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BASE COMMANDER'S

GUIDE

TO

CBPO OPERATIONS

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PREFACE

The world of Air Force personnel programs is a dynamic, sometimes confusing one. This guide has been prepared to complement a block of instruction provided by the Base Commander's Management Course to help you understand and use the personnel system to meet your mission.

This guide outlines the mission and organization of the Consolidated Base Personnel Office (CBPO) and provides you, the commander, with a brief summary of some of the important programs directed by the CBPO. Please note the emphasis on "brief" summary and "some" important programs. It is not possible to present all of the programs that transcend the CBPO in a guide such as this. The reason is obvious when you consider that everyone in our Air Force is reassigned, receives efficiency/performance reports, is awarded decorations, is promoted, is trained, and separates or retires. In other words, virtually every action that individually affects your people and their careers begins, ends, or passes through the CBPO! You owe it to yourself and your people to become familiar with how the CBPO can help meet your mission needs.

Some basic assumptions have been made during the formulation of this guide. Everyone attaining your level of command has experienced some interrelationships with the CBPO and with some of the programs available through or supported by the CBPO. Also, you, as a senior Air Force officer, do not want to be bogged down by "fine print" and this overview is the desired format.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author has been assigned to virtually every level and area of the personnel arena during his more than fourteen years in the field. As an enlisted person, he served as a records clerk, personnel data systems analyst, assignments control specialist, and in the reenlistments/separations areas of CBPOs at Amarillo AFB, TX, George AFB, CA, Elmendorf AFB, AK, and at HQ Strategic Air Command. Commissioned through the Bootstrap Commissioning Program after completing his degree at the University of Nebraska/Omaha and Officer Training School in 1971, he has held positions which include chief of every major section within the CBPO and a tour at the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center (AFMPC). He was selected for a career broadening assignment as a Minuteman missile launch officer (1975-78) and completed requirements for a Master of Arts degree in Human Communication from the University of Northern Colorado during that period.

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your new assignment--the opportunities to command are few. We in the personnel community look forward to meeting the challenges of the day-to-day Air Force mission with you. One way we hope to help you is through this guide. It is intended to make your job easier by acquainting you with some personnel programs that will affect your command.

No guide can cover everything in sufficient detail to answer all possible questions; this one is designed to do two things. First, it provides a brief overview of some of the critical programs that will come to your attention from the first day of command. Secondly, this guide is designed to complement your training at the Base Commander's Management Course and, hopefully, foster an early-on visit with your CBPO Chief. The intent here is to whet your appetite for more information. If this guide proves helpful in the orientation and transition to your new command, it will have served its purpose.

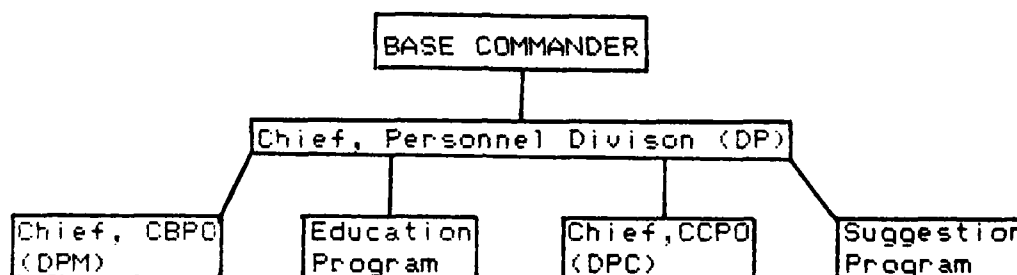
Again, congratulations on your new assignment and welcome to the dynamic world of personnel service.

Chapter Two

THE PERSONNEL ENVIRONMENT

The personnel manager on your base is the Chief, Personnel Division (DP). The DP directs and monitors the development and operation of all military and civilian personnel management programs as well as the Air Force Suggestion and Education Programs. It's a big job and he is assisted in the two larger branches by the chiefs of the Consolidated Civilian Personnel Office (CCPO) and the Consolidated Base Personnel Office (CBPO).

