

(i) Maintain for public access a reading file and associated index of records of NDRB proceedings in all reviews undertaken subsequent to July 1, 1975.

Subpart G—Organization of the Naval Discharge Review Board

§ 724.701 Composition.

The NDRB acting in plenary review session shall be composed of five members. Normally the members shall be career military officers, assigned to the Naval Council of Personnel Boards or otherwise made available; inactive duty officers of the Navy and Marine Corps Reserve may serve as members when designated to do so by the President, NDRB.

(a) Presiding officers of the NDRB shall normally be Navy or Marine Corps officers in the grade of Captain/Colonel or above.

(b) The remaining NDRB membership shall normally be not less than the grade of Lieutenant Commander/Major with preference being given to senior grades.

(c) At least three of the five members of the NDRB shall belong to the service from which the applicant whose case is under review was discharged.

(d) Individual membership in the NDRB may vary within the limitations of the prescribed composition.

(e) Any member of a panel of the NDRB other than the presiding officer may act as recorder for cases assigned. The recorder will participate as a voting member of the panel.

§ 724.702 Executive management.

The administrative affairs of the NDRB shall be managed by the Executive Secretary. This responsibility shall include schedules, records, correspondence and issuance of NDRB decisions.

§ 724.703 Legal counsel.

Normally, the NDRB shall function without the immediate attendance of legal counsel. In the event that a legal advisory opinion is deemed appropriate by the NDRB, such opinion shall be obtained routinely by reference to the senior Judge Advocate assigned to the Office of the Director, Naval Council of Personnel Boards. In addition, the

NDRB may request advisory opinions from staff offices of the Department of the Navy, including, but not limited to the General Counsel and the Judge Advocate General.

Subpart H—Procedures of Naval Discharge Review Board

§ 724.801 Matters to be considered in discharge review.

In the process of its review of discharges, the NDRB shall examine available records and pertinent regulations of the Department of the Navy, together with such information as may be presented by the applicant and/or representative, which will normally include:

(a) The application for discharge review;

(b) Statements, affidavits or documentation, if any, accompanying the application or presented during hearings;

(c) Testimony, if any, presented during hearings;

(d) Service and health records;

(e) A brief of pertinent facts extracted from the service and health records, prepared by the NDRB recorder.

§ 724.802 Applicant's responsibilities.

(a) *Request for change of discharge.* An applicant may request a change in the character of or reason for discharge (or both).

(1) *Character of discharge.* Block 7 of DD Form 293 provides an applicant an opportunity to request a specific change in character of discharge (for example, General Discharge to Honorable Discharge; Other than Honorable Discharge to General or Honorable Discharge). A person separated on or after 1 October 1982 while in an entry level status may request a change from Other Than Honorable Discharge to Entry Level Separation. A request for review from an applicant who does not have an Honorable Discharge will be treated as a request for a change to an Honorable Discharge unless the applicant requests a specific change to another character of discharge.

(2) *Reason for discharge.* Block 7 of DD Form 293 provides an applicant an opportunity to request a specific change

in the reason for discharge. If an applicant does not request a specific change in the reason for discharge, the NDRB will presume that the request for review does not involve a request for change in the reason for discharge. Under its responsibility to examine the propriety and equity of an applicant's discharge, the NDRB will change the reason for discharge if such a change is warranted.

(3) The applicant must ensure that issues submitted to the NDRB are consistent with the request for change in discharge set forth in block 7 of the DD Form 293. If an ambiguity is created by a difference between an applicant's issue and the request in block 7, the NDRB will respond to the issue in the context of the action requested in block 7. In the case of a personal appearance hearing, the NDRB will attempt to resolve the ambiguity under § 724.802(c).

(b) *Request for consideration of specific issues.* An applicant may request the Board to consider specific issues which, in the opinion of the applicant, form a basis for changing the character of or reason for discharge, or both. In addition to the guidance set forth in this section, applicants should consult the other sections in this manual before submitting issues for consideration by the Board.

(1) *Submission of issues on DD Form 293.* Issues must be provided to the NDRB on DD Form 293 (82 Nov) before the NDRB closes the review process for deliberation.

(i) *Issues must be clear and specific.* An issue must be stated clearly and specifically in order to enable the NDRB to understand the nature of the issue and its relationship to the applicant's discharge.

