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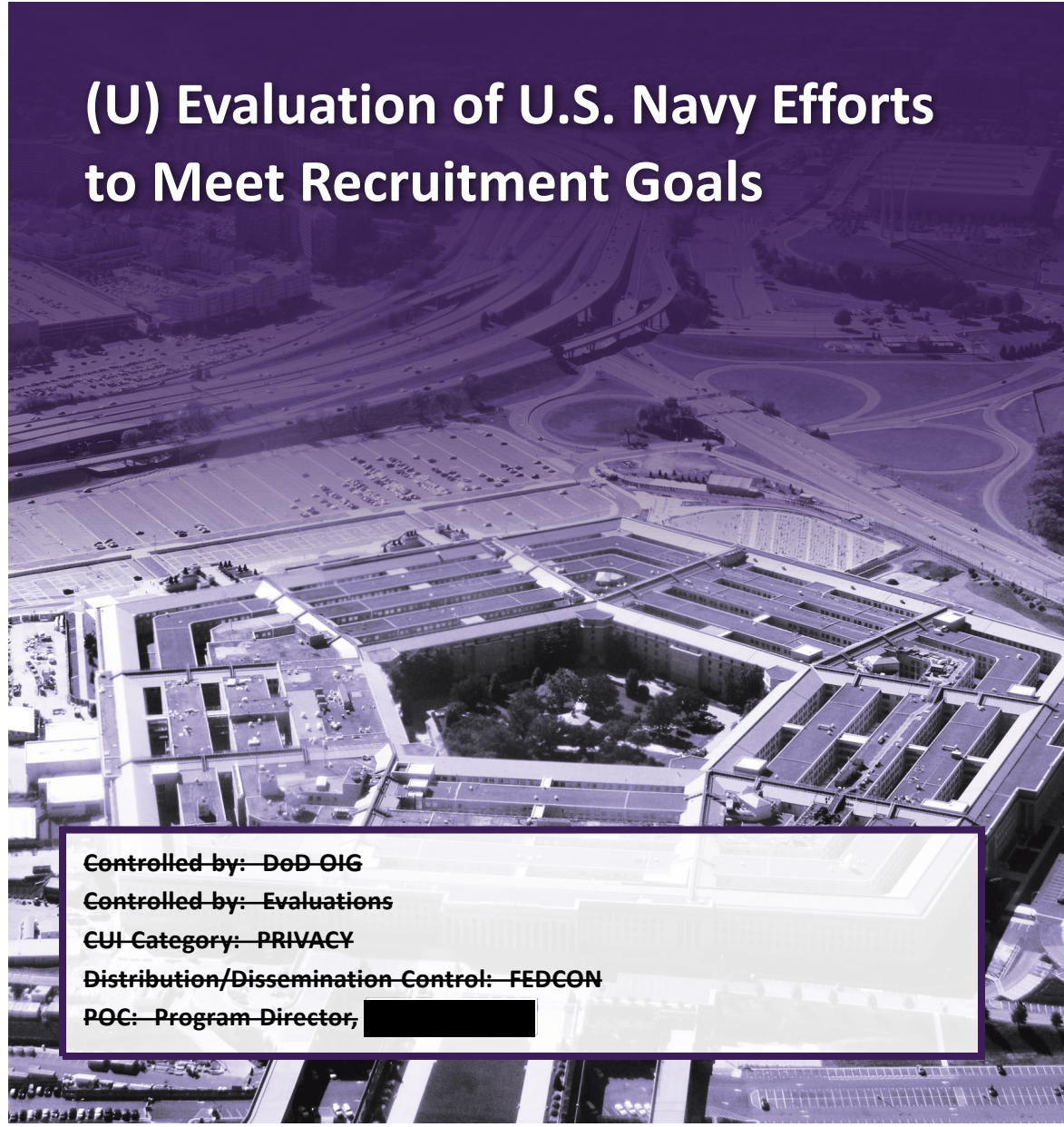
INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense

JUNE 27, 2025



(U) Evaluation of U.S. Navy Efforts to Meet Recruitment Goals



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(U) Results in Brief

(U) Evaluation of the U.S. Navy Recruiting Efforts to Meet Recruitment Goals

June 27, 2025

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of U.S. Navy initiatives and incentives to address recruitment goals.

