

Psychological Operations (PO) Branch

19 November 2024

1. Unique features of the Psychological Operations (PO) Branch

a. The essential and enduring role of the Psychological Operations (PO) Branch is to create and reinforce desired behaviors in selected foreign individuals and groups to achieve military and U.S. national objectives across the range of military operations. Psychological Operations units contribute to accomplishing the full range of conventional and special operations by conducting two primary influence activities: Military Information Support Operations (MISO) and Department of Defense Deception activities (DDA). Individual PO officers assigned to other Army and joint force commanders' staffs, create conditions for the employment of Psychological Operations units by commanders and provide subject matter expertise for the planning and command and control of operations conducted by Psychological Operations units and other Army units conducting influence activities. PO Branch Soldiers are specially selected, trained, and educated in the branch's influence process prior to assignment to a Psychological Operations unit. Psychological Operations units unilaterally, or alongside other units support U.S. Chiefs of Mission (COM) and country teams, other interagency partners, lead federal agencies, Allies, and partner nations. These units are prepared to provide information dissemination support to lead federal agencies responding to natural and man-made disasters in the United States and its territories.

b. PO Branch Core Competencies. PO Branch core competencies describe the capabilities required to execute MISO and DoD deception activities and contribute to Army operations. The competencies are collective, not individual. The varying levels of skills among individuals contribute to the collective competencies of the branch. Each core competency compliment the others, providing units the capability to plan and execute the two primary influence activities. PO officers will continue to develop the following skills, areas of expertise, and capabilities throughout their career:

(1) **Influence Skills** – Influence skills are diverse and require deliberate institutional, unit, and self-development to evolve from basic levels to levels of expertise. These skills include:

- Active listening.
- Analysis (data, statistical).
- Conflict resolution.
- Critical thinking.
- Diplomacy.
- Empathy.
- Intuition.
- Motivational techniques.
- Negotiation.
- Nonverbal communication.
- Observation.
- Persuasion.
- Problem-solving.
- Situational awareness.

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- Verbal communication.

(2) **Regional Expertise** – Regional expertise (including foreign language expertise) and the Cultural skills associated with such expertise are vital components of any influence effort. The DoD recognizes this importance and DoDD 5160.4E explicitly notes, “Foreign language skills, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities are enduring critical competencies, essential to the DoD mission and must be managed to maximize the accession, development, sustainment, enhancement, and employment of these critical skills to the DoD mission.” According to DoDD 5160.4E, regional expertise is knowledge about a specific region of the world that focuses on (but is not limited to) the political, historical, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of that region. Specific skills required to contribute to the collective regional expertise of the branch include:

- Analytical proficiency
- Computing Competence
- Conducting interviews
- Critical Thinking
- Data collection
- Divided attention
- Memory
- Nonverbal communication skills
- Oral communication/public speaking
- Perception
- Recording information
- Selective attention
- Spatial thinking
- Statistical analysis
- Sustained attention

(3) **Cultural Capability** – Cultural capabilities are the skills and knowledge that enable personnel to adapt and function effectively in any culture to achieve mission success. Culture-general capabilities promote effective development and use of regional expertise.

(a) Culture is the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, attitudes, meanings, social hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people across generations by individual and group striving. Culture significantly influences how humans interpret information, make decisions, and behave. Cultural skills include:

- Active listening.
- Adaptability.
- Analytical techniques.
- Collaboration.
- Confidence.
- Conflict resolution.

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- Cross-cultural communication.
- Diplomacy.
- Emotional control.
- Empathy.
- Mental agility.
- Observation.
- Open-mindedness.
- Reasoning.
- Reception.
- Self-awareness.
- Situational awareness.
- Social competence.

(b) PO Soldiers acquire cultural knowledge through the study of:

- Attitudes.
- Beliefs and belief systems.
- Geography.
- Gender and age-related roles.
- History.
- Icons and symbols.
- Spatial relationships.
- Social hierarchies.
- Social mores.
- Religion.
- Time norms.
- Values and value systems.
- Worldviews.

c. *PO Branch Areas of Concentration.*

Psychological Operations Officer (37A): PO officers apply their individual skills in the PO core competencies and proficiency in critical individual tasks to lead and manage units in executing collective and mission essential tasks in permissive, uncertain, and hostile environments. Often, these officers work alongside our conventional or SOF counterparts to produce effects that meet national objectives. PO officers also work in support of Department of State (DoS) priorities in embassies around the world and may be one of a few U.S. Soldiers in a country at any given time.

(a) 37A COMPO 1 and 3 officers command Psychological Operations units and serve on the staffs at echelons ranging from the Office of the Secretary of Defense through battalion.

(b) 37A COMPO 2 officers are assigned to Theater Information Operations

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Groups (TIOGs), National Guard Field Artillery units, and National Guard Infantry Division staffs.

