

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
Office of the Chief of Naval Operations  
Washington, DC 20350-2000

OPNAVINST 1220.1B  
OP-131  
31 August 1989

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1220.1B

**From:** Chief of Naval Operations  
**To:** All Ships and Stations (less Marine Corps field addressees not having Navy personnel attached)

**Subj:** CHANGING OR REMOVING  
PRIMARY NAVY ENLISTED  
CLASSIFICATION CODES FOR  
NUCLEAR PROPULSION PLANT  
OPERATORS

**Ref:** (a) Manual of Navy Enlisted Manpower and Personnel Classifications and Occupational Standards, Section II, Navy Enlisted Classifications, NAVPERS 18068  
(b) NAVMILPERSCOMINST 1540.1  
(c) OPNAVINST 5355.3A

1. **Purpose.** To provide instructions for removing or changing Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) Codes used to designate enlisted personnel trained as nuclear propulsion plant operators. This instruction has been substantially revised and should be read in its entirety.

2. **Cancellation.** OPNAVINST 1220.1A.

3. **Background.** This instruction amplifies the information in references (a) and (b) and clarifies procedures to be used in submitting recommendations for removal or change of NECs used to identify enlisted personnel trained as nuclear propulsion plant operators. NECs used to identify enlisted nuclear propulsion plant operators are defined in reference (a) and can be separated into five distinct categories; two operational, two supervisory, and one special.

**a. Operational Category**

(1) **Submarine - Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator (3353, 3354, 3355, 3356).** NECs in this category are used primarily to identify junior enlisted personnel with less than

six years of naval service who are either serving aboard submarines or are submarine designated.

(2) **Surface Warship - Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator (3383, 3384, 3385, 3386).** NECs in this category are used primarily to identify junior enlisted personnel with less than six years of naval service who are either serving aboard nuclear powered surface warships or are not designated for submarine duty.

**b. Supervisory Category**

(1) **Submarine - Nuclear Propulsion Plant Supervisor (3363, 3364, 3365, 3366).** NECs in this category identify enlisted personnel (R) who are fully qualified by virtue of seniority, experience, watch qualification, and demonstrated proficiency to supervise the operation and maintenance of a submarine nuclear propulsion plant.

(2) **Surface Warship - Nuclear Propulsion Plant Supervisor (3393, 3394, 3395, 3396).** NECs in this category identify nuclear enlisted personnel who are fully qualified by virtue of seniority, experience, watch qualification, and demonstrated proficiency to supervise the operation and maintenance of a surface warship nuclear propulsion plant. (R)

**c. Special Category**

(1) **Submarine/Surface Warship - Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator - Special Category (3359/3389).** NECs in this category identify enlisted personnel who have qualified for an NEC in one of the operational or supervisory categories but are not currently assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation, or maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant.

4. **Procedure.** Recommendations for change or removal of NECs for enlisted nuclear propulsion (R) operators shall be submitted under Appendix A of reference (a) to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) (OP-131C) who will resolve and forward the NEC Change Recommendation (R)

0579-LD-054-6770

(NAVPERS 1221/1) to the Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command (NMPC-48). The following amplifying instructions provide specific guidance for submitting recommendations for changes to nuclear propulsion plant NECs:

**a. Changing Categories.** There are three basic situations involving changes between NEC categories: Operator/Supervisor NEC changes, Submarine/Surface NEC changes, and Operational or Supervisory/Special Category changes.

**(1) Operator/Supervisor NEC Changes.**

The criteria for recommending a supervisory NEC (336X/339X) are: Pay grade E-5 or above, completed six or more years of active naval service based on Active Duty Service Date (ADSD) and currently qualified on specified watch stations. Nuclear trained personnel who have an enlisted performance evaluation grade of 3.2 or less in military knowledge, rating knowledge, personal behavior, directing, reliability or overall on the most recent evaluation do not qualify for assignment of a supervisory NEC. Personnel with the supervisory NEC who do not maintain the above evaluation performance standards, proficiency or watch-station supervisory skills should be recommended for the operator (335X/338X) NEC or for nuclear NEC removal. In the case of changing a nuclear NEC from supervisor to operator, the commanding officer should take action to restore the supervisor NEC or conclude that NEC removal is the appropriate action. If the commanding officer considers that restoration of the supervisory NEC is not likely within a period of two to three months, he or she should recommend NEC removal vice changing the supervisor NEC to an operator NEC. If the effective date of eligibility for the NEC change recommendation is other than the date of submission, then this effective date should be indicated in the recommendation. Commands may submit recommendations for the supervisory NEC up to three months in advance of the six year active naval service requirement in the case of individuals who meet all other requirements in order to expedite the NEC change.