(U) Background

(U) The Navy's recruiting goals aim to ensure that the Navy has enough well-qualified personnel to fulfill its mission requirements, including maintaining enough Sailors at sea and in support roles. According to the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC), the Navy missed its recruiting goal in FY 2023. Specifically, the Navy missed the active duty enlisted goal by 7,464, the reserve enlisted goal by 2,012, the active duty officer goal by 452, and the reserve officer goal by 773. Although the Navy did not meet its recruitment goals, the CNRC stated that the Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) is continuously adapting its processes to reduce another shortfall in fulfilling mission requirements.

(U) Finding

(U) Navy recruitment initiatives and incentives were effective in meeting the Navy's recruitment goals in FY 2022 and FY 2024 by increasing the eligible applicant pool. According to NRC officials, to increase the applicant pool, the NRC updated its recruitment policies and expanded the population of qualified applicants with initiatives such as accepting lower Armed Forces Qualification Test scores, raising the maximum enlistment age to 41, and allowing

(U) Finding (cont'd)

(U) more non-medical waivers. In addition, the NRC changed its operations, communications, and medical waiver processes during FY 2024, which helped the Navy exceed its contractual recruitment goal of 40,600 enlisted recruits. Specifically, the NRC introduced daily operations briefings to adopt a more data-driven approach, increased personnel to address a backlog in medical waiver applications, and refined the medical waiver process.

(U) However, the NRC did not document the refinements to the medical waiver and operational recruitment processes and procedures.

(U) According to NRC officials, they did not document changes to the medical waiver and operational recruitment process and procedures because personnel focused on implementing those changes and lacked the time to develop and publish guidance documenting the changes.

(U) Without documented guidance, the NRC does not have assurance that it can consistently meet future recruitment goals. Documented guidance will ensure that updates to roles, responsibilities, and procedures are established and will maintain continuity as personnel rotate out of the NRC. Personnel transitions increase the importance of creating consistent records to maintain continuity in NRC recruiting efforts. Furthermore, until the NRC updates these procedures, it will lack controls over program operations and will be unable to provide reasonable assurance that the program will meet its objective.

(U) Recommendations

(U) We recommend that the Commander, CNRC, develop written guidance to document changes made to the medical waiver and operational recruitment processes.

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(U) Results in Brief

(U) Evaluation of the U.S. Navy Recruiting Efforts to Meet Recruitment Goals

(U) Management Comments and Actions Taken

(U) During the evaluation, the NRC took actions to revise guidance to improve medical waiver processing. The NRC published COMNAVCRUITINST 5400.2J on June 12, 2025, the new instruction incorporated the additional documentation for medical waiver and operational recruitment processes. The actions satisfy the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is closed. Please see the Recommendations Table on the next page for the status of recommendations.

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(U) Recommendations Table

(U) Management	Recommendations Unresolved	Recommendations Resolved	Recommendations Closed
Commander, Navy Recruiting Command	None	None	1 (U)

(U) Note: The following categories are used to describe agency management's comments to individual recommendations.

- **(U) Unresolved** – Management has not agreed to implement the recommendation or has not proposed actions that will address the recommendation.
- **(U) Resolved** – Management agreed to implement the recommendation or has proposed actions that will address the underlying finding that generated the recommendation.
- **(U) Closed** – The DoD OIG verified that the agreed upon corrective actions were implemented.

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OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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June 27, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS)
COMMANDER, NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
AUDITOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

SUBJECT: (U) Evaluation of U.S. Navy Efforts to Meet Recruitment Goals
(Report No. DODIG-2025-120)

(U) This final report provides the results of the DoD Office of Inspector General's evaluation. We previously provided copies of a discussion draft version of the report and requested comments on the recommendation. We considered management's informal comments when preparing the final report.

(U) This report contains one recommendation that is considered resolved and closed. During the evaluation, the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, provided evidence of the actions the command took to address the recommendation. We verified that these actions met the intent of the recommendation. Therefore, the recommendation is closed and we are issuing the report in final form.