2.37A PO Officer Requirements and Attributes Common to All:

- a. Apply problem-solving and decision-making skills to defeat an enemy with capabilities comparable to our forces.
- b. Possess the leadership capabilities to fight among the populace and deny support to our adversaries while encouraging support to the local government.
- c. Recognize changing operational environments and remain fully prepared to reconfigure resources to undertake a range of altered missions.
- d. Possess unquestionable personal integrity and moral courage.
- e. Be specialists and known authorities in the psychological aspects of warfare, the influencing of individuals and groups, planning, influence operations, integrating intelligence into influence operations, as well as technical and tactical skills.
- f. Be physically fit and capable of operating under stress.
- g. Understand the human and information domains to enable operations conducted within multiple domains.
- h. Be tactically and technically proficient in the execution of influence operations in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments throughout the range of military operations.
- i. Be proficient in assessing the capabilities and capacities of friendly and hostile governing structures, institutions, and methods. Capable of assessing, developing, and mobilizing resistance governance capability, capacity, and methods.
- j. Understand and be capable of employing Army and joint doctrine in planning and operations.
- k. Be capable of planning and conducting influence operations at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.
- l. Maintain knowledge and develop mastery of branch doctrinal principles, and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP); combined arms operations before, during, and after LSCO; Irregular Warfare (IW); combatant commander campaign plans (CCP); the Joint and Army targeting and operations processes; non-standard logistics; the Army warfighting functions and the joint functions with emphasis on the information function; and; and interorganizational processes.

3. COMPO 1: Active Duty PO Officers

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a. Additional Requirements for COMPO 1:

(1) Maintain language proficiency of 1+/1+ or better in an assigned Control Language (CLANG).

(2) Be airborne qualified before starting PO training. Special Operations PO officers must remain eligible to perform airborne duties throughout their careers. If the officer's airborne status is medically terminated, the regimental proponent Commandant, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (AOJK- PO) can waive this requirement.

b. Branch transfer.

(1) *Recruitment.* The PO branch recruits officers from other Army branches. PO officers are expected to have served a successful initial tour as a small-unit leader or as a company grade officer in one of the other branches to gain a working knowledge of Army operations and tactics. Officers in target year groups identified via military personnel messages may apply for branch transfer into PO.

(2) *Application procedures.* Officers in the target year groups that desire a branch transfer to the PO branch must apply through the Special Operations Recruiting Battalion or Human Resources Command (HRC) PO Future Readiness Officer (FRO). Application requirements and target year groups are released via military personnel message. Officers in an older year group than those identified in the military personnel messages must request an exception to the policy.

(3) *Branch transfer acceptance.* Upon acceptance of a class seat for PO Assessment and Selection (POAS), officers are transferred to PO branch for management as untrained PO personnel. The HRC PO FRO will schedule officers for POAS (if needed), Basic Airborne Course (if needed), ARSOF Captains Career Course (CCC), and the Psychological Operations Training Pathway (POTP) before assigning them to a PO unit. The PO branch is awarded upon completion of the PO Qualification Course (POQC). Active component officers who do not pass the PO Pathway in its entirety may have their MOS revoked and may go back to their former branch.

(4) *Pre-requisites for 37A.* Officers selected for branch transfer into the PO branch must:

- (a) Complete Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC).
- (b) Complete an initial tour in one of the Army's basic branches and have a minimum of 24-months of active federal commissioned service by application approval date.
- (c) Possess a valid secret security clearance and eligible to obtain top secret /sensitive compartmented information (TS/SCI) clearance in accordance with AR 380-67.
- (d) Possess a bachelor's degree.

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- (e) Meet medical standards per AR 40-501 or be granted a waiver by the PO Commandant, with appeal authority to CG, USAJFKSWCS.
- (f) Be airborne qualified, or medically and physically capable and willing to volunteer for the Basic Airborne Course. Officers should not start the POQC until they complete airborne training.
- (g) Possess a Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) score of 75 or higher or a current foreign language proficiency score of 1+/1+ or higher in an ARSOF Strategic Language.
- (h) Attend and be selected at POAS.
- (i) Complete ARSOF CCC or equivalent CCC.
- (j) Complete the Psychological Operations Qualification Course.

(5) *Waiver authority.* The PO Commandant is the final authority for award of AOC, course prerequisites, as well as PO qualification and branch-transfer requirements. All requests for exceptions to policy should be routed through the PO Proponent and addressed to the PO Commandant through (AOJK–PO), Fort Liberty, NC 28310. Email the personnel division of the PO proponent at psyop.cmdt.personnel@socom.mil with any questions.

c. *Education and assignments.* Upon award of the AOC, the officer serves in a key developmental (KD) position, followed by other developmental positions described in the following paragraphs.

(1) *Captain.*

(a) *Professional Military Education (PME).* Completion of ARSOF CCC or CCC equivalent, and the PO training pathway in its entirety (includes Special Warfare PO Course (SWPC), Language, and the PO pathway graduation module, subject to change).

(b) *Assignments.*

i. *KD assignments.* Captains should successfully serve as PO Detachment Commander for a minimum of 18 months and optimally for 24 months. This is the KD position for all PO captains. All PO officer billets at the O-3 level within the Information Warfare Company are executing the roles and responsibilities of PO Detachment Commanders and therefore will be treated as a PO Detachment Commanders for the purposes of evaluation. This duty equates to company, battery, or troop command in other branches. PO captains may be considered for broadening opportunities only after completing their KD assignment. This can include Army Reserve Detachment Command time.

ii. *Service in a second command following the officer's initial KD*

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assignment. Selection to a second command is appropriate for an officer with very high-potential. Preferred second commands include the 4th or 8th Psychological Operations Group (POG) Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) or a Battalion Headquarters and Support Company (HSCs). Officers selected for these positions must attend a Pre-Command Orientation Course.

