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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2022-02465

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COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING REQUESTED: NO

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

His DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, be amended to reflect the following:

- a. Joint Meritorious Unit Award.
- b. Remote Combat Effects Campaign Medal.
- c. Air and Space Campaign Medal.
- d. Air Force Organizational Excellence Award.
- e. Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon.
- f. Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal. (**Administratively Corrected**)

APPLICANT'S CONTENTIONS

His service in support of various operations during his time on active duty makes him eligible for several awards and medals. Also, during his small arms qualification in 2009, the instructor team told him he did not receive a Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon due to the limited number of awards available.

The applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is a former Air Force staff sergeant (E-5).

According to AF Forms 910, *Enlisted Performance Report (AB thru TSgt)*, for reporting periods from 19 Apr 05 through 18 Dec 10, the applicant was assigned to Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

According to DD Form 214, the applicant served in the Regular Air Force from 19 Apr 05 through 18 Apr 11 and was credited with six years of total active service. Item 13, *Decorations, Medals, Badges, Citations and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized*, reflects: Meritorious Unit Award with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Air Force Longevity Service Award, and Air Force Noncommissioned Officer Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon.

On 30 Oct 20, according to DD Form 215, *Correction to DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, Item 13 was amended to add the Humanitarian Service Medal.

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Controlled by: SAF/MRB

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Limited Dissemination Control: N/A

POC: SAF.MRBC.Workflow@us.af.mil

For more information, see the excerpt of the applicant's record at Exhibit B and the advisories at Exhibits C and E.

APPLICABLE AUTHORITY

Department of Defense Manual (DoDM) 1348.33, *Manual of Military Decorations and Awards: DoD Joint Decorations and Awards*, 21 Dec 16, Change 5, 9 Apr 21, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award is only awarded to joint units or joint duty activity (JDA). To qualify, the JDA must either report through combatant or combined command channels or pursue a joint mission under the cognizance of the Secretary of Defense; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the commander of a unified, specified, or combined command that is also a joint command; or the Secretary of a Military Department that has been designated the executive agent for the Secretary of Defense. The award is awarded to units in recognition of exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service for periods of performance normally ranging from one to three years, but not less than 30 days. Outstanding accomplishment of a unit or JDA's normally assigned and expected mission is not sufficient to justify award of the Joint Meritorious Unit Award. The unit or JDA's qualifying achievements must be superior to what is normally and must have been performed under one of the following conditions: (a) during action in combat with an armed enemy of the United States; (b) in a declared national emergency situation; or (c) under extraordinary circumstances that involve national interests.

AIR FORCE EVALUATIONS

AFPC/DP3SP (Recognition Program) recommends denying award of the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Remote Combat Effects Campaign Medal, and Air and Space Campaign Medal. Per DoDM 1348.33, unless otherwise stated, only service members assigned to a JDA or joint task force headquarters, are eligible for DoD Joint Personal Military Decorations and the Joint Meritorious Service Medal.

In addition, Department of the Air Force Manual (DAFMAN) 36-2806, *Military Awards: Criteria and Procedures*, dated 27 Oct 22, states the Remote Combat Effects Campaign Medal was established by the Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) on 22 May 19, to recognize DAF members dedicated to our nation's strategic objectives in combating terrorism. The medal is awarded to DAF military members who, on or after 11 Sep 01, distinguished themselves by direct participation in a DoD combat operation, under the following conditions: was assigned or attached to a unit directly supporting a DoD combat operation; was serving in a remotely piloted aircraft, cyber, space, or intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance career field, personally provided hands-on employment of a weapon system that had direct and immediate impact on a combat operation, and was not physically exposed to hostile actions or at risk of exposure to hostile action. The Remote Combat Effects Campaign Medal will be primarily awarded to remotely piloted aircraft, cyber, space, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance career fields, which create direct combat effects from remote locations and lead to strategic outcomes or the delivery of lethal force. In some circumstances, members from other functional communities may be considered for the medal which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Air and Space Campaign Medal was established by SecAF on 24 Apr 02, to recognize DAF members who, after 24 Mar 99, participated in or directly supported a significant U.S. military operation designated by Chief of Staff of the Air Force or Chief of Space Operations, as qualifying for the medal. The Air and Space Campaign Medal will only be awarded to members who provided direct support for 30 consecutive or 60 nonconsecutive days, to an Air and Space Campaign Medal operation, from home station or other areas outside a geographic area determined by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for eligibility for a DoD campaign medal. For the purpose of the Air and Space

Campaign Medal, direct support is defined as: deploying in support of an operation, or if at home station, performing functions or missions that historically were deployed forward, or entirely new and future missions, which due to technological advances, are no longer constrained by geographic location. This includes, but is not limited to, sortie generation, intelligence, surveillance, targeting, computer network attack operations, etc.