(U) We appreciated the cooperation and assistance provided during this evaluation. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED]

Bryan Clark

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(U) Introduction

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this evaluation was to assess the effectiveness of U.S. Navy initiatives and incentives to address recruitment goals.

(U) Background

(U) The Navy's recruiting goals aim to ensure that the Navy has enough well-qualified personnel to fulfill its mission requirements, including maintaining a sufficient number of Sailors at sea and in support roles. According to a December 2023 press release, the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC) stated that the Navy missed its recruiting goals in FY 2023. Specifically, the Navy missed the active duty enlisted Sailor goal by 7,464, reserve enlisted goal by 2,012, active duty officer goal by 452, and reserve officer goal by 773. Although the Navy did not meet its recruitment goals, the CNRC further stated that the Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) continuously adapted its processes to reduce a shortfall in FY 2023. The CNRC also stated that as they began FY 2024, they again faced a challenging environment.

(U) Navy Recruiting Goals for FY 2024

(U) The CNRC reported that the Navy increased its FY 2024 recruiting goals after the FY 2023 shortfall. These goals included 40,600 active duty enlisted, 2,807 active duty officers, 7,619 reserve enlisted, and 1,785 reserve officers. Additionally, the CNRC testified to the Senate Armed Services Committee in December 2023 that the Navy was examining its processes to improve efficiency, add recruiters, and expand the pool of qualified and interested candidates.

(U) Laws, Policies, and Guidance Pertaining to Recruiting Initiatives and Incentives

(U) Section 520, title 10, United States Code (10 U.S.C. § 520), 10 U.S.C. § 505, and 37 U.S.C. § 331, provide recruiting initiatives and incentives. The Navy also has policies and guidance that implement or further refine the authorizations in the law.

(U) Sections 520 and 505, Title 10, United States Code

(U) Section 520, title 10, United States Code, as amended, establishes authority for the Services to enlist potential candidates outside the normal parameters, such as Category Four (CAT IV) applicants (those who score between the 10th to 31st percentile on the Armed Forces Qualification Test [AFQT]) and non-high school

(U) graduates, and 10 U.S.C. § 505, increases the maximum enlistment age from 39 to 42.¹ Under 10 U.S.C. § 520, CAT IV applicants may constitute up to 4 percent of a Service's total number of recruits. Furthermore, the Secretary of the Military Department may increase the CAT IV portion to up to 20 percent with approval from the Secretary of Defense. Section 520, title 10, U.S.C. provides authority for applicants without a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma to enlist provided they score at least 31 on the AFQT. As amended in 2023, 10 U.S.C. § 505, authorizes Services to enlist non-prior service applicants no more than 42 years of age, provided they are qualified and able-bodied persons.

(U) Section 331, Title 37, United States Code

(U) Section 331, title 37, U.S.C. authorizes the Secretaries of the Military Departments to pay recruits a bonus of up to \$75,000 for a minimum 2-year service obligation in a designated career field.

(U) National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2024

(U) In addition, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2024 outlines the following changes to the accession and recruitment standards.²

- (U) Increased access to potential recruits at secondary schools.
- (U) Amended 10 U.S.C. § 520 standards for enlistment and induction of CAT IV recruits whose AFQT score is below a 32nd percentile.
- (U) Increased access to potential recruits at institutions of higher education.
- (U) Increased accession bonus for nurse officer candidates.
- (U) Improved medical standards for accession to certain Armed Forces.
- (U) Instructed use of the Future Service member preparatory course.

(U) Navy Recruiting Manual–Enlisted

(U) Commander, Navy Recruiting Command Instruction (COMNAVCRUITCOMINST) 1130.8P, "Navy Recruiting Manual–Enlisted," establishes recruitment eligibility, contracting potential of applicants, recruiting practices, and recruiting education requirements.³ The instruction applies to the NRC and all Navy recruiting activities, which include Navy Recruiting Regions, Navy Talent and Acquisition Groups, or similar units tasked with completing the recruiting mission for the Navy.

¹ (U) Although Section 505, Title 10, U.S.C., authorizes Services to enlist persons no more than 42 years of age, the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command Instruction 1130.8N sets the Navy's maximum enlistment age to 41.

² (U) Accession refers to the act of entering service or an enlistee who has shipped to a recruit training command and counts towards the shipping accession goal.