Figure 1. Personnel Division

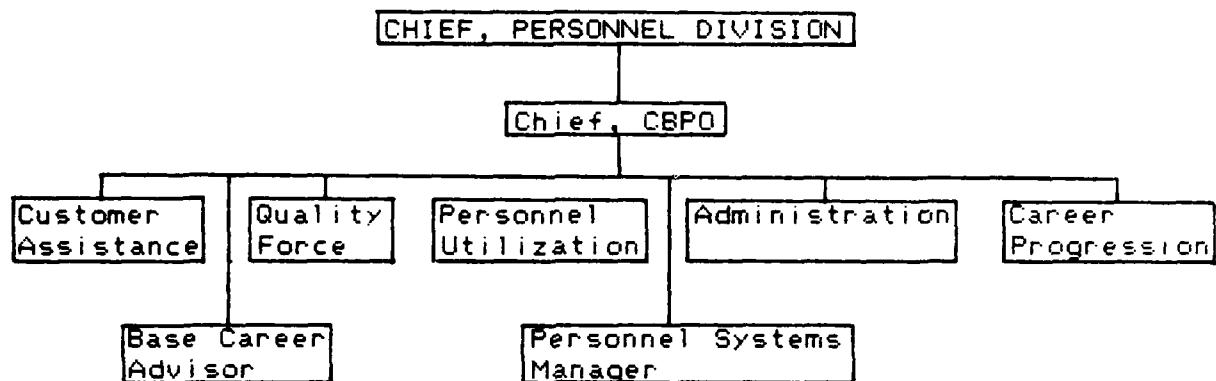


This guide will concentrate on CBPO, or military personnel, activities.

The mission of the Consolidated Base Personnel Office (CBPO) is to effect standard application of Air Force military personnel policies and programs and provide direct support to you and your people on personnel issues. The CBPO Chief, as the military personnel manager, is the source of answers to your questions dealing with military personnel and manages the CBPO to insure all military personnel programs run smoothly. CBPO's have evolved, since the late 1950's, from individual squadron personnel clerks to today's consolidated structure with all actions under one roof.

Manning standards have continually been applied to CBPOs and significant manpower savings have resulted from the consolidation and automation. Today's CBPO is lean and functional, with a significant reliance upon computers to pick up the workload associated with the reduced manning levels.

Figure 2. The CBPO Structure
(This structure may vary somewhat
for CBPOs at smaller bases.)



Personnel policies and programs are developed at all levels within the Air Force corporate structure--from the Pentagon, the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center (AFMPC), the major commands, and any intermediate headquarters in the reporting chain. The bottom line in this structure is the CBPO. This is where the face-to-face, help-them-understand customer contacts are made. This is where your people are served! This is where Air Force personnel programs and policies are applied to the individual members--personally. Not an easy job, in the best of circumstances, and one that sometimes needs your help and support. Ask your CBPO Chief to show you how.

Chapter Three

RELATIONSHIPS

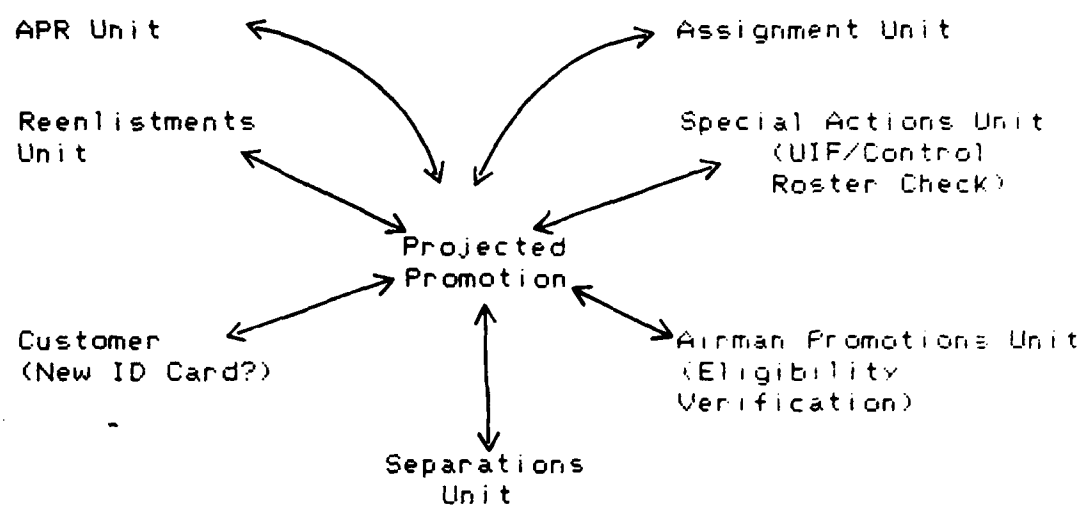
The CBPO does not, and cannot, exist in a vacuum. It is a service organization that complements other service agencies on your base to provide the "people needs" necessary for mission accomplishment. Some examples of staff interactions are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Examples of Staff Interactions

