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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2022-01457

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COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING REQUESTED: NO

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Her DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, dated 23 Apr 98, Block 24, *Character of Service*, be changed from "Not Applicable" to "Honorable."

APPLICANT'S CONTENTIONS

The "Not Applicable" character of service will negatively impact her civil service retirement annuity. She was unaware her DD Form 214 "Not Applicable" character of service was an issue until she requested a Certified Summary Request prior to her retirement from federal civil service. On 23 Feb 22, AFPC Benefits and Entitlements Service Team, determined her military service on her DD Form 214 for the period of 7 Feb 84 to 3 May 84 for successful completion of Officer Training School (OTS), as uncharacterized not applicable, and because there was no break in service to her next DD Form 214 starting on 4 May 84, characterized as honorable, they were unable to give her credit for both services. They stated she should have the character of service corrected to honorable to receive credit towards civilian service. Special Order AH-866 shows she was appointed as a second lieutenant in the USAF Reserve effective 4 May 84 and her AF Form 1613, *Statement of Service*, dated 15 May 84, shows "HON, ACCPT COMSN" for the separation reason. Per memorandum from OTS/DS, current OTS graduates who accept an Air Force commission receive an "honorable" characterization on their DD Form 214. She contacted the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) Total Force Service Center in an attempt to correct this at a lower level and they directed her to submit a correction request to the AFBCMR.

The applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is a former Air Force Reserve second lieutenant (O-1).

Effective 3 May 84, the applicant provided her DD Form 214 which indicated she received an entry level separation (ELS) with a character of service of "Not Applicable" after serving 2 months and 27 days on active duty. Her narrative reason for separation was "To Accept Commission in AF from Officer Training Program."

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Controlled by: SAF/MRB
CUI Categories: Work-Product
Limited Dissemination Control: N/A
POC: SAF.MRBC.Workflow@us.af.mil

Dated 12 Apr 84, Special Order **Work-Product** provided by the applicant, indicates she was relieved from assignment from Officer Training School (OTS) and honorably discharged, effective 3 May 84.

On 11 Aug 90, the applicant was honorably discharged with a narrative reason for separation of “Invol Release: Disapproved Request for Extension of Tour” and was credited with six years, three months, and eight days of active service (correction shown on DD Form 215, *Correction to DD Form 214*).

For more information, see the excerpt of the applicant’s record at Exhibit B and the advisory at Exhibit C.

APPLICABLE AUTHORITY/GUIDANCE

DoDI 1332.14, *Enlisted Administrative Separations*, incorporating changes through 23 Jun 22 reads as follows:

Enclosure 3, section 2 – Selected Changes in Service Obligation

Paragraph a(3) states an enlisted Service member may be separated due to an acceptance of an active duty commission or appointment, or acceptance into a program leading to such commission or appointment in any branch of Military Service.

Paragraph b(1) states the characterization or description is honorable, unless the separation is an entry-level separation and is required in accordance with section 3 of Enclosure 4.

Enclosure 4, section 3 – Characterization of Service or Description of Separation

Paragraph c(1)(a)2 states an uncharacterized separation will be described as an entry-level if separation is initiated while an enlisted Service member is in entry-level status, except when the Secretary concerned, on a case-by-case basis, determined that characterization of service as honorable is clearly warranted by the presence of unusual military duty. The characterization is authorized when the Service member is separated under Enclosure 3 by reason of selected changes in service obligation.

AFR 39-10, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, dated 1 Oct 82, describes the authorized service characterizations that were applicable at the time of the applicant’s separation.

Entry Level Separation. Airmen are in entry level status during the first 180 days of continuous active military service or the first 180 days of continuous active military service after a break of more than 92 days of active service. Determine the member's status by the date of notification; thus, if the member is in entry level status when initiating the separation action, describe it as an entry level separation unless:

- A service characterization of under other than honorable conditions is authorized under the reason for discharge and is warranted by the circumstances of the case; or
- The Secretary of the Air Force determines, on a case-by-case basis, that characterization as honorable is clearly warranted by unusual circumstances of personal conduct and performance of military duty.

Honorable. The quality of the airman's service generally has met Air Force standards of acceptable conduct and performance of duty or when a member's service is otherwise so meritorious that any other characterization would be inappropriate.

Section 2B-Changes in Service Obligation:

Per paragraph 2-9, eligibility for separation under this section is based on a change, or a proposed change, in a member's obligation to serve the full term of an enlistment contract. Such a change may involve appointment to officer status, a new term of enlistment, separation from the active force to serve with one of the Reserve forces, or a defect in the enlistment. On receipt of evidence that a member is qualified for separation for one of the reasons in this section, the separation authority concurs in the action and establishes a DOS consistent with the reason for the separation.

Per paragraph 2-10, *Type of Separation*, characterize the service of airmen separated for a reason in paragraphs 2-11 through 2-18 as honorable unless an entry-level separation is required according to paragraph 1-19, separation from a void enlistment under paragraph 2-19 will be by order of release from custody and control of the Air Force.

Per paragraph 2-11, *Completion of Officer Training*, discharge graduates of officer training contingent on their acceptance of appointment as commissioned officers.

AIR FORCE EVALUATION

AFPC/DP2SSR recommends denying the application. Based on review of the applicant's request, there is no error or injustice with the discharge processing. Airmen are in entry level status during the first 180 days of continuous active military service. The Department of Defense (DoD) determined if a member served less than 180 days continuous active service, it would be unfair to the member and the service to characterize their limited service. To grant relief would be contrary to the criteria established by DoD guidance.

The complete advisory opinion is at Exhibit C.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION

The Board sent a copy of the advisory opinion to the applicant on 17 Aug 22 for comment (Exhibit D), but has received no response.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The application was not timely filed but it is in the interest of justice to excuse the delay.
2. The applicant exhausted all available non-judicial relief before applying to the Board.
3. After reviewing all Exhibits, the Board concludes the applicant is the victim of an error or injustice. While the Board notes the initial recommendation of AFPC/DP2SSR against correcting the record, as of 8 Mar 23, AFPC/DP2SSR has now reversed their decision on denying these cases stating “for many years, OTS operated under their own internal policy with regards to characterizing the service of their graduates. Discussions with them have indicated their policy has shifted from time to time through the years, with some periods in the 1970s being characterized and some periods in the 1980s and 1990s listed as uncharacterized. Individuals attending OTS are there in an active-duty status and therefore fall under active-duty personnel policy. AFPC has reviewed the current DAFI 36-3211 and former enlisted separation AFIs, and both offer flexibility to give OTS graduates an honorable service characterization even though they are in entry level status.” Furthermore, the Board notes service members attending OTS have no break in service between their enlisted time at OTS and their commission date on active duty; therefore, their time spent at OTS qualifies as a change in service obligation and is characterized as honorable service per AFR 39-10. Therefore, the Board recommends correcting the applicant’s records as indicated below.

RECOMMENDATION

The pertinent military records of the Department of the Air Force relating to APPLICANT be corrected to show on 3 May 1984, she was discharged with service characterized as honorable.

CERTIFICATION

The following quorum of the Board, as defined in Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*, paragraph 2.1, considered Docket Number BC-2022-01457 in Executive Session on 30 Oct 24:

Work-Product	Panel Chair
Work-Product	Panel Member
Work-Product	Panel Member

All members voted to correct the record. The panel considered the following:

- Exhibit A: Application, DD Form 149, w/atchs, dated 23 Mar 22.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Advisory Opinion, AFPC/DP2SSR, dated 17 Aug 22.
- Exhibit D: Notification of Advisory, SAF/MRBC to Applicant, dated 17 Aug 22.

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Taken together with all Exhibits, this document constitutes the true and complete Record of Proceedings, as required by DAFI 36-2603, paragraph 4.12.9.

11/6/2024

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR
Signed by: USAF

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