iii. *Broadening assignments.* High-performing officers should seek assignments marked as nominative to best represent the PO branch throughout the Army and broaden their individual development. The broadening assignments for high-performing, high-potential captains are:

- (i) HHC/HSC Company Commander. (Nominative)
- (ii) USAJFKSWCS assignments – minimum 24 months. (Nominative)
- (iii) Special Operations Recruiting Battalion assignments. (Nominative)
- (iv) Human Resources Command assignments. (Nominative)
- (v) General officer personal staff assignments. (Nominative)
- (vi) PO Battalion or Brigade Assistant Operations officer.
- (vii) PO officer at Operational, Strategic, institutional, inter-agency, inter-organizational, and academic assignments.
- (viii) Combat Training Center (CTC) Observer, Coach, and Trainer (O/C-T).
- (ix) Brigade Combat Team, Special Forces Battalion, Security Force Assistance Brigade, or other Battalion-level PO Staff officer (S39).
- (x) Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves.

(c) *Self-development goals.* In addition to professional development through operational assignments, PO captains will continue an intensive military self-development program. Their efforts will focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of combined arms operations in support of LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW) to include influence in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments. Emphasis must be placed on how to apply and integrate PO and influence TTPs with other SOF units in support of DoD and DoS priorities. Captains must also develop an understanding of joint, inter-agency, and inter-organizational operations, as well as improve cultural and linguistic expertise (maintaining a 1+/1+ or higher in their assigned language). Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is encouraged.

(d) *Suggested captains' development courses.* Recommended courses include (in no order): Jumpmaster, Ranger, Pathfinder, Special Operations Military Deception Course (SOFMILDEC), Special Warfare Touchstone, Special Warfare Brighton, SOF courses at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), Tactical Information.

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Operations Planner Course (TIOPC), MISO Program Design and Assessment Course (MPDAC), Joint IO Orientation Course (JIOOC), Army IO Planners Course (AIOPC), Joint MILDEC Course (JMDC), Joint Targeting Course (JTC), Joint Fires and Effects Course (JOFEC), Joint Special Technical Operations (JSTO), and others identified by your chain of command.

(e) *Advanced Education.* PO captains are encouraged to start master's level education and/or certifications as part of their professional development. Captains should consider applying for advanced civil schooling (ACS), broadening opportunity programs (BOP), and training with industry (TWI) as in-service options; however, due to the time and utilization commitments, planning to compete and attend these should be done well in advance and discussed with the HRC Career Manager for possible promotion and intermediate level education (ILE) complications. As PO officers, preferred career fields for advanced degrees are in Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Data Science, Marketing, Advertising, International Relations, Defense Analysis, or Strategic Studies.

(2) *Major.*

(a) *Professional Military Education.* Officers must complete ILE PME requirements. Officers in the primary zone cohort year group will be assigned and expected to attend ILE as directed. High-performing/high-potential officers should seek opportunities to attend the Special Operations Campaign Artistry Program (SOCAP) in conjunction with CGSC. Officers selected for company command will attend a Pre-Command Orientation Course.

(b) *Assignments.*

i. *KD assignments.* Multiple positions exist to develop and prepare a PO major to lead at successively higher levels of responsibility; however, PO company command is preferred to ensure optimal competitiveness. PO majors must successfully serve a total of at least 18 months, optimally 24 months, in one or a combination of the following assignments:

- (i) Company Commander.
- (ii) PO Battalion or Group Executive officer.
- (iii) PO Battalion or Group Operations officer.
- (iv) Information Warfare Company PO O-4 billets are filling the roles of a Battalion Operations officer and should be treated as such.
- (v) Non-PSY-G Brigade-level or higher staff PO (37A coded) planner positions.
- (vi) Task Force Executive officer.

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(vii) Task Force Operations officer.

ii. *Broadening Assignments. PO majors will also meet the Army's mission requirements and broaden their experience in the following developmental assignments:*

- (i) Personnel Division Chief at PO Proponent. (Nominative.)
- (ii) Career Manager at Human Resources Command. (Nominative.)
- (iii) USAJFKSWCS Assignments (All assignments minimum 24 months). (Nominative.)
- (iv) Special Operations Recruiting Battalion Assignments. (Nominative.)
- (v) General officer-level personal staff positions. (Nominative.)
- (vi) Theater Special Operations Command Plans officer.
- (vii) Theater Psychological Operations Plans/Operations officer.
- (viii) Mission Command Training Center, Special Operations Training Detachment, and CTC O/C-T or staff positions.
- (ix) Assignments at USASOC Force Modernization Center.
- (x) PO officer at Operational, Strategic, institutional, inter-organizational, and academic assignments.
- (xi) Equivalent positions in an Army Reserve unit.
- (xii) General staff officer. In this position, an officer receives professional development at one of the staff sections at the command, division, corps, Army Service component command, or joint duty positions.
- (xiii) Senior staff. As senior staff members, majors serve as Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA); Department of Defense (DoD); Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS); United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM); and joint or combined headquarters staff officers, or interagency positions requiring PO experience and expertise.
- (xiv) Interagency fellowships.
- (xv) Service school staff.
- (xvi) NATO assignments.

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(xvii) Other assignments: operational, institutional, inter-organizational, and academia.