<u>Action</u>	<u>Possible Interested Agencies</u>
Administrative Separation	Squadron Commander Staff Judge Advocate Social Actions (if drug/alcohol involvement) Chaplain Accounting and Finance Security Police Hospital/Mental Health Clinic
New Dependent	Hospital Accounting and Finance
Assignment	Squadron Commander Security Police Housing Office Hospital/Dental Clinic Accounting and Finance Open Mess Credit Union Supply Social Actions Transportation

Internally, extensive coordination is also done between the various CBPO offices to insure everyone is in the loop and the individual's personnel record accurately reflects all relevant data. The projected promotion of an airman, for example, is reviewed by at least seven different work centers in the CBPO (as shown in Figure 4).

Figure 4. Example of Internal CBPO Coordination



Keeping the right people, including you, informed of all actions that may affect them and/or their organizations will insure that the correct action is taken.

Chapter Four

GOOD NEWS

It has often been said that every action that affects each individual member of our Air Force begins, ends or goes through the CBPO in some form at some time. The great majority of these actions have a positive affect on our members and our mission. This chapter will highlight some of them for you.

INTRO (Individual Newcomer Treatment and Orientation).

Remember the old "sponsorship program?" Well, INTRO is a vastly enhanced sponsorship program that provides the critical "first impression" of your base to incoming military members and their families. The INTRO manager in the CBPO organizes and coordinates this critical "people" program. However, each of your organizations are individually responsible for insuring program goals are achieved. From the initial welcoming letter to the member's first day on the job, a positive INTRO program will make a difference in making our people welcome and comfortable in new surroundings. An integral part of INTRO is your "newcomers' orientation" briefing, usually scheduled monthly, where you will have the opportunity to address newly assigned personnel. Your personal effort and interest will insure a viable program and pay long-term dividends for your mission.

RECOGNITION

Officer effectiveness reports and airman performance reports (OER/APR) are the keys to accurate assessments of job performance and potential for additional responsibilities or promotions. The CBPO plays an integral part in the OER/APR process from generation of requests for reports to quality control to final input to the computer system and filing in the members' records. One of the biggest problems with the OER/APR system is TIMELINESS, and you can help by providing command emphasis throughout your staff. The CBPO Chief has the current statistics, by organization, ready for your review.

When our people excel in their jobs, we have the opportunity to recognize their achievements through the AWARDS AND DECORATIONS programs. The CBPO serves as a clearing house for awards and decorations in much the same manner as for OERs/APRs; generating basic information for submissions, performing a quality control check, and processing them through the appropriate approval authority. Again, TIMELINESS is one of the "system's" biggest shortcomings. The closer we can present an award to the act that generates it, the more it means to the individual. Unfortunately, many hard earned awards are never presented because the supervisor "forgot" or NEVER TOOK THE TIME to write the recommendation! A little nudge from you, the commander, is usually all that's required.

Well written OERs/APRs and timely awards usually result in **PROMOTIONS** for our people and, again, the CBPO is in the center ring. You are certainly aware of Air Force promotion programs and this is not the place to outline them. However, the CBPO does orchestrate the release and verification of promotion lists and these procedures will be of interest to you. Enlisted promotions are generally handled through the computer and officer promotions are handled by central boards and the lists are mailed to the CBPO. Procedures for notifying you and your commanders of promotion results have been established and the CBPO Chief can give you the specifics.

RETENTION

Retention of our best people is a real leadership and management challenge. Especially during periods in which everyone wants to stay but we only have a limited number of openings due to end strength constraints. Who gets to stay and who must go? To help work the retention challenges, the Base Career Advisor (BCA) was established as your "right-hand man" and will routinely brief you and your staff on retention programs. The Selective Reenlistment Program (SRP) and the Career Reenlistment Eligibility Reservation System (CAREERS) are tools designed to make sure the Air Force keeps the right numbers of the right people on board. As the economy improves, retention will grow in importance to our Air Force. Your input to the retention process could be the deciding factor, in individual cases, as to who gets to stay. The BCA will help you, and us, meet the challenge.

