown by grade follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Panel Chief</th>
<th>Panel Members (4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>Lt General</td>
<td>Major General</td>
<td>Brig General or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brig General (sel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LtColonel</td>
<td>Major General</td>
<td>Brigadier General</td>
<td>Colonel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>Major General</td>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>Colonel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Brigadier General</td>
<td>Colonel</td>
<td>Colonel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19.5. **Letters to Selection Boards.** All officers eligible IPZ, APZ, or BPZ may send a letter to the selection board. The board considers the letter when assessing the officer's selection record. (Details on how to prepare letters to the boards are in AFI 36-2501.)

19.6. **Selection Boards Review Specified Information Only.** Selection board members can consider only those documents the Air Force approves and lists in AFI 36-2501 in assessing each officer's records. Appropriate "due-process" requirements exist to preclude a board from considering derogatory information without the eligible officer having knowledge of such information. For example, a recommendation to find an officer Not Qualified for Promotion (NQP) must be referred to the officer for comment, and it must have a legal review before the board can consider it. Board members will not disclose information about an officer's career unless it is referenced within the content of the OSR.

19.7. **Briefings to the Board.** The Secretariat briefs selection board members regarding the demographics of the eligibles and the content of selection records. The briefing discusses a variety of issues relative to the OSR that may come to the attention of the board members during the scoring process. This includes such things as ratings by civilian supervisors and members of other services, breaks in service, organizational changes, differences in OER and OPR ratings the officer received while in the Reserve, etc.
19.8. Trial-Run. Before actually scoring any records, board members complete a trial-run exercise. The Secretariat selects records used in trial run exercises to depict the full range of quality the board will see and to highlight anomalies and differences in records. The trial run gives board members an opportunity to set a consistent scoring pattern to be used throughout the board.

19.9. Random Flow of Selection Records to the Board. The Secretariat combines selection records for all IPZ and APZ officers for each competitive category and provides them to board members in a random manner by reverse social security number. The distribution of BPZ records is done in the same manner.

19.10. Oaths. All board members take an oath to serve without prejudice or partiality. All recorders involved with administration of the boards also swear to keep a true record of the board proceedings.

19.11. Secret Ballots. Using a secret ballot, each board member records his or her assessment of each selection record. This eliminates any chance of undue influence. Discussion of records is allowed only when resolving a split vote.

19.12. Split Votes. A difference of more than 1 1/2 points between any two panel members on a five-member panel is a "split vote," and the split vote panel members must resolve the split vote. That is, the members should discuss the split and then rescore the record until all panel members’ scores for the record are within 1 1/2 points. This prevents any one panel member from adversely impacting the overall score of a given record.

19.13. Board President's Review. The board president reviews 15 to 20 percent of all eligible records to ensure that board members are assessing all records in a consistent manner. The board president also reviews controversial records—for example, where a split vote is not easily resolved—and various other records to ensure that the board provides all eligibles fair and equitable consideration.

19.14. Board Members’ Signatures. All board members sign the board report affirming the best qualified officers are those they are recommending for promotion and that the board carefully considered the record of each officer whose name was furnished to it.

19.15. Postboard MPF Verification. Before HQ AFPC announces the board results to the public, MPF personnel check to be sure all eligible officers they service are accounted for.

Section F—Processing Board Results

20. Notifying Selectees and Processing Board Results. Usually, commanders do not notify officers whether they are selected or not until 6 to 8 weeks after the board adjourns. Why does it take so long?

20.1. HQ AFPC cannot release the board results until the Office of the Secretary of Defense approves the board proceedings. Auditing lists and preparing memoranda and documents needed to transmit board results to the SecAF and the Office of the Secretary of Defense for approval and through the President for nomination to the Senate must be thoroughly and accurately accomplished. Generally, preparing, reproducing, and routing the board proceedings to the Office of the Secretary of Defense takes 5 to 7 weeks. While HQ AFPC can release promotion results at that time, the Air Force cannot promote selectees to the field grades until the Senate confirms the promotion list.