(c) *Self-development goals.* PO majors will expand their understanding of combined arms operations and joint operations before, during, and after LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW), with an emphasis on battalion and brigade or group-level elements, as well as conventional brigades and divisions. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is encouraged.

(d) *Suggested majors' development courses.* Majors will complete Joint Professional Military Education I. Completion of a master's degree allows the officer to fill one of the many positions with the Army Educational Requirements System (AERS) code 96 (master's degree required). Additionally, special operations forces courses at the Joint Special Operations University and NATO courses are encouraged in addition to any other courses listed under the captains list.

i. *Joint Professional Military Education. Command and General Staff Officer's Course (CGSOC) is the primary Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) I venue for Army majors. CGSOC educates field grade officers through the resident course at Fort Leavenworth, KS, through satellite campuses, or distance learning programs. Schools of Other Nations (Foreign ILE) and Sister Service ILE are reserved for the top five percent of resident selects across the Army and should be the preferred ILE venue for highly competitive PO officers. Senior majors should strive to complete JPMEII as soon as possible.*

ii. *Master's Degree. PO majors are highly encouraged to pursue their master's degree through the following programs.*

(i) *Command and General Staff College (CGSC).* Conducted at Fort Leavenworth, KS, CGSC is the Army's premier ILE venue and the primary venue for most resident selects. Students receive a graduate level education firmly based in Army doctrine that will prepare them to succeed in command and/or assignments to division or corps staffs. CGSOC curriculum provides students with a Master of Operational Studies (MOS) degree or students have the option of pursuing a thesis-based Master of Military Arts and Science (MMAS) degree.

(ii) *National Defense University (NDU).* Select PO officers may attend the highly competitive Joint Special Operations Master of Arts (JSOMA) program conducted over ten months at Fort Liberty, NC, producing a Master of Arts in Strategic Security Studies. This education better prepares PO officers for assignments in joint and interagency billets. Officers attending this venue will need to complete ILE Common Core via satellite or distributed learning. The application for NDU requires an endorsement by the first O-6 in the officer's chain of command. Graduates of this venue incur a 3:1 ADSO (IAW AR 350-100) for every day spent in NDU.

(iii) *Naval Postgraduate School (NPS).* Conducted at Monterey, CA over 18 months, this venue offers three curriculum choices: 699 - Special Operations and

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Irregular Warfare Curriculum, 698 - Joint Information Strategy and Political Warfare Curriculum, and 697 - Applied Design for Innovation. NPS focuses more on the graduate degree than it does on preparing ARSOF officers for future assignments on division and higher staffs. Officers attending this venue should be prepared to conduct considerable self-development on Army doctrine and MDMP to remain on par with their CGSOC peers. The application for NPS requires an endorsement by the first O-6 in the officer's chain of command. Graduates of this venue incur a 3:1 ADSO (IAW AR 350-100) for every day spent at NPS with an immediate 24-month AERS utilization IAW AR 621-1.

(iv) *Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP)*. AMSP is the largest and most well-known education program in the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) at Fort Leavenworth, KS for selected officers that have completed ILE. Completion of the program confers a Master of Arts in Military Operations degree focused on Theater Operations and the 6S SI. The program consists of one year of advanced classroom education followed by one year of operational education via Tier I utilization. Tier I utilization will be in a critical battle staff position within a division, corps, or equivalent headquarters, with priority going to committed, forward-deployed, contingency, and reinforcing units IAW AR 350-1 and AR 614-100. (Note: IAW USAJFKSWCS Policy, HRC will send an ETP to request non-KD complete officers who graduate from AMSP move directly into a KD position prior to the 12-month Tier 1 utilization tour). Following KD completion and Tier I utilization, AMSP officers will fulfill Tier II utilization via operational/strategic planning, joint, or doctrine writing positions IAW AR 614-100. Some officers have had difficulty getting their KD time and as such, this is recommended as an option upon completion of all KD assignments as opposed to before.

(3) *Lieutenant Colonel.*

(a) *Professional Military Education*. The primary institutional education mechanism for lieutenant colonels is the Senior Service College (SSC). Officers selected to command battalions must attend all Army Pre-Command Courses (PCCs) for selected command category. The Battalion Command Assessment (BCAP) has become a requirement for officers competing for battalion command opportunities. All lieutenant colonels should strive to complete JPME II. The professional development objective for this phase is to demonstrate excellence in tactical, operational, and strategic AOs, and the ability to lead, train, motivate, and care for Soldiers in both the staff and command environments.

(b) *Assignments.*

i. *KD assignments*. Battalion command or other Centralized Selection List (CSL) assignment in either the AC or RC.

ii. *Former Battalion Commander (FBC) assignments*. The following are considered assignments the best-qualified lieutenant colonels will hold after commanding a PO battalion or other CSL assignment:

(i) SWCS Assignments, minimum of 24 months.

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- (ii) Assistant Chief of Staff / G9.
- (iii) PO group or another group/brigade Deputy Commander.
- (iv) General officer-level personal staff positions.

Note: FBC positions are approved and slated per USASOC policy.

iii. *Broadening assignments.*

(i) HQDA, DoD, JCS, Army Service component command, major command, joint or combined headquarters staff officer, or interagency position.