(ii) *Separate listing of issues.* Each issue submitted by an applicant should be listed separately. Submission of a separate statement for each issue provides the best means of ensuring that the full import of the issue is conveyed to the NDRB.

(iii) *Use of DD Form 293.* DD Form 293 provides applicants with a standard format for submitting issues to the NDRB, and its use:

(A) Provides a means for an applicant to set forth clearly and specifically

those matters that, in the option of the applicant, provide a basis for changing the discharge;

(B) Assists the NDRB in focusing on those matters considered to be important by an applicant;

(C) Assists the NDRB in distinguishing between a matter submitted by an applicant in the expectation that it will be treated as a decisional issue, and those matters submitted simply as background or supporting materials;

(D) Provides the applicant with greater rights in the event that the applicant later submits a complaint concerning the decisional document;

(E) Reduces the potential for disagreement as to the content of an applicant's issue.

(iv) *Incorporation by reference.* If the applicant makes an additional written submission, such as a brief, in support of the application, the applicant may incorporate by reference specific issues set forth in the written submission in accordance with the guidance on DD Form 293. The reference shall be specific enough for the NDRB to identify clearly the matter being submitted as an issue. At a minimum, it shall identify the page, paragraph, and sentence incorporated. Because it is to the applicant's benefit to bring such issues to the NDRB's attention as early as possible in the review, applicants who submit a brief are strongly urged to set forth all such issues as a separate item at the beginning of the brief. If it reasonably appears that the applicant inadvertently failed expressly to incorporate an issue which the applicant clearly identifies as an issue to be addressed by the NDRB, the NDRB shall respond to such an issue. (See §§ 724.805 and 724.806.)

(v) *Effective date of the new Form DD 293.* With respect to applications pending (before November 1982, the effective date of the new DD Form 293), the NDRB shall consider issues clearly and specifically stated in accordance with the rules in effect at the time of submission. With respect to applications received after November 1982, if the applicant submits an obsolete DD Form 293, the NDRB shall accept the application, but shall provide the applicant with a copy of the new form and advise the applicant that it will only respond

to issues submitted on the new form in accordance with this instruction.

(2) *Relationship of issues to character of or reason for discharge.* If the application applies to both character of and reason for discharge, the applicant is encouraged, but not required, to identify the issue as applying to either the character of or the reason for discharge (or both). Unless the issue is directed at the reason for discharge expressly or by necessary implication, the NDRB will presume that it applies solely to the character of discharge.

(3) *Relationship of issues to the standards for discharge review.* The NDRB reviews discharges on the basis of issues of propriety and equity. The standards used by the NDRB are set forth in § 724.804. The applicant is encouraged to review those standards before submitting any issue upon which the applicant believes a change in discharge should be based.

(i) *Issues concerning the equity of the discharge.* An issue of equity is a matter that involves a determination whether a discharge should be changed under the equity standards of this part. This includes any issue, submitted by the applicant in accordance with § 724.802(b)(1), that is addressed to the discretionary authority of the NDRB.

(ii) *Issues concerning the propriety of a discharge.* An issue of propriety is a matter that involves a determination whether a discharge should be changed under the propriety standards of this part. This includes an applicant's issue, submitted in accordance with § 724.802(b)(1), in which the applicant's position is that the discharge must be changed because of an error in the discharge pertaining to a regulation, statute, constitutional provision, or other source of law (including a matter that requires a determination whether, under the circumstances of the case, action by military authorities was arbitrary, capricious, or an abuse of discretion). Although a numerical reference to the regulation or other sources of law alleged to have been violated is not necessarily required, the context of the regulation or a description of the procedures alleged to have been violated normally must be set forth in order to inform the NDRB ade-

quately of the basis for the applicant's position.

(iii) *The applicant's identification of an issue.* The applicant is encouraged, but not required, to specify that each issue pertains to the propriety or the equity of the discharge. This will assist the NDRB in assessing the relationship of the issue to propriety or equity.

(4) *Citation of matter from decisions.* The primary function of the NDRB involves the exercise of discretion on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are not required to cite prior decisions as the basis for a change in discharge. If the applicant wishes to bring the NDRB's attention to a prior decision as background or illustrative material, the citation should be placed in a brief or other supporting documents. If, however, it is the applicant's intention to submit an issue that sets forth specific principles and facts from a specific cited decision, the following requirements with respect to applications received on or after November 27, 1982 apply:

(i) The issue must be set forth or expressly incorporated in the "Applicant's Issue" portion of DD Form 293.