(a) On each ship there may be a few, singularly outstanding individuals who have clearly demonstrated they are able to be effective supervisors as evidenced by their qualification as Engineering Watch Supervisor (EWS) or Propulsion Plant Watch Supervisor (PPWS) prior to having six years active naval service. In order to recognize the exceptional performance of these individuals, commanding officers shall recommend a supervisory NEC (336X/339X) assignment waiver. The request should recommend waiver of the six year active naval service requirement to an allowable minimum of five years active naval service. This recommendation will be limited to those individuals who, in addition to qualification as EWS or PPWS meet the requirements of pay grade and enlisted performance evaluation grades specified in paragraph 4a(1).

**(2) Submarine/Surface NEC Changes.**

Circumstances which require disqualification from submarine duty due to medical reasons, but do not result in disqualification from occupational exposure to ionizing radiation or assignment to sea duty shall result in a concurrent but separate nuclear NEC change to the corresponding surface nuclear NEC. The command which initiates submarine disqualification should also initiate the NEC change recommendation. A copy of the correspondence recommending submarine disqualification and medical documents stating qualification for occupational exposure to ionizing radiation and sea duty shall be included with the request for NEC change and will be forwarded via the Type Commander (TYCOM) with submarine disqualification authority. The (TYCOM) will provide an endorsement and forward the recommendation to CNO (OP-131C). Personnel volunteering to transfer from surface to submarine duty, or vice versa, will be processed per paragraph 4b.

**(3) Operational or Supervisory/Special Category NEC Changes.**

(a) Assignment of NEC 3359/3389. NECs 3359/3389 identify enlisted personnel who

R) have previously qualified for a nuclear propulsion plant NEC but are not currently authorized or assigned duty in connection with supervision, operation or maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant. Specifically, these special category NECs permit the identification of those nuclear propulsion plant operators who have been assigned by the Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command to non-nuclear billets within activities that may also have billets authorized for nuclear trained personnel. Personnel with NEC 3359/3389 shall specifically not be assigned to radiological control facilities (R-5), nuclear planning or quality assurance activities, Nuclear Repair Divisions, or any other assignment associated with the operation, maintenance or supervision of a nuclear propulsion plant.

(b) Limited duty personnel will be assigned an NEC of 3359/3389 while on limited duty. Limited duty is defined for this application as any medical or psychological condition which results in the member being found unfit for full duty, or for sea duty, or for submarine duty, or for occupational exposure to ionizing radiation, as determined by cognizant medical authority (non-Undersea Medical Officers may make determination regarding fitness for full duty, but an Undersea Medical Officer must make the determination of fitness for submarine duty and, a medical officer knowledgeable about the effects of ionizing radiation must make the determination of fitness for duty involving occupational exposure to ionizing radiation). Commands shall request assignment of the NEC 3359/3389 immediately upon being informed of a disqualifying condition by cognizant medical authority. When a member is assigned NEC 3359/3389, the member must concurrently be removed from all duties associated with the operation, supervision and maintenance of a nuclear propulsion plant. Should a waiver of physical standards be requested, the member must retain NEC 3359/3389 during the processing of the waiver request.

(c) Assignment of NEC 3359/3389 is not to be used as a substitute for NEC removal because of lack of ability or unreliability. Personnel with an NEC of 3359/3389 will be

considered as part of the Navy's usable inventory of nuclear propulsion plant operators and are eligible for return to nuclear billets after CNO (OP-131C) screening procedures described in reference (b) are completed. When assignment of members to non-nuclear billets is initiated:

1. CNO (OP-131C) will initiate a change in NEC to 3359/3389 upon transfer of nuclear propulsion plant operators to non-nuclear billets at sea or ashore, or to duty under instruction including special college education programs.

2. The command to which these personnel are attached at the time of receipt of orders to non-nuclear billets shall make the following service record entry on page 13 at the time of transfer. (R)

"(Rate/Name) is being processed for change of NEC to 3359/3389. He or she shall not be reassigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation and maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant without prior approval by CNO (OP-131C), reference (b) applies." (R)

(d) Reassignment or continuance of Active Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator or Supervisory NECs to personnel serving in billets not associated with the operation of a nuclear propulsion plant: (R)

1. Per reference (b), CNO (OP-131C) screens the records of all nuclear propulsion plant operators completing tours of duty in assignments wherein proficiency as a nuclear propulsion plant operator cannot be maintained (i.e., in any billet other than in nuclear powered ships or land based prototypes) prior to assignment to duty involving nuclear propulsion plant operation. A periodic review will be conducted to determine if personnel away from an active nuclear propulsion plant operator billet have potential for future assignment to an active operator billet. For those personnel eligible to return, CNO (OP-131C) will initiate NEC change from 3359/3389, if required, to the (R)

appropriate active nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisor NEC at the time of reporting to an active nuclear billet. The effective date of the NEC change will be the date the member reports to the active billet.