³ (U) COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8P, "Navy Recruiting Manual–Enlisted," November 12, 2024.

(U) Navy Recruiting Command Decision Guidance Memorandums

(U) According to the NRC Recruiting Operations Center Director, Decision Guidance Memorandums (DGMs) are a way for the CNRC to provide updated guidance and policy changes throughout the NRC and subordinate commands. The following list contains examples.

- (U) DGM 01 outlines the CNRC initiatives to reflect the NRC FY 24 strategy.
- (U) DGM 02 changes policy for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) use for the nuclear field career option.
- (U) DGM 03 flattens the NRC to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Navy recruiting.
- (U) DGM 07 suspends applicants with AFQT scores of 10-15 because of Future Sailor Preparatory Course strain.
- (U) DGM 14, following on DGM 07, suspends applicants with AFQT scores of less than 21.
- (U) DGMs 19–21 and 25 reorganize the Navy recruiting organization.
- (U) DGM 29 provides an exception to policy for retesting Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) for CAT IV scores of 21 to 30.⁴

(U) Roles and Responsibilities of Navy Recruiting Organizations

(U) The following Department of the Navy organizations play key roles in planning and overseeing Navy recruiting efforts.

(U) Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Manpower, Personnel, Training, and Education

(U) The Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Manpower, Personnel, Training, and Recruiting (DCNO N1) serves concurrently as the Chief of Naval Personnel and is responsible for planning and programming all manpower, personnel, training, and education resources for the Navy. DCNO N1 leads more than 26,000 personnel involved in recruiting, talent management, training, and development of more

⁴ (U) DGM #N00-01, "Navy Recruiting Command (NAVCUITCOM) FY24 Strategy," April 1, 2024.

(U) DGM #N00-02, "Nuclear Field THC Use and POSDAT Guidance," April 16, 2024.

(U) DGM #N00-03, "Flattening the Organization," April 22, 2024.

(U) DGM #N00-07, "Suspension of AFQT Ten to Fifteen Contracting," May 10, 2024.

(U) DGM #N00-19, "Navy Recruiting Command Headquarters Internal Function Realignment," September 5, 2024.

(U) DGM #N00-21, "Realign National Chief Recruiter (NCR) Duties and Responsibilities to Commander Navy Recruiting Command," September 18, 2024.

(U) DGM #N00-25, "Navy Talent Acquisition Group Command and Control (C2)," November 4, 2024.

(U) than 400,000 Navy personnel. DCNO N1 responsibilities include overseeing the Navy Recruiting Command, Navy Personnel Command, and Naval Education and Training Command.

(U) Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

(U) The Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN[M&RA]) supervises the Navy's staffing and Reserve Component affairs. The ASN(M&RA) is responsible for overseeing and directing Navy policies on the accession, recruitment, promotion, transition, development, compensation, and retention of active and Reserve Component personnel.

(U) Navy Recruiting Command

(U) The NRC's mission is to recruit the highest caliber Sailors to meet the needs of the Fleet. Two of the NRC's main objectives are to "increase the quality of the total force" and to "maintain a healthy pool of young Sailors in the Delayed Entry Program (DEP)." The NRC covers the United States with 26 Navy Talent and Acquisition Groups; the Navy Recruiting Reserve Command; and the Navy Recruiting Orientation Unit recruiting school. The NRC consists of 6,056 active and reserve military, civilian, and contract employees. Of those, more than 5,297 active duty and reserve officer and enlisted Sailors staff 850 recruiting stations and centers throughout the United States and overseas.

(U) Finding

(U) Recruitment Efforts Helped the Navy Exceed Its Targets in FY 2022 and FY 2024, but Formalized Processes Are Needed to Meet Future Goals

(U) Navy recruitment initiatives and incentives were effective in meeting the Navy's recruitment goals in FY 2022 and FY 2024 by increasing the eligible applicant pool. According to NRC officials, to increase the applicant pool, the NRC increased its emphasis on updating recruitment policies. Specifically, the NRC implemented initiatives to:

- (U) accept CAT IV AFQT scores;
- (U) raise the maximum enlistment age from 39 to 41; and
- (U) grant certain non-medical waivers, such as number of dependents.