(ii) If an applicant's issue cites a prior decision (of the NDRB, another Board, an agency, or a court), the applicant shall describe the specific principles and facts that are contained in the prior decision and explain the relevance of cited matter to the applicant's case.

(iii) To ensure timely consideration of principles cited from unpublished opinions (including decisions maintained by the Armed Forces Discharge Review Board/Corrective Board Reading Room), applicants must provide the NDRB with copies of such decisions or of the relevant portion of the treatise, manual or similar source in which the principles were discussed. At the applicant's request, such materials will be returned.

(iv) If the applicant fails to comply with requirements in § 724.802(b)(4), the decisional document shall note the defect, and shall respond to the issue without regard to the citation.

(c) *Identification by the NDRB of issues submitted by an applicant.* The applicant's issues shall be identified in accordance with this section after a review of the materials noted under § 924.803, is made.

(1) *Issues on DD Form 293.* The NDRB shall consider all items submitted as issues by an applicant on DD Form 293 (or incorporated therein).

(2) *Amendment of issues.* The NDRB shall not request or instruct an applicant to amend or withdraw any matter submitted by the applicant. Any amendment or withdrawal of an issue by an applicant shall be confirmed in writing by the applicant. Nothing in this provision:

(i) Limits the NDRB's authority to question an applicant as to the meaning of such matter;

(ii) Precludes the NDRB from developing decisional issues based upon such questions;

(iii) Prevents the applicant from amending or withdrawing such matter any time before the NDRB closes the review process for deliberation; or

(iv) Prevents the NDRB from presenting an applicant with a list of proposed decisional issues and written information concerning the right of the applicant to add to, amend, or withdraw the applicant's submission. The written information will state that the applicant's decision to take such action (or decline to do so) will not be used against the applicant in the consideration of the case.

(3) *Additional issues identified during a hearing.* The following additional procedure shall be used during a hearing in order to promote the NDRB's understanding of an applicant's presentation. If, before closing the case for deliberation, the NDRB believes that an applicant has presented an issue not listed on DD Form 293, the NDRB may so inform the applicant, and the applicant may submit the issue in writing or add additional written issues at that time. This does not preclude the NDRB from developing its own decisional issues.

§ 724.803 The decisional document.

A decisional document shall be prepared for each review. At a minimum, this document shall contain:

(a) The circumstances and character of the applicant's service as extracted from available service records, including health records, and information provided by other government authorities or the applicant, such as, but not limited to:

(1) Information concerning the discharge under review, including:

- (i) Date (YYMMDD) of discharge;
- (ii) Character of discharge;
- (iii) Reason for discharge;
- (iv) The specific regulatory authority under which the discharge was issued;
- (v) Date (YYMMDD) of enlistment;
- (vi) Period of enlistment;
- (vii) Age at enlistment;
- (viii) Length of service;
- (ix) Periods of unauthorized absence;
- (x) Conduct and efficiency ratings (numerical or narrative);
- (xi) Highest rank achieved;
- (xii) Awards and decorations;
- (xiii) Educational level;
- (xiv) Aptitude test scores;
- (xv) Incidents of punishment pursuant to Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice (including nature and date (YYMMDD) of offense or punishment);
- (xvi) Convictions by court-martial;
- (xvii) Prior military service and type of discharge received.

(2) Any other matters in the applicant's record which pertains to the discharge or the issues, or provide a clearer picture of the overall quality of the applicant's service.

(b) A list of the type of documents submitted by or on behalf of the applicant (including written briefs, letters of recommendation, affidavits concerning the circumstances of the discharge, or other documentary evidence), if any.

(c) A statement whether the applicant testified, and a list of the type of witnesses, if any, who testified on behalf of the applicant.

(d) A notation whether the application pertained to the character of discharge, the reason for discharge, or both.

(e) A list of the items submitted as issues on DD Form 293 or expressly incorporated therein and such other items submitted as issues by the applicant that are identified as inadvertently omitted. If the issues are listed verbatim on DD Form 293, a copy of the