2. Permanent Change of Station orders will require the command to which these personnel are attached at time of receipt of orders to make the following service record entry on page 13:

R) "Rate/Name is eligible for assignment to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant. A change in NEC from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ has been approved by the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-131C) and is being processed. The effective date of change in NEC will be the date of reporting to active billet."

3. Those personnel found unsuitable for reassignment as a nuclear propulsion plant operator will have all assigned nuclear NECs removed by CNO (OP-131C).

R) Notification of NEC removal will be made via NAVPERS 1221/1 initiated by CNO (OP-131C) and sent to the individual's current command. Reasons such as previous poor performance as a nuclear operator, poor supervisory skill, lack of achievement of supervisory qualifications, R) maintenance of proficiency, or demonstrated unreliability, are justification for NEC removal.

4. Personnel assigned NEC 3359/3389 will be screened by CNO

R) (OP-131C) prior to reassignment of an operator/supervisor NEC and to duty involving R) nuclear propulsion plant operation. To ensure the member is physically/psychologically qualified to be an operator/supervisor of a nuclear propulsion plant upon completion of a limited duty period, the following documentation must be submitted for review to CNO (OP-131C), via the ISIC and Type Commander: the Medical Board Report cover sheet (NU 6100) which assigned the member to limited duty, all supporting documentation, and the Report of Medical Examination (SF 88) with qualified or not

qualified recommendations in block 77 for (1) fitness for full duty, (2) fitness for duty involving occupational exposure to ionizing radiation, and (3) fitness for submarine duty (if applicable). A Chronological Record of Medical Care (SF 600) that clearly and legibly states all of the above qualifications, will be acceptable in lieu of a Report of Medical Examination (SF 88) when signed by a medical officer qualified to make the assessment. If the period of limited duty was based on a psychological problem, documentation forwarded for review must include a thorough history of the problem (stress reaction, personality disorder, suicidal ideation, etc.), treatment, and resolution. MEDCOM 21 will review all medical/psychological data as forwarded by OP-131 per current agreements. Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command will be notified by OP-131C when the member is determined to be physically/psychologically qualified and eligible for reassignment to duty. When eligible for reassignment, Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command, will request that an YJ availability be submitted. Upon return to duty, CNO (OP-131C) will initiate a change from 3359/3389, to the appropriate active NEC, effective upon reporting to an active billet.

5. Personnel assigned special NECs during Alcohol Rehabilitation (Level III) will forward, via their parent command, documentation supporting successful completion of Level III treatment with a request for active NEC reassignment directly to CNO (OP-131C). After screening, OP-131C will initiate a change from 3359/3389 to the appropriate active NEC. Commands may submit the documents supporting NEC restoration following alcohol rehabilitation via naval message or telecopy direct to OP-131C. OP-131C will notify the command (or ISIC if the ship is at sea) expeditiously, resolving restoration of the service member's active nuclear NEC and authorize resumption of duties associated with the operation, maintenance or supervision of a naval nuclear propulsion plant. The individual command shall monitor the individual's progress during the after-care program. (R)

**b. Migration Between Specialties**

(1) Approval by CNO (OP-131C) is required prior to assigning submarine personnel to surface warship nuclear billets, and vice versa. Approval of such recommendations will be made

R) considering the needs of the service and under reference (b). Requests for such assignment shall clearly specify if a permanent NEC change is requested.

(2) Engineering Laboratory Technicians. Changes from 3356, 3386, 3396 (Engineering Laboratory Technician) to 3355, 3385, 3395 (Mechanical Operator) will not be approved.

**c. NEC Removal.** Removal of an NEC is an administrative action taken when a member's commanding officer considers the member no longer suitable for assignment to duties in the specialty represented by that NEC. A recommendation to remove an NEC shall not be submitted in lieu of appropriate disciplinary action. Since an NEC serves to identify a valued skill in the Navy's personnel inventory, requests from members for removal or change of nuclear NECs cannot be approved. Recommendations for removal of NECs identifying nuclear trained enlisted personnel shall include sufficient information or justification concerning the recommendation. Lack of motivation is not sufficient reason for removal of a nuclear NEC.

