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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2024-00220

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COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING REQUESTED: NO

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

His character of service from Officer Training School (OTS) from 8 Aug 88 through 21 Nov 88 changed from uncharacterized to honorable on his DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*.

APPLICANT'S CONTENTIONS

He would like to increase his time in Federal Service for his annuity retirement calculation. Defense Finance Accounting Services (DFAS) will only process DD Form 214's that say "honorable" in Block 24. In support of his request, the applicant provides a copy of his OTS DD Form 214 from 8 Aug 88 to 21 Nov 88, his DD Form 214 from 22 Nov 88 to 15 Dec 96, and his DFAS rejection letter.

The applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is an Air Force Reserve lieutenant colonel (O-5), who retired on 19 Jul 23.

On 25 May 88, according to the DD Form 4/1, *Enlistment/Reenlistment document Armed Forces of the United States*, the applicant enlisted in the United States Air Force Reserve for eight years, by joining the Delayed Entry/Enlistment Program (DEP).

On 8 Aug 88, according to DD Form 4/3, *Discharge From/Delayed Entry/Enlistment Program*, the applicant was discharged from the DEP and entered active duty for a period of four years in the Air Force.

On 21 Nov 88, the applicant received an entry level separation (ELS) with a character of service of "uncharacterized" after serving 3 months and 14 days on active duty. His narrative reason for separation is "To Accept a Commission in the AF from Officer Training Program."

On 19 Jul 23, according to Reserve Order Work-Product, the applicant retired from the Air Force Reserve. He is credited with 34 years, 11 months, and 11 days of service.

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

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APPLICABLE AUTHORITY/GUIDANCE

AFR 39-10, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, dated 1 Oct 84, 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. This characterization is authorized if the reason for separation is a change in military status according to chapter 2 which includes completion of officer training according to paragraph 2-11, honorably discharge graduates of officer training contingent on their acceptance of appointment as commissioned officers.

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.

AIR FORCE EVALUATION

AFPC/DPMSSR recommends granting the application. 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. OTS has been allowed to make the determination since they prepare DD Form 214s on all of their OTS students. That said, 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, *Military Separations*, and former enlisted separations AFI 36-3208, and they both offer flexibility to give OTS graduates an honorable service characterization even though they are in entry level status. As a result, and in consultation with our AFPC Legal representatives (AFPC/JA), AFPC recommends approval of the change of characterization to "honorable" for anyone submitting an AFBCMR application who is a graduate from OTS and was given a characterization of "uncharacterized" or "N/A" and who is requesting a favorable service characterization.

The complete advisory opinion is at Exhibit C.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION

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The Board sent a copy of the advisory opinion to the applicant on 2 Jul 24 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. The Board concurs with the rationale and recommendation of AFPC/DPMSSR and finds a preponderance of the evidence substantiates the applicant's contentions. The current DAFI 36-3211 and former enlisted separations AFI 36-3208, both offer flexibility to give OTS graduates an honorable service characterization even though they are in entry level status. As a result, AFPC recommends approval of the change of characterization to "honorable" for anyone submitting a BCMR application who is a graduate from OTS who was given characterization of "uncharacterized" or "N/A" and who is requesting a favorable service characterization. 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 his character of service from his OTS, changed from uncharacterized to 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-2024-00220 in Executive Session on 12 Sep 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, atchs, dated 11 Jan 24.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Advisory opinion, AFPC/DPMSSR, dated 3 Jun 24.
- Exhibit D: Notification of Advisory, SAF_MRBC to Applicant, dated 2 Jul 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.

10/3/2024

X

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR
 Signed by: USAF

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