(U) In addition, the NRC changed its operations, communications, and medical waiver process during FY 2024, which helped the Navy exceed its contractual recruitment goal of 40,600 by contracting 40,978 enlisted recruits. For example, the NRC introduced daily operations briefings to adopt a more data-driven approach, increased personnel to address a medical waiver backlog, and refined the medical waiver process.

(U) However, the NRC did not formalize the medical waiver and operational recruitment processes and procedures that might help the Navy continue to meet future recruitment goals. According to NRC officials, they did not document changes to the medical waivers and operation recruitment process procedures because personnel focused on implementing those changes and lacked the time to develop and publish guidance that captured the changes.

(U) Without documented guidance, the NRC does not have assurance that it can consistently meet future recruitment goals. Documented guidance for the NRC will capture and sustain successful enhancements to their processes. It will also ensure updates to roles, responsibilities, and procedures are established and will maintain continuity as personnel rotate out of the NRC. Personnel rotating in and out of the NRC increases the importance of creating consistent procedures to maintain continuity throughout NRC recruiting efforts.

(U) Navy Recruitment Initiatives and Incentives Increased the Eligible Applicant Pool

(U) Navy recruitment initiatives and incentives were effective in helping the Navy meet its recruitment goals in FY2022 and FY 2024 by increasing the eligible applicant pool. According to NRC officials, to increase the applicant pool, the NRC increased its emphasis on updating recruitment policies. Specifically, the NRC implemented initiatives to:

- (U) accept CAT IV AFQT scores;
- (U) raise the maximum enlistment age from 39-41; and
- (U) grant certain non-medical waivers, such as number of dependents.⁵

(U) For example, from FY 2022 to FY 2024, the Navy increased the eligible applicant pool for [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

(U) In addition, the NRC changed its operations, communications, and medical waiver process during FY 2024, which helped the Navy exceed its contractual recruitment goal of 40,600 active duty enlisted recruits. For example, the CNRC established a daily operations brief and incorporated DGMs to communicate changes. The CNRC also changed the medical waiver process, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] In addition, CNRC changes to the non-medical waiver process, based on factors such as number of dependents, conduct, and drug use, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

(U) The Navy Recruiting Command Changed Recruiting Processes in FY 2024

(U) The NRC also changed its recruiting processes in FY 2024, which included daily operations meetings to adopt a more data-driven approach, increased personnel to address a medical waiver backlog, and a refined medical waiver process.

⁵ (U) COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8Q, "Navy Recruiting Manual Enlisted," January 30, 2025, defines a dependent as a spouse by marriage, any natural child, or child adopted by the applicant, stepchildren of the applicant or the applicant's spouse, and any parent or other person who can be claimed as a dependent on the applicant's income tax return.

⁶ (U) COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1130.8Q defines conduct as actions which degrade the public trust or brings discredit to the member or the Navy. It states drug and alcohol abusers, and those individuals whose pre-service abuse of drugs or alcohol indicates a proclivity to continue abuse in the service.

(U) Recruiting Operations Center

(U) The NRC changed operations by establishing the Recruiting Operations Center in FY 2024 to provide the Commander with a daily operations brief. We observed a daily operations brief on January 28, 2025, and noted that the brief allows the CNRC and staff to monitor the recruitment efforts to ensure they can make real-time decisions as often as needed and monitor the effectiveness of those decisions.

(U) Decision Guidance Memorandums

(U) According to NRC officials, the CNRC implemented DGMs to communicate policy changes and other guidance throughout the NRC. DGMs are designed to eliminate unnecessary paperwork and roadblocks so recruiters can use their time to recruit. DGMs are also a way that the CNRC can issue incentives to recruiters, such as the CNRC giving an award for outstanding contributions towards new contracts, prior service, officer recruiting, and nuclear field attainments.

(U) Medical Waivers Backlog and Processing Changes

(U) In FY 2024, the CNRC brought in 37 medical personnel within NRC, including six medical senior reviewers, to address a backlog of approximately 8,600 medical waivers pending decision. Overall, the NRC Medical Waivers Division approved 10,917 medical waivers, resulting in 5,845 recruits, in May and June during two 3-day operations called “battle stations.” The battle stations eliminated the backlog of medical waiver cases and led to an increase in staffing for the Medical Waivers Division to 26 personnel, including 13 medical senior reviewers. As a result, the Medical Waivers Division can now process 200 to 400 waiver cases daily, with an average decision-making time of 1 day.

