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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2025-00958

Work-Product

COUNSEL: Work-Product

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HEARING REQUESTED: YES

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

Her "Uncharacterized" Entry-Level Separation (ELS) be changed to honorable.

APPLICANT'S CONTENTIONS

She joined the Air Force as a distinguished graduate from officer training school (OTS), served honorably, separated as a major (O-4) in Sep 11, and now works as a federal civilian. Despite her honorable service, her time in OTS is listed as uncharacterized. This came to her attention as she applied for a military deposit to buy back her military service towards a civilian retirement. She is only eligible to buy back time which had honorable service, and her time in OTS is uncharacterized. She requests the character be corrected to honorable.

The applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is a former Air Force major (O-4).

Dated 29 Apr 08, a DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, reflects the applicant received an ELS with a character of service of "Uncharacterized" after serving three months and five days on active duty. Her narrative reason for separation was "Commissioned or Warrant in Same Branch of Service."

Dated 1 Sep 11, a DD Form 214 indicates the applicant received an honorable discharge. The narrative reason for separation is "Miscellaneous/General Reasons," and she was credited with three years, four months, and two days of active service for this period.

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:

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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.

AFI 36-3208, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, dated 9 Jul 04, 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 reason for separation is a change in military status according to chapter 2 which states the service of airmen separated for completion of officer training will be characterized as honorable.

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 70s being characterized and some periods in the 80s, 90s, and 00s listed as uncharacterized. OTS has been allowed to make the determination since they prepare DD Form 214s on all of their OTS students.

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 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 a BCMR application who is a graduate from OTS who were 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

The Board sent a copy of the advisory opinion to the applicant on 23 Sep 25 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 other available administrative remedies 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. Specifically, 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. 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 29 Apr 08, 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-2025-00958 in Executive Session on 26 Jan 26:

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 10 Mar 25.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Advisory opinion, AFPC/DPMSR, dated 4 Sep 25.
- Exhibit D: Notification of advisory, SAF/MRBC to applicant, dated 23 Sep 25.

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.

2/24/2026

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR

Signed by: Work-Product