21. Promoting Selectees. The Air Force promotes officers selected for captain and MC and DC officers on the day they complete the necessary time-in-grade requirement. For captain, it is usually 2 years from the date he or she was promoted to first lieutenant. The Air Force promotes officers to field grades to fill
vacancies. HQ AFPC places selectees in each competitive category on promotion lists in seniority order (based on the selectee’s position on the ADL in his or her current grade) and assigns promotion sequence numbers. Each month, HQ USAF determines how many officers the Air Force may promote in each grade and in each competitive category. By about the 15th of the month, HQ AFPC provides each MPF the number for each grade and for each competitive category the Air Force will promote the following month. The MPF notifies commanders which of their officers the Air Force will promote the next month and commanders notify the officers. HQ AFPC also publishes increment numbers through the HQ AFPC Home Page on the worldwide web and other media to inform the Air Force at large:

21.1. Effective Date of Promotion and Date of Rank (DOR). The effective date of promotion is the date specified in the order that announces the promotion. It is usually the 1st day of the month for promotion. EXCEPTIONS: The effective date for promotion to captain and for promoting MC and DC officers to any grade is the officer’s anniversary date of their current grade rate of rank.

21.2. Declining of Promotion. A selected officer may decline promotion. However, if an officer does not decline before the effective date of promotion, the Air Force considers that the officer accepts the promotion. The officer is also subject to the ADSC and retirement restriction associated with promotion to that grade. AFI 36-2501 explains what action an officer will take to decline a promotion and the consequences of a promotion declination.

21.3. Active Duty Service Commitment (ADSC) and Retirement Restrictions. Officers promoted to captain incur a 1-year ADSC. Officers (other than MC and DC officers) promoted to major and above incur a 2-year ADSC. The ADSC for promotion runs concurrent with any other ADSC an officer may have. Officers promoted to lieutenant colonel and colonel are not entitled to voluntary retirement in the higher grade until they serve 3 years in that grade. The ADSC computer notice provided to the officer soon after being notified of selection for promotion specifies the applicable ADSC and retirement restrictions.

21.4. Propriety of Promotion Actions. Being selected for promotion does not ensure an officer the Air Force will promote him or her. As a continuing quality control check, commanders are required to take action to delay an officer’s promotion or recommend removal (also known as "red line") of an officer’s name from a promotion list if they believe the officer is not physically, mentally, morally, or professionally qualified to perform the duties of the higher grade. The commander needs to notify the officer of such action before the promotion effective date and provide him or her an opportunity to submit a statement in his or her behalf before action is taken on the approval authority’s recommendation.

22. Consequence of Nonselection. Officers, not selected IPZ, are considered again by a second board (their first APZ look). Officers not selected by a second board for captain or major are separated or retired not later than the 1st day of the 7th month after the Office of the Secretary of Defense approves the board results. A selective continuation board may consider officers not selected the second time for major if the officers possess a critical skill, as determined by the SecAF. If the continuation board selects them, officers may remain on active duty for an initial 3-year period. Prior to expiration of the initial 3-year period, the Air Force considers officers for further continuation until they are eligible to retire if a board does not select them for promotion during the initial continuation period. Selective continuation for captain and major is a board process and is not something for which an individual applies. Continued officers remain eligible for promotion consideration as long as they are on active duty and meet established promotion board criteria. The Air Force usually permits regular majors not selected for lieutenant colonel to remain
on active duty until they have reached 20 years of commissioned service. Lieutenant colonels not selected for colonel may remain on active duty until they have 28 years of commissioned service, unless selected for early retirement by a Selective Early Retirement Board (SERB).

**Section G—What Can You Do To Improve Your Chances for Promotion?**

23. **Things You Should Do.** There is no guarantee the selection board will select you, or any other officer, for promotion. However, there are three things you should do to increase your opportunity for being selected:

23.1. The first and most important thing you can do is perform your current job to the best of your ability. Your raters will evaluate you on how well you do the job you have now. If you do well and maintain a positive and professional attitude, your raters will recognize you for it and help you volunteer for more challenging and responsible jobs. Selection boards and leaders looking for top-notch performers to take on increasingly more responsible jobs recognize consistently outstanding performance.

23.2. The second thing you should do is seek advice from your supervisor, your commander, and others in a position of leadership. Their guidance can be of great value in helping you develop professionally. There are some differences in desired professional development steps for various job specialties; some emphasize extensive broadening while others require greater specialization. You should also be familiar with the officer professional development information in AFI 36-2611, *Officer Professional Development,* and AFPAM 36-2630, *Officer Professional Development Guide,* that pertains to your career field.

23.3. Finally, understand the officer promotion program and take appropriate actions before the board convenes. One of those actions is to review your record before boards convene to ensure it is accurate and up to date.