(ii) Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves

(c) *Self-development goals. PO lieutenant colonels should expand their understanding of combined arms operations and joint operations before, during, and after LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW), focusing on brigade or group-level SOF elements and Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), as well as conventional divisions and corps. Lieutenant colonels are encouraged to continue their education in relevant topics such as strategy, policy, and international relations through graduate certificate programs, professional seminars, and research projects. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is encouraged.*

(4) *Colonel.*

(a) *Professional Military Education.* Completion of Senior Service College.

(b) *Assignments.*

i. *KD assignments.* Brigade/ PO Group command or other CSL assignment.

ii. *Broadening assignments.* The following are considered assignments colonels will hold after commanding a brigade or other CSL assignment:

- (i) Chief of Staff or Deputy Commanding officer at a general officer headquarters.
- (ii) Capability Manager, who serves in the position for a minimum of 24 months.
- (iii) USAJFKSWCS, PO Commandant (Nominative)
- (iv) Corp or equivalent primary staff officer.
- (v) Assistant Chief of Staff for one of the primary staff positions at the general officer command level.

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(vi) HQDA, DoD, JCS, joint or combined headquarters staff officer, or interagency positions.

(vii) Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves.

(c) *Self-development goals.* Colonels should develop a mastery of combined arms operations and joint operations before, during, and after LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW). Colonels are encouraged to continue their civilian education in relevant topics such as strategy, policy, and international relations through graduate certificate programs, professional seminars, research projects, and pursue a doctoral degree. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is highly encouraged.

d. Assignment preferences and precedence.

(1) *Preferences.* The Army assigns PO officers based on its needs, the regional alignment of the officer, and the desires of the individual officer. Worldwide assignments are available. The goal of PO officer development is to produce officers able to assimilate into staff and organizations and immediately integrate PO plans and influence principles into the deliberate planning process.

(2) *Precedence.* Assignment of officers to KD leadership positions has precedence over other assignments. PO officers should seek assignments in the following order at each grade plate; however, the assignment sequence is flexible:

- (a) Completion of required PME.
- (b) Command.
- (c) Other KD assignment.
- (d) Broadening assignment.

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37A – Active Component (AC)

Years of Service	4	10	17	22
Rank	CPT	MAJ	CSL Board LTC	CSL Board COL
Professional Military Education Requirements	ARSOF CCC POQC	ILE JPME I ARSOF Co CDR Course	JPME II	SSC
Self/Suggested Developmental Courses	Special Operations Military Deception Operations University (JSOU), Tactical Orientation Course (JIOOC), Army Operations (JSTO), Jumpmaster, Air Assault, Ranger, Sapper, Pathfinder	Course (SOFMILDEC), Special Warfare Touchstone Information Operations Planner Course (TIOPC), Joint MILDEC Course	one, Special Warfare Brighton, SOF MISO Program Design and Assessment (JMDC), Joint Targeting Course (JTC), Joint Special Technical anything else deemed important by	courses at the Joint Special Cosuer(MPDAC), Joint IO unit leadership
Typical Assignments	<p>Key Developmental (18-24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DET CDR (AC/RC) IWC PO O-3 assignment <p>Broadening**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HHC CDR (nom) SWCS Assignments(nom) SORB Assignments (nom) HRC Assignments (nom) GO personal staff (nom) 	<p>Key Developmental (~24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co CDR BN/BDE/GRP/TF XO BN/BDE/GRP/TF/ S3 IWC PO O-4 assignment Non-POG BDE PO planner <p>Broadening**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel Div Chief (Proponent) (nom) HRC PO FG assignment Officer (nom) SWCS Assignments (nom) SORB Assignment (nom) GO personal staff (nom) 	<p>Key Developmental (24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSL BN CDR RC CSL BN CDR <p>Former BN CDR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positions approved and slated per USASOC Policy PO Proponent Director GO personal staff positions <p>Broadening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HQDA, DOD, JCS, ASCC, MACOM, Joint/Combined HQ, Interagency staff 	<p>Key Developmental (24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSL GRP/BDE CDR <p>Broadening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS or DCO at GO HQ Capability Manager Corps primary staff officer ACOS for GO level primary staff positions PO Commandant HQDA, DOD, JCS, Joint/Combined HQ staff or interagency positions Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves
**Underlined means high-performing officer assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves All other assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves All other assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equivalent positions in the Army Reserves All other assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other assignments

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| <p>Advanced Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS) Training With Industry (TWI) Broadening Opportunity Program (BOP) Credentialing Assistance (CA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CGSC Master of Military Arts (MMAS) National Defense University (NDU)Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) (SAMS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate Certificate Programs Professional Seminars Research projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate Certificate Programs Professional Seminars Research projects |
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Figure 1. Active Duty PO Officer KD, Developmental, and Broadening Assignments

4.37A PO Officer – COMPO 2 (Army National Guard) and 3 (Army Reserves)

a. Branch transfer.

(1) *Overview.* The PO branch recruits officers from other Army branches. PO officers are expected to have served a successful initial tour as a small-unit leader as a company-grade officer in one of the other branches to gain a working knowledge of Army operations and tactics.

(2) Officers selected for branch transfer must:

(a) Complete Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC).

(b) Complete an initial tour in one of the Army's basic branches and have a minimum of 24- months federal commissioned service by application approval date.

(c) Possess a valid secret security clearance and eligible to obtain top secret/sensitive compartmented information (TS/SCI) clearance in accordance with AR 380–67.

