



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
THE MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY  
2000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

August 9, 2021

Goats, good day!

The 2020 CPO Initiation Season was a challenge, as we worked around a once-in-a-century pandemic, the winter weather, and a much needed holiday leave/stand-down period. In the end it only solidified the resolve, determination, and flexibility of our CPO Mess to succeed in the face of adversity and challenge. While 2021 will not be back to the “normal season” we’ve seen in prior years, the mission of preparing our recently selected Chief Petty Officers to enter the Mess remains unchanged. COVID-19 is not over, and we must remain vigilant in the fight to protect our Sailors and maintain mission readiness within our units – it is imperative that we adhere to all relevant risk mitigation procedures and all applicable guidance during the entire Season.

Each year our selection boards recommend the best and fully qualified for advancement to Chief Petty Officer. Then, in only a few short weeks, we provide meaningful training and appropriate events to prepare them to serve within our CPO Mess. All of the training must directly contribute to enhancing our capability as a CPO Mess, and every event must increase confidence, trust and teamwork. The readiness of selectees to enter the CPO Mess is a direct reflection on the tone we set and the quality of the mentoring during the season.

This year we expect the Reserve E-7 Board results to be released on 24 August 2021, and the Active E-7 Board results to be released on 05 October, 2021. The CPO Initiation Season begins upon release of the results and culminates with Final Night on 18 November and pinning ceremonies on 19 November, 2021. As we have always allowed, Commanding Officers and Command Senior Enlisted Leaders can communicate through their ISIC to their Fleet Master Chief, or the OPNAV CMC for direct report commands, to coordinate moving that date if operational commitments preclude the execution of the crucible event and/or pinning on the designated days.

Command Senior Enlisted Leaders will ensure that all selectees are guided through the Teaching to the Creed syllabus, as these sessions form the backbone of our training effort. Each of our selectees must understand what is expected of them as a Chief Petty Officer, and leveraging our Creed as the primary focus will accomplish this goal. Additionally, a specific Culture of Excellence and Warrior Toughness training session will be conducted; training materials and instructions will be provided. Other training topics that have historically been included as “additional items” should be carefully weighed to determine the actual value they provide. Laying the Keel (May 2019) remains in effect and provides guidelines and a framework for a successful Initiation. The legacy CPO Selectee Leadership Course (CPO Indoctrination) is officially “sun-downed,” and a new CPO Leader Development Course will be launched next year as part of the Enlisted Leader Development continuum.

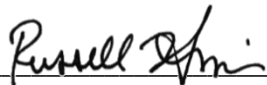
The focus of our season is “preparing” our newest Chiefs to enter the Mess, not screening them out. The Chief of Naval Personnel has already determined they are authorized to wear the uniform of an E-7; it is the process of enculturation and acceptance as a Chief Petty Officer that makes what we do so incredibly valuable. The Command Senior Enlisted Leader and the CPO Mess are responsible and accountable for the quality of execution, and the readiness of each selectee to perform at the level of a Chief Petty Officer on day one. The strength of our Mess is teamwork and our commitment to a common vision, therefore we must focus on transitioning them into their new role by leveraging their existing leadership attributes. They will not be perfect, but they will continue to learn, and we will make our Navy better together.

The continued viability of our Initiation relies on our ability to professionally execute this process. Command Senior Enlisted Leaders will thoroughly brief their respective Commanding Officer to ensure a clear

vision and proper alignment exists with unit leadership. As we continue to navigate another challenging year, I look forward to watching our Chief's Mess step forward and execute yet another safe and successful Season.

Navy Chief, Navy Pride – HOOYAH!

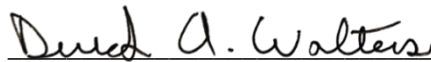
Very respectfully,



MCPON Russell Smith



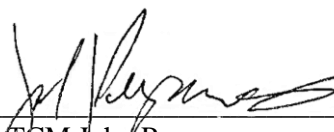
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FLTCM John Perryman  
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