**Section H—Summary**

24. **Some Final Comments.** One of the most gratifying aspects of a military career is being selected for promotion to the next higher grade. Unfortunately, it is a fact that not all officers can be selected for promotion. In addition, law has established specific limitations on the number of both regular and reserve officers who can serve on active duty in the grade of major and above:

24.1. Your objective should be to progress to the highest grade possible commensurate with your capabilities. At the same time, recognize that promotion boards cannot select all officers to the higher grades and competition for promotion to each succeeding higher grade becomes more intense. There are many exceptionally talented officers in the Air Force, but the Air Force is not going to promote everyone to the highest grades, because not all officers are required in the higher grades. Promotion based entirely on individual capability without regard to requirements would be wasteful, so it is inevitable the Air Force will not select some highly capable officers.

24.2. A fair and equitable promotion program exists now and will continue in the future. You should understand it, so you can better appreciate the significance of your successes and better realize the necessarily competitive nature of Air Force promotions. The officer promotion program in the Air
Force has served individual officers, the Air Force, and our country well by continuing to help produce a professional, highly qualified, and fully combat-ready officer corps.

MICHAEL D. McGINTY, Lt General, USAF
DCS/Personnel
Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviations and Acronyms
ADL—Active Duty List
ADSC—Active Duty Service Commitment
AFI—Air Force Instruction
AFPC—Air Force Personnel Center
APZ—Above-the-Promotion Zone
BPZ—Below-the-Promotion Zone
BSC—Biomedical Sciences Corps
CHAP—Chaplain
DC—Dental Corps
DNP—Do Not Promote This Board
DOPMA—Defense Officer Personnel Management Act
DOR—Date of Rank
DP—Definitely Promote
IPZ—In-the-Promotion Zone
JA—Judge Advocate
JDA—Joint Duty Assignment
JSO—Joint Service Officer
LAF—Line of the Air Force
LOE—Letter of Evaluation
LOR—Letter of Reprimand
MAJCOM—Major Command
MC—Medical Corps
MOI—Memorandum of Instruction
MPF—Military Personnel Flight
MSC—Medical Services Corps
NC—Nurse Corps
NQP—Not Qualified for Promotion
OER—Officer Effectiveness Report
OPB—Officer Preselection Brief
OPR—Officer Performance Report
OSB—Officer Selection Brief
OSR—Officer Selection Record
P—Promote
PME—Professional Military Education
PRF—Promotion Recommendation Form
SERB—Selective Early Retirement Board
TR—Training Report
Attachment 2

AIR FORCE OFFICER SELECTION BRIEF

Figure A2.1. Air Force Officer Selection Brief.

| NAME | JOHN H. DOE | SEX | M | RACE | CAU | SSN | 112324455 | ETHNIC | NONE |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**PERSONAL DATA**

**GRADE DATA**

| CUR GR | LTC | DOR | 01 JUL 1990 | EFF DATE | 01 JUL 1990 |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**SERVICE DATA**

--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION**

| SCHOOL | AIR WAR COL | METHOD | CORRESPONDENCE | 1995 |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

| SCHOOL | AC & STAFF | METHOD | RS/SEMINAR | 1989 |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

| SCHOOL | SQ OFF SCH | METHOD | CORRESPONDENCE | 1977 |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**ACADEMIC EDUCATION**

| LVL | BUS AIM AND MANAGEMENT | SPECIALTY / SCHOOL | 1981 |
--- | --- | --- | --- |

| LVL | CENTRAL MI, MI | POLITICAL SCIENCE | ELON COL, NC, NC |
--- | --- | --- | --- |

**DECORATIONS**

| DECORATION | MERIT SVC MED | YR | 1992 |
--- | --- | --- | --- |

| DECORATION | DMS MOL | YR | 1993 |
--- | --- | --- | --- |

| DECORATION | AF COMM MED | YR | 1985 |
--- | --- | --- | --- |

| DECORATION | J SVC COMM MD | YR | 1995 |
--- | --- | --- | --- |

**OVERSEAS DUTY HISTORY**

| INCLUSIVE DATES | LOCATION | 14 SEP 1992 | SEP 1993 | KORES |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

| INCLUSIVE DATES | LOCATION | 25 JUN 1984 | 21 MAY 1985 | ICELDS |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

**ASSIGNMENT HISTORY**

| DUTY STATUS CODE | EFFECTIVE | DUTY TITLE | CMD LVL | MAJ COM | ORGANIZATION |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

| DUTY STATUS CODE | EFFECTIVE | DUTY TITLE | CMD LVL | MAJ COM | ORGANIZATION |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |

| DUTY STATUS CODE | EFFECTIVE | DUTY TITLE | CMD LVL | MAJ COM | ORGANIZATION |
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| DUTY STATUS CODE | EFFECTIVE | DUTY TITLE | CMD LVL | MAJ COM | ORGANIZATION |
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