(d) Possess a bachelor's degree.

(e) Meet medical standards per AR 40-501 or be granted a waiver by the Commanding General (CG), USAJFKSWCS.

(f) Complete USAR CCC Common Core, or an equivalent branch CCC.

(g) Complete the RC Psychological Operations Captains Career Course.

i. MEL-F / prior Captains Career Course complete officers require the AOC portion of the PO CCC (Phases 2 and 3).

ii. Non-MEL-F officers who have completed only the USAR CC Common Core DL will attend all phases of the PO CCC.

(3) *Waiver authority.* The PO Commandant is the final authority for the award of AOC, course prerequisites, as well as PO qualification and branch-transfer requirements. All requests for exceptions to policy should be routed through the PO Proponent and addressed to the PO Commandant through (AOJK–PO), Fort Liberty, NC 28310. Email the personnel division of the PO proponent at psyop.cmdt.personnel@socom.mil for questions.

b. Education and assignments. Upon award of the AOC, the officer serves in a key developmental (KD) assignment, followed by other developmental assignments described in the following paragraphs.

(1) *Captain.*

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(a) *Professional Military Education (PME)*. Completion of CCC (MEL-F) and AOC via a PO qualification course (POQC or POCCC PH3).

(b) *Assignments*.

i. *KD assignments*. Captains must successfully serve in the following positions for a minimum of 18 months and optimally for 24 months. These are KD positions for all PO captains. This duty equates to company, battery, or troop command in other branches. PO captains may be considered for broadening opportunities only after completing their KD assignment.

- (i) PO officer (PO Company) (AGR/TPU)
- (ii) Operations officer (AGR/TPU)
- (iii) HSC/HHC CDR (AGR/TPU)
- (iv) PO officer (FA BDE) (NG)
- (v) Active Component Detachment Commander

ii. *Broadening assignments*. High-performing officers should seek assignments outside of 2nd and 7th PSY-G to best represent the PO branch throughout the Army and broaden their individual development. The developmental assignments for high-performing, high-potential captains are:

- (i) PO officer at USACAPOC, PSY-G/PSY-B, Training BDE (AGR/TPU)
- (ii) Plans/Operations officer at USACAPOC, PSY-G, PSY-B, PSY-C, TIOG (TPU/NG)
- (iii) Training Company XO at a TNG BDE (AGR/TPU)
- (iv) Instructor / course manager at USAJFKSWCS (AGR/TPU)
- (v) PO officer at Operational, Strategic, institutional, inter-agency, and academic assignments.

(c) *Self-development goals*. In addition to professional development through operational assignments, PO captains will continue an intensive military self-development program. Their efforts will focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of combined arms operations in support of LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW) to include influence in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments. Emphasis must be placed on how to apply and integrate PO and influence TTPs with other units in support of DoD and DoS priorities. Captains must also develop an understanding of joint, inter-agency, and inter-organizational operations, as well as improve cultural expertise. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is encouraged.

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(d) *Suggested captains' development courses.* Recommended courses include (in no order): Jumpmaster, Ranger, Pathfinder, Special Operations Military Deception Course (SOFMILDEC), Special Warfare Touchstone, Special Warfare Brighton, SOF courses at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), Tactical Information Operations Planner Course (TIOPC), MISO Program Design and Assessment Course (MPDAC), Joint IO Orientation Course (JIOOC), Army IO Planners Course (AIOPC), Joint MILDEC Course (JMDC), Joint Targeting Course (JTC), Joint Fires and Effects Course (JOFEC), Joint Special Technical Operations (JSTO), and others as identified by your CoC.

(e) *Advanced Education.* PO captains are encouraged to start master's level education and/or certifications as part of their professional development. Captains should consider applying for advanced civil schooling (ACS), broadening opportunity programs (BOP), and training with industry (TWI) as in-service options; however, due to the time and utilization commitments, planning to compete and attend these should be done well in advance and discussed with the HRC Career Manager for possible promotion and intermediate level education (ILE) complications. As PO officers, preferred career fields for advanced degrees are in Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Data Science, Marketing, Advertising, International Relations, Defense Analysis, or Strategic Studies.

(2) *Major.*

(a) *Professional Military Education.* The developmental goal for majors is to complete CGSC or an ILE equivalent. Officers should complete CGSC/ILE but must complete ILE common core or 50% of the legacy CGSC to be educationally qualified for promotion to lieutenant colonel.

(b) *Assignments.*

i. *KD assignments.* Multiple positions exist to develop and prepare a PO major to lead at successively higher levels of responsibility; however, PO company command is preferred to ensure optimal competitiveness (only for USAR). PO majors must successfully serve a total of at least 18 months, optimally 24 months, in one or a combination of the following assignments:

- (i) PSY-C Commander (AGR/TPU)
- (ii) Battalion or Brigade Operations officer (AGR/TPU)
- (iii) Battalion Executive officer – PSY-B or TASS BN (AGR/TPU)
- (iv) Battalion or Brigade Plans officer (AGR/TPU)
- (v) PO officer – INF DIV, SF GRP, IO BN (NG)
- (vi) Equivalent positions in the Active Component

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ii. *Broadening assignments.* High-performing majors should seek opportunities to enhance their experience and assignments to meet the Army's mission requirements. The assignments below are designated for high-performing majors:

- (i) PO officer (PSY-B/PSY-C, MCPOD, SFAB) (AGR/TPU/NG)
- (ii) PO officer (GCC/USASOC) (AGR/TPU)
- (iii) Plans/Operations officer (USACAPOC/POB/1TB) (AGR/TPU)
- (iv) Cyber Assessment OCT (USAR TNG Div) (AGR/TPU)
- (v) CMF Manager (USAR TNG Div) (AGR/TPU)
- (vi) Instructor / course manager at USAJFKSWCS (AGR/TPU)
- (vii) Equivalent positions in the Active Component.