(U) Several factors contributed to the backlog of medical waivers that created the need to shorten the time frame for processing waivers. Before the NRC implemented battle stations, the Medical Waivers Division consisted of 10 personnel with 5 medical senior reviews, according to an NRC official. During our interview with Medical Waivers Division personnel, an NRC official told us that the medical waiver process took an average of 40 days for an applicant to receive a decision. At most, the Medical Waivers Division operated at a pace of 50 medical waiver cases per day. However, the NRC official further stated that the reviewers historically developed a practice of requesting more information, which led to a “no-decision” on waiver applications. The NRC official told us that those actions caused a failure rate of 4,000 to 5,000 applicants per year for common medical conditions and a larger rate for more serious symptoms.

(U) The NRC Needs to Formalize the Medical Waiver and Operational Recruitment Processes and Procedures

(U) According to NRC officials, they did not document changes to the medical waiver and operational recruitment processes and procedures implemented in FY 2024 because personnel focused on implementing those changes and lacked the time to develop and publish guidance capturing the changes. However, Chapter 3 of the Navy Recruiting Command Organization Manual states that one of the responsibilities of the Director of Operations is to ensure the existence and maintenance of standards and metrics needed to effectively and efficiently execute the assigned mission. Furthermore, the Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government state that documentation is a necessary part of an effective internal control system and is required for the effective design, implementation, and operating effectiveness of that system.⁷

(U) Procedures to Process Medical Waivers Were Not Documented

(U) The NRC did not document its new procedures to process medical waivers. During our March 19, 2025 interview with Medical Waivers Division officials, we received an update on the new review process for medical waivers and the NRC official explained the new flow chart for the waiver process. When asked if the new waiver process was documented in a standard operating procedure or instruction, the NRC official told us that the refined medical waiver process had not been documented because the Medical Waivers Division was still working on the process. However, the NRC official told us that the Medical Waivers Division plans to start the documentation process within 2 months. Effective documentation will assist in management's internal control activities and allow the NRC leadership to effectively monitor and adjust as necessary through updates.

(U) Operational Recruitment Processes Were Not Documented

(U) The NRC did not document its operational recruitment processes. An NRC official confirmed processes for operations were not documented during an interview on March 31, 2025. However, the NRC official stated that the NRC's operational process was evolving and the NRC plans to provide documentation capturing its processes. Documentation will provide current and future CNRC a means to retain organizational knowledge and mitigate the risk of having that knowledge limited to a few personnel, as well as a means to communicate that knowledge as needed to external parties.

⁷ (U) GAO-14-704G, "Government Accountability Office Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government," September 2014.

(U) Without Documenting Procedures Implemented in FY 2024, the NRC May Not Replicate Its Success in Meeting Recruiting Goals

(U) Without documented guidance, the NRC does not have assurance that it can consistently meet future recruitment goals. Documented guidance for the NRC will ensure that updates to roles, responsibilities, and procedures are established and will maintain continuity as personnel rotate out of the NRC. Personnel transitions increase the importance of creating consistent records to maintain continuity throughout NRC recruiting efforts. Furthermore, until the NRC updates these procedures, they will lack controls over program operations and will be unable to provide reasonable assurances that the program will meet its objective.

(U) Management Comments and Actions Taken

(U) Recommendation 1

(U) We recommend that the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, develop written guidance to document changes made to the medical waiver and operational recruitment processes.

(U) Management Actions Taken

(U) During our evaluation, on April 24, 2025, the CNRC provided informal comments describing that the NRC initiated formal revisions to applicable instructions and standard operating procedures that will improve medical waiver processing, daily operations morning brief, and reporting and analytics. The NRC provided an updated COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 5400.2J on June 12, 2025, which addressed those specific fields.

(U) Our Response

(U) The actions taken by the NRC addressed the specifics of the recommendation. The NRC provided us their updated COMNAVCRUITINST 5400.2J on June 12, 2025, that incorporated the additional documentation for medical waiver and operational recruitment processes. Therefore, the recommendation is closed.