In addition, a recommendation for removal of an individual's nuclear NEC shall be submitted when circumstances of demonstrated unreliability R) clearly indicated such a recommendation is necessary. Recommendations for removal of a nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisor NEC should be submitted in the following cases:

(1) When personnel demonstrate they are unable to maintain proficiency as nuclear R) propulsion plant operators or supervisors while assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation and maintenance of nuclear propulsion plants, a recommendation for NEC removal shall be submitted. Failure to qualify within a reasonable period of time on all watch stations appropriate to a member's NEC and seniority in the nuclear propulsion plant to which assigned,

or failure to requalify upon reassignment as required are also cause for NEC removal. Recommendations should include a brief summary of the individual's performance during shipboard training describing:

(a) The steps taken to evaluate and assist the member in maintaining his proficiency.

(b) Whether the member has performed the duties to the extent of the member's ability, and if not, what corrective R) measures have been taken (e.g. evaluations, advancement recommendations, letters of instruction, Page 13 entries).

(2) When personnel demonstrate a lack of reliability for assignment to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of a nuclear propulsion plant because of a serious offense, repeated minor civil/military offenses, indebtedness, loss of eligibility for security clearance, etc., a recommendation for NEC removal shall be submitted. In the case of an individual convicted, in civil or military proceedings, of an offense classified as a felony, the submission of a recommendation for nuclear NEC removal is mandatory. Recommendations should include a summary of the individual's performance and action taken by the command (e.g., cancellation of security clearance, special R) evaluation, recommendation for administrative discharge). The recommendation must substantiate unreliability as a nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisor and should clearly state the individual is considered unreliable.

(3) When nuclear propulsion plant operators fail to qualify for the senior enlisted watch station in the nuclear propulsion plant to which they are assigned within six months after R) being advanced to chief petty officer for pay purposes. Recommendations for removal of nuclear NEC should include a summary of the individual's performance during shipboard training as outlined in subparagraph 4c(1).

NOTE: Special circumstances (e.g., post-shakedown availability or selected restricted availabilities) may arise where qualification

cannot be completed within six months. In such cases, commanding officers may request an extension of qualification time of up to six

- R) months from CNO (OP-131C). Requests should briefly include information on why qualification could not be achieved in the time period specified.

- R) (4) In the case of nuclear trained personnel identified as drug abusers, Commanding Officers will submit a recommendation for nuclear NEC removal. Submission by naval message (info ISIC for submarines) in lieu of NAVPERS 1221/1 is authorized. The recommendation must include the Commanding Officer's statement that member is considered unreliable for supervision, operation and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants having been identified as a drug abuser per reference (c).

(5) Whenever a recommendation has been made to remove the nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisor NEC, the member shall not be assigned to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of a nuclear propulsion plant until final action on the recommendation has been completed by the Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command. When directed by the Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command, the following service record entry shall be made:

- R) "NEC \_\_\_\_\_ has been removed (Rate/Name) is no longer eligible for assignment to duty in connection with supervision, operation, and maintenance of a naval nuclear propulsion plant. Authority: COMNAVMIIPERSCOM endorsement on NAVPERS 1221/1 of (Date)."

(6) All NAVPERS 1221/1 recommendations for NEC removal must be signed by the Commanding Officer. Recommendations for personnel assigned to submarines will be forwarded via the appropriate ISIC. Documents having signatures of Administrative Officers utilizing By direction

authority will be returned for the Commanding Officer's signature.

**d. Verification of Effective Nuclear Propulsion Plant Operator NEC**

- (1) CNO (OP-131C) addresses individual letters to commands receiving former 3359/3389 nuclear propulsion plant operators or supervisors on board for requalification in accordance with reference (b). These letters set forth requalification guidelines for subject member and provide an independent certification that the individual is eligible for assignment to duties involving supervision, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants. (R)

(2) In cases of uncertainty on the part of commands with nuclear billets authorized regarding the current nuclear propulsion plant operator or supervisory NEC status of personnel, CNO (OP-131C) should be contacted for clarification. (R)

**5. Action.** Addressees shall ensure recommendations for changing or removing NECs used to designate personnel trained as nuclear propulsion plant operators are submitted in accordance with this instruction. NAVPERS 1221/1 form or naval message are the only acceptable vehicles to initiate NEC changes. (R)

**6. Form.** NAVPERS 1221/1, Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC) Change Recommendations, S/N 0106-LF-012-2105 and SF 88, Report of Medical Examination, S/N 0105-LF-200-7140, are available through normal Navy supply channels following the procedures of NAVSUP P-2002. (R)

J. M. BOORDA  
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations  
(Manpower, Personnel and Training)

(Distribution on next page)

**Distribution:**  
**SNDL Parts 1 and 2**

**Commander**  
**Naval Data Automation Command**  
**(Code 813)**  
**Washington Navy Yard**  
**Washington, DC 20374-1662 (280 copies)**

**Stocked:**  
**CO, NAVPUBFORMCEN**  
**5801 Tabor Avenue**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19120-5099 (500 copies)**