(c) *Self-development goals.* PO majors will expand their understanding of combined arms operations and joint operations before, during, and after LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW), as well as conventional brigades and divisions. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is encouraged.

(d) *Suggested majors' development courses.* Special operations forces courses at the Joint Special Operations University and NATO courses are encouraged in addition to any other courses listed under the captain's list.

i. *Joint Professional Military Education I.* Command and General Staff Officer's Course (CGSOC) is the primary joint professional military education (JPME) I venue for Army majors. CGSOC educates field grade officers through the resident course at Fort Leavenworth, KS, through satellite campuses, or through distance learning programs. Schools of Other Nations (Foreign ILE) and Sister Service ILE are reserved for the top five percent of resident selects across the Army and should be the preferred ILE venue for highly competitive PO officers. Senior majors should strive to complete JPMEII as soon as possible.

ii. *Master's Degree.* PO majors are highly encouraged to pursue their master's degree through the following programs.

(i) *Command and General Staff College (CGSC).* Conducted at Fort Leavenworth, KS, CGSC is the Army's premier ILE venue and the primary venue for most resident selects. Students receive a graduate level education firmly based in Army doctrine that will prepare them to succeed in command and/or assignments to division or corps staffs. CGSOC curriculum provides students with a Master of Operational Studies (MOS) degree, or students have the option of pursuing a thesis-based Master of Military Arts and Science (MMAS) degree.

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(ii) *Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP)*. AMSP is the largest and most well-known education program in the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) at Fort Leavenworth, KS for selected officers that have completed ILE. Completion of the program confers a Master of Arts in Military Operations degree focused on Theater Operations and the 6S SI. The program consists of one year of advanced classroom education followed by one year of operational education via Tier I utilization. Tier I utilization will be in a critical battle staff position within a division, corps, or equivalent headquarters, with priority going to committed, forward-deployed, contingency, and reinforcing units IAW AR 350-1 and AR 614-100. Following KD completion and Tier I utilization, AMSP officers have the potential to fill Tier II operational/strategic planning, joint, or doctrine writing positions IAW AR 614-100. Some officers have had difficulty getting their KD time and as such, this is recommended as an option upon completion of all KD assignments as opposed to before.

(3) *Lieutenant colonel.*

(a) *Professional Military Education*. The RC lieutenant colonel must complete 100% of the legacy CGSC or ILE common core to be considered educationally qualified for promotion to colonel. Qualified lieutenant colonels may apply for the U.S. Army War College or other Senior Service Colleges (resident or distance learning). The professional development objective for this phase is to demonstrate excellence in tactical, operational, and strategic AOs, and the ability to lead, train, motivate, and care for Soldiers in both the staff and command environments.

(b) *Assignments.*

i. *KD assignments.*

- (i) CSL BN CDR (POB, TASS BN)
- (ii) GRP/BDE Operations officer (AGR/TPU)
- (iii) GRP/BDE DCO / XO (POG, TASS) (AGR/TPU)
- (iv) Chief, PO (INF DIV) (NG)

ii. *Former Battalion Commander (FBC) assignments*. The following are considered assignments the best-qualified lieutenant colonels will hold after commanding a PO battalion or other CSL assignment:

- (i) Chief of Training, G-7 (USACAPOC) (AGR).
- (ii) Assistant Chief of Staff.
- (iii) Another Group/Brigade Deputy Commander.
- (iv) General officer-level personal staff positions (nominative).

Note: Former battalion commander positions are approved and slated per HRC/OCAR policy.

iii. *Broadening assignments.*

(i) Deputy, G-7 (USACAPOC) (AGR/TPU)

(ii) Chief IO Planner (OSD)(AGR/TPU)

(iii) PO officer (JS, HQDA, USARC, GCC/TSOC/USASOC USAR Element) (AGR/TPU)

(iv) Equivalent positions in the active component.

(v) HQDA, DoD, JCS, Army Service component command, major command, joint or combined headquarters staff officer, or interagency position.

(c) *Self-development goals.* PO lieutenant colonels should expand their understanding of combined arms operations and joint operations before, during, and after LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW), focusing on brigade or group-level SOF elements and Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), as well as conventional divisions and corps. Lieutenant colonels are encouraged to continue their education in relevant topics such as strategy, policy, and international relations through graduate certificate programs, professional seminars, and research projects. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is highly encouraged.

(4) *Colonel.*

(a) Professional Military Education. Completion of Senior Service College.