(U) Appendix

(U) Scope and Methodology

(U) We conducted this evaluation from October 2024 through April 2025 in accordance with the “Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation,” published in December 2020 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Those standards require that we adequately plan the evaluation to ensure that objectives are met and that we perform the evaluation to obtain sufficient, competent, and relevant evidence to support the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. We believe that the evidence obtained was sufficient, competent, and relevant to lead a reasonable person to sustain the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

(U) We identified and reviewed the following criteria for this evaluation to gain an understanding of policies and guidance related to Navy recruiting.

- (U) DoD Instruction 1304.24, “Use of Directory Information on Secondary School Students for Military Recruiting Purposes”
- (U) DoD Directive 5160.58E, “Recruiting Facilities”
- (U) NRC Instruction 1130.8M, “Navy Recruiting Manual Enlisted”
- (U) NRC Instruction 1130.8N, “Navy Recruiting Manual Enlisted”
- (U) Public Law 118-31, “National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2024”

(U) During the evaluation, we obtained and analyzed the following supporting documentation.

- (U) Decision Guidance Memorandums
 - (U) DGM 01, outlining the initiatives the CNRC implemented to reflect the NRC FY 24 strategy
 - (U) DGM 02, changing policy for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) use for the nuclear field career option
 - (U) DGM 03, flattening the organization to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Navy recruiting
 - (U) DGM 04, signing requirements for applicants enlisting or commissioning in the Navy or Naval Reserve
 - (U) DGM 05, providing monthly required shipping policy
 - (U) DGM 06, suspending the Warrior Challenge Draft
 - (U) DGM 07, suspending applicants with AFQT scores of 10-15 due to Future Sailor Preparatory Course strain
 - (U) DGM 08, updating the NRC FY 2024 Strategy 7-day initiatives

- (U) DGM 09, updating delayed entry nuclear field program policy
- (U) DGM 10, retesting requirements for Navy advanced placement test
- (U) DGM 11, suspending applicants with AFQT scores of 10-15 (update)
- (U) DGM 12, delineating exception to policy for Gold Wreath Award
- (U) DGM 13, updating policy for delayed entry medical for the warrior challenge program
- (U) DGM 14, following on DGM 07, suspending applicants with AFQT scores less than 21
- (U) DGM 15, increasing contracting rates through warrior challenge honor-grad outreach support program
- (U) DGM 16, incentivizing Warrior Challenge recruiting
- (U) DGM 17, holding harmless agreement
- (U) DGM 18, discontinuing computerized special operations resilience testing
- (U) DGM 19, realigning the NRC Headquarters internal functions
- (U) DGM 20, realigning NRC and NRC Region functions
- (U) DGM 21, realigning National Chief Recruiter duties and responsibilities
- (U) DGM 22, incentivizing FY 2025 overproduction
- (U) DGM 23, delineating exception to policy for Gold Wreath Award
- (U) DGM 24, promulgating “Bell Check” criteria
- (U) DGM 25, delineating Navy Talent Acquisition Group Command and Control
- (U) DGM 26, outlining 60-day intermediate stop at ultimate duty station
- (U) DGM 27, incentivizing Medical Corps direct accession/direct commission officer production
- (U) DGM 28, establishing NRC training function
- (U) DGM 29, retesting Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) for CAT IV scores of 21 to 20
- (U) DGM 30, processing of applicants identifying as transgender
- (U) Navy Enlisted Recruitment Manual for FY 2022, FY 2024, and FY 2025
- (U) Personalized Recruiting for Immediate and Delayed Enlistment (PRIDE) Modernization II (MOD II) Reports
- (U) Recruiting Process documents
- (U) Medical Waiver Process flowcharts

(U) To determine roles, responsibilities, procedures, and efforts relating to Navy recruiting, we interviewed the following officials.

- (U) Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (DCNO/N1) and the Director, Military Personnel Plans and Policy (N13)
- (U) Commander, Navy Recruiting Command
- (U) Navy Recruiting Command Outreach Deputy Director
- (U) Director of Policy and Waivers Division (N35)
- (U) Lead Analyst for Navy Recruiting Command, Strategic Plans Research and Analysis (N36)
- (U) Navy Recruiting Command, National Enlisted Programs Officer
- (U) Navy Recruiting Command, Director of Operations (N3)

(U) We obtained report data from the PRIDE MOD II system to identify the successes or failures of recruitment initiatives and incentives used in FY 2024 in meeting annual recruitment goals. We focused on active duty enlisted recruits only. From FY 2022 to FY 2024, we compared the number of enlisted recruits using each recruitment initiative and incentive, such as Category IV Armed Forces Qualification Test scores, maximum enlistment age, enlistment bonuses, and medical and non-medical waivers, to determine whether there was an increase of eligible applicants.

(U) Use of Computer-Processed Data

(U) We did not use computer-processed data to perform this evaluation.

(U) Prior Coverage

(U) During the last 5 years, the DoD OIG and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued four reports discussing Navy recruitment.

(U) DoD OIG

(U) DoDIG-2023-103, "Audit of the Military Service Recruiting Organizations' Efforts to Screen Applicants for Extremist and Criminal Gang Behavior," August 3, 2023

(U) The audit found that Military Service recruiting organizations did not fully comply with DoD and Military Service policies and procedures for screening applicants for extremist and criminal gang behavior. Specifically, the audit found that recruiters did not: (1) annotate that 41 percent of applicants were asked and responded to initial questions about extremist or criminal gang affiliation; (2) administer screening questionnaires or forms for 40 percent of applicants; (3) implement tattoo and body modification review procedures

(U) for 9 percent of applicants; (4) provide evidence of fingerprint results for 13 (9 percent) of 142 applicants; or (5) provide evidence that a background investigation was initiated for 1 percent of applicants.

(U) The audit recommended that the Military Service recruiting organizations take action to ensure compliance with screening policies and procedures. Specifically, the audit made six recommendations to improve documentation, enhance applicant screening procedures, and verify implementation of background investigations.

(U) Report No. DoDIG-2023-072, “Review of the Military Services’ Policies and Procedures on the Medical Waiver Process for Recruiting,” May 17, 2023

(U) The review found that the Military Services did not consistently apply the medical waiver process for recruitment. Specifically, the Service did not track whether active duty enlisted applicants who were permanently disqualified requested a waiver or were encouraged to pursue one. Additionally, the Services did not track the reason a waiver was not requested and could not readily provide complete data for applicants who were permanently disqualified at Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS). The report made seven recommendations for the Military Services to improve the documentation and oversight of the waiver process to ensure consistency and accountability. Six recommendations are resolved and one remains unresolved.

(U) GAO

(U) Report No. GAO-20-61, “National Security Snapshot: DoD Active-Duty Recruitment and Retention Challenges,” March 2023

(U) The audit found that the DoD faced multiple challenges in recruiting and retaining active duty personnel. These challenges included gaps in the availability of recruitment and retention-related data; limited use of goals, plans, and strategies; and insufficient monitoring of those plans for effectiveness. The snapshot also identified quality of life concerns and opportunities for commercial sector employment as key factors contributing to retention issues. The audit concluded that addressing these challenges would better position the DoD to maintain a skilled and knowledgeable active duty workforce capable of responding to national security uncertainties.

(U) Report No. GAO-23-106551, "Female Active-Duty Personnel: Guidance and Plans Needed for Recruitment and Retention Efforts," May 2020

(U) The audit found that female active duty Service members had a 29 percent higher likelihood of separation compared with males, and that the Services lacked plans with goals, performance measures, and timelines to guide and monitor efforts to recruit and retain females. The report made five recommendations for the DoD to provide the Services with guidance to develop plans addressing female recruitment and retention, and or the Services to implement such plans. The DoD concurred. As of November 2024, one recommendation was closed and implemented at the DoD level, two were closed and implemented by individual Services, and the remaining recommendations were open.

(U) Acronyms and Abbreviations

- (U) **CNRC** Commander, Navy Recruiting Command
- (U) **DGM** Decision Guidance Memorandum
- (U) **NRC** Navy Recruiting Command
- (U) **PRIDE MOD** Personalized Recruiting for Immediate and Delayed Enlistment Modernization II

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