PERSONAL AFFAIRS

Under a large umbrella called personal affairs, the CBPO provides a multitude of individual and family services for our people. Individual counseling on retirement and Veterans Administration benefits; temporary financial assistance from the Air Force Aid Society and the American Red Cross; and the all-volunteer Family Services organization are just a very few of the important personal services available. You and your spouse will become closely involved with the Family Services program during your command assignment. A new concept, the Family Support Center, is being established at selected bases that incorporates some of the personal affairs functions with other base services (and some new programs) and puts everything under one roof. If your base has a Family Support Center, have the director provide you with an orientation into its capabilities and programs. It's an exciting new concept for our people.

There are many other "good news" programs run by (or through) the CBPO along with some special programs such as the Combined Federal Campaign, the Air Force Assistance Fund and

Savings Bond drives, to name a few. The above is intended to provide you with a flavor of what's working and who can give you more information. The important thing for you to remember is that more--much more--information is available to you at any time. Please ask.

Chapter Five

BAD NEWS

Obviously, if there is "good news," as in Chapter Four, there must be some "bad news." Now, all things are relative and what is bad for others may be good for you, your command, and the Air Force. Let's look at some examples of how we manage "bad" people. Then we'll briefly discuss another type of "bad" news.

QUALITY

In today's environment of improved retention and favorable recruiting, we find ourselves in a position much unlike previous years. We can afford to pick and choose only those truly deserving of promotion and retention. There are, however, only so many promotions and jobs available. To make room for our good performers, we need to weed out those who cannot or will not meet the Air Force standards. NOW is the time for commanders and supervisors to take action.

Major General Robert D. Springer
Commander
Air Force Manpower & Personnel Center

The quality of our Air Force people is paramount to mission accomplishment. Sometimes our people demonstrate undesirable characteristics or behaviors and the Air Force has developed some outstanding tools for commander/supervisor use in identifying who they are and what has gone wrong. The CBPO Quality Force Section works very closely with your commanders and your Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) to insure the tools are properly used. Some of the quality force programs available for commanders are presented below.

Unfavorable Information Files (UIF) form the basis for a variety of adverse actions or decisions concerning Air Force members. The UIFs contain only verified, substantiated unfavorable information about a member's conduct, bearing, behavior, integrity, and so forth--on and off duty, or less than acceptable duty performance.

The Control Roster is used by commanders to observe and evaluate Air Force members who have fallen down in their duty performance, conduct, bearing or behavior. The Control Roster is a controlled, 4-month observation period during which the member may not be promoted, reassigned or separated.

The Weight Management Program (WMP) is designed to bring all members within the Air Force weight standards. Maintaining weight within standards is necessary for good health and presenting an acceptable military image. Commanders and supervisors are responsible for identifying members who fail to comply and they are entered into the WMP. Failure to satisfactorily progress in the WMP may result in administrative actions to separate or bar reenlistment of the member.

Assignment Quality Control, or preventing the PCS of unqualified personnel, is a responsibility that must be met by everyone. If your commanders have a viable quality control program, using the tools mentioned in this chapter, and if there is strong interaction with the CBPO, unqualified personnel will not go PCS. The Air Force cannot afford to reassign these people--for purely monetary reasons and, more importantly, because they will be a disruptive influence on their new units' ability to meet the mission. We must collectively take every possible action to correct substandard performance and conduct. Failing that, we must move out smartly to eliminate such members from the Air Force. Your understanding and support of this issue is paramount to its success.

If reasonable rehabilitative efforts fail to correct substandard performance or conduct, we need to promptly separate the member from the Air Force. In all involuntary administrative discharges, documentation is the key. A total interaction between the unit commander, the Staff Judge Advocate and the CBPO will really make the discharge effort smooth. There are numerous variations of the administrative discharge and this guide will not delve into them. It will be your job to act as the discharge decision authority in the majority of these cases and the CBPO will bring you up to speed on them.

There are other quality force tools which will come to your attention during your command tour. This guide has highlighted the most common ones and hopefully whetted your appetite for additional information. A superb source of such information is the Commander's Quality Force Guide, published by the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center. While