(b) Assignments.

i. *KD assignments.*

(vi) Brigade/ PSY-G command or other CSL assignment (TASS, 1TNG BDE) (AGR/TPU)

ii. *Broadening assignments.* The following are considered assignments that the best- qualified colonels will hold after commanding a brigade or other CSL assignment:

(i) Assistant Chief of Staff, G-7 (USACAPOC) (AGR/TPU)

(ii) TASS BDE CDR / Deputy PO Commandant (TPU)

(iii) USAJFKSWCS PO Commandant (Nominative)

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- (iv) Asst Dir, PO Policy (OSD) (*AGR/TPU*)
- (v) Director of USAR Element (USASOC) (*AGR/TPU*)
- (vi) Equivalent positions in the active component.

(vii) HQDA, DoD, JCS, Army Service component command, major command, joint or combined headquarters staff officer, or interagency position.

(c) *Self-development goals.* Colonels should develop a mastery of combined arms operations and joint operations before, during, and after LSCO and Irregular Warfare (IW). Colonels are encouraged to continue their civilian education in relevant topics such as strategy, policy, and international relations through graduate certificate programs, professional seminars, research projects, and pursue a doctoral degree. Writing articles on any of the above topics for publishing is highly encouraged.

c. *Assignment precedence.*

(1) *Precedence.* Assignment of officers to KD leadership positions have precedence over other assignments; however, the assignment sequence is flexible. Ideally, PO branch officers should complete the following assignments in order at each grade plate:

- (a) Completion of required PME.
- (b) Command.
- (c) Other KD assignment.
- (d) Broadening assignment.

d. *Duration of developmental officer life-cycle assignments.* Officers in the PO branch should ideally serve for a minimum of 18 months with a goal of 24 months in all assigned positions.

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37A – Reserve Component (RC) (Includes NG/COMPO 2)

Years of Service	4	10	17	22
Rank	CPT	MAJ	CSL Board LTC	CSL Board COL
Professional Military Education Requirements	CCC Completion (MEL-F) & AOC (POQC or POCCC PH3)	ILE (Minimum of ILE common Core to be educationally qualified for promotion to LTC) JPME I	100% ILE Complete JPME II	SSC
Self/Suggested Developmental Courses	Special Operations Military Deception Course (SOFMILDEC), Special Warfare Touchstone, Special Warfare Brighton, SOF courses at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), Tactical Information Operations Planner Course (TIOPC), MISO Program Design and Assessment Cosuer(MPDAC), Joint IO Orientation Course (JIOOC), Army IO Planners Course (AIOPC), Joint MILDEC Course (JMDC), Joint Targeting Course (JTC), Joint Special Technical Operations (JSTO), Jumpmaster, Air Assault, Ranger, Sapper, Pathfinder, Anything else deemed important by unit leadership			
Typical Assignments	<p>Key Developmental (18-24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PO officer (PSY-C) (AGR/TPU) Operations officer (AGR/TPU) HSC/HHCCDR (AGR/TPU) PO officer (FA BDE)(NG) AC DET CDR <p>Broadening**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>PO officer at USACAPOC, PSY-G/PSY-B, Training BDE (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>Plans/Operations officer at USACAPOC, PSY-G, PSY-B, PSY-C, TIOG (TPU/NG)Senior PO Observer – JRTC (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>Training Co XO at a TNG BDE (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>Instructor / Course manager at USAJFKSWCS (AGR/TPU)</u> Equivalent positions in the AC All other assignments <p>**Underlined means high-performing officer assignments</p>	<p>Key Developmental (~24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSY-C CDR (AGR/TPU) BN/BDE/GRP S3 (AGR/TPU) BN/BDE/GRP S5 (AGR/TPU) BN/BDE/GRP XO (AGR/TPU) PO Officer - INF DIV, SF GRP, IO BN (NG) Equivalent positions in the Active Component <p>Broadening**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>PO Officer (PSY-B/PSY-C, MCPOD, SFAB) (AGR/TPU/NG)</u> <u>PO officer at GCC/USASOC (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>Plans / Operations officer at USACAPOC, PSY-B, 1st TNG BDE (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>Cyber Assessment OCT (USAR TNG Div) (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>CMF Manager (USAR TNG Div) (AGR/TPU)</u> <u>Instructor / Course manager at USAJFKSWCS (AGR/TPU)</u> Equivalent positions in the AC All other assignments 	<p>Key Developmental (24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSL BN CDR GRP/BDE S3 (AGR/TPU) GRP/BDE DCO/XO (AGR/TPU) Chief, PO (INF DIV)(NG) <p>Broadening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy, G-7 at USACAPOC (AGR/TPU) Chief IO Planner at OSD (AGR/TPU) PO officer: JS, HQDA, USARC, GCC, TSOC/GCC/USASOCUSAR Element (AGR/TPU) Equivalent positions in the AC All other assignments 	<p>Key Developmental (24mo):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRP/BDE CDR (AGR/TPU) <p>Broadening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TASS BDE CDR/Deputy PO CMDT (TPU) PO CMDT (AGR) Dir PO Policy at OSD (AGR) ACOS, G-7 at USACAPOC (AGR/TPU) Director USAR Element at USASOC (AGR/TPU) Equivalent positions in the AC All other assignments
Advanced Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS) Training With Industry (TWI) Broadening Opportunity Program (BOP) Credentialing Assistance (CA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CGSC Master of Military Arts (MMAS) Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) Graduate Certificate Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate Certificate Programs Professional Seminars Research projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate Certificate Programs Professional Seminars Research projects

Figure 2. Army Reserve / Army National Guard PO Officer KD, Developmental, and Broadening Assignments