After a thorough review of the official military personnel record, there is evidence of an error or injustice. The applicant does not meet established criteria for the Joint Meritorious Unit Award or Air and Space Campaign Medal. Nor does he meet all established criteria for the Remote Combat Effects Campaign Medal. Specifically, they were unable to verify the applicant personally provided hands-on employment of a weapon system that had a direct and immediate impact on a named operation. To grant relief would be contrary to the criteria established by DoDM 1348.33 and DAFMAN 36-2806.

Notwithstanding, they were able to verify the applicant qualified for the Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal. Accordingly, his record will be administratively corrected.

The complete advisory opinion is at Exhibit C.

AFPC/DP3SP recommends denying the applicant's request for the Air Force Organizational Excellence Award and Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon. Per DAFMAN 36-2806, the Air and Space Organizational Excellence Award was established by SecAF in Aug 69, to recognize the achievements and accomplishments of DAF organizations or activities. On 16 Nov 20, SecAF approved the renaming of the Air Force Organizational Excellence Award to the Air and Space Organizational Excellence Award.

The Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon is awarded to Regular Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members, who, after 1 Jan 63, qualify as "expert" with either the M-16 rifle (to include the M-4 and GAU-5) or an issued handgun on the Air Force qualification course, an appropriate orientation course prescribed in other Air Force Instructions, other Military Departments' qualification course, or who satisfactorily complete the Combat Rifle Program. Members who, after 22 Jun 72, qualify as "expert" with both the M-16 rifle (or M-4 or GAU-5) and an issued handgun, wear a bronze service star on the ribbon. AF Form 522, *Ground Weapons Training Data and USAF Firearms Qualification*, or a letter from the small arms marksmanship monitor is used as the source documentation for this award. Members who qualify as "expert" provide a copy of the AF Form 522 or letter to the military personnel flight for update in the member's personnel records.

Based on a review of the applicant's official military personnel record and provided documentation, there is no evidence of an error or injustice as the applicant does not meet the established criteria for award of the Air and Space Organizational Excellence Award and Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon. To grant relief would be contrary to the criteria established by DAFMAN 36-2806.

The complete advisory opinion is at Exhibit E.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATIONS

The Board sent copies of the advisory opinions to the applicant on 26 Jun 23 and 8 Jan 24 for comment (Exhibits D and F) but has received no response.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The application was not timely filed. The Board notes the applicant did not file the application within three years of discovering the alleged error or injustice, as required by Section 1552 of Title 10, United States Code, and DAFI 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*. While the applicant asserts a date of discovery within the three-year limit, the Board does not find the assertion supported by a preponderance of the evidence.

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 not the victim of an error or injustice. The Board concurs with the rationale and recommendation of AFPC/DP3SP and finds a preponderance of the evidence does not substantiate the applicant's contentions. While AFPC/DP3SP was able to verify entitlement to the Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal, the applicant failed to provide sufficient evidence he met established criteria for the remaining requested awards. Therefore, the Board recommends against correcting the applicant's records beyond that corrected administratively.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board recommends informing the applicant the evidence did not demonstrate material error or injustice, and the Board will reconsider the application only upon receipt of relevant evidence not already presented.

CERTIFICATION

The following quorum of the Board, as defined in DAFI 36-2603, paragraph 2.1, considered Docket Number BC-2022-02465 in Executive Session on 29 Feb 24:

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

All members voted against correcting the record. The panel considered the following:

- Exhibit A: Application, DD Forms 149, w/atchs, dated 15 Aug 22 and 10 May 23.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Advisory Opinion, AFPC/DP3SP, dated 20 Jun 23.
- Exhibit D: Notification of Advisory, SAF/MRBC to Applicant, dated 26 Jun 23.
- Exhibit E: Advisory Opinion, AFPC/DP3SP, dated 26 Sep 23.
- Exhibit F: Notification of Advisory, SAF/MRBC to Applicant, dated 8 Jan 24.

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.

5/21/2025

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR

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