


**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

Application for the Correction of
the Coast Guard Record of:

**FINAL DECISION
BCMR Docket No. 2019-031**


LCDR (former)

SUMMARY OF THE RECORD

The applicant asked the Board to correct his DD 214 to show that he is eligible to receive the Iraqi Freedom Service Medal and to reflect his service aboard a merchant maritime vessel during Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1991. His military record shows that he enlisted in the Coast Guard on June 3, 1970, was honorably discharged on October 1, 1977, and served in the Reserves until September 20, 1986. He stated that he joined the Merchant Marines in 1990 and was the Master of a merchant ship in 1991 when it participated in the transportation of military vehicles to the Middle East. He stated that he discovered the errors in his record on August 1, 2007, and he argued that the Board should consider his application because the actions of the ship's crew were heroic.

On June 5, 2019, a judge advocate (JAG) of the Coast Guard submitted an advisory opinion recommending that the Board deny relief in accordance with a memorandum submitted by the Commander, Personnel Service Center (PSC). PSC argued that the application is untimely and should be denied because the applicant was not in the Coast Guard during the eligibility period for the Iraq Campaign Medal, which began on March 19, 2003, more than 15 years after he was discharged from the Coast Guard. The JAG argued that the applicant is not eligible to receive the medal or another DD 214 because he never returned to a position in the military in which he could receive a medal or a new DD 214. The JAG recommended that the applicant seek relief from the Maritime Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The applicant was invited to but did not submit a response to the advisory opinion.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The application is untimely because the applicant was discharged and received his DD 214 in 1977 and the actions for which he seeks a medal occurred in 1991. In addition, a cursory review of the merits reveals that he is unlikely to prevail. The record shows that he was discharged from active duty in 1977 and from the Reserves in 1986, and there is nothing in the record to show that he was on active duty in 1991 when he mastered the merchant marine vessel and transported military cargo to the Middle East. Chapter 1.C. of the Coast Guard Medals and Awards Manual lists categories of those who can receive Coast Guard medals, and the list does not include members of the Merchant Marine. Since he was not on active duty when the Iraq Campaign Medal was authorized beginning in 2003, he is not eligible to receive it. Accordingly, the Board finds that no correction of his record is necessary, and it will not waive the statute of limitations. His request should be denied.

ORDER

The application of former LCDR [REDACTED], USCG, for correction of his military record is denied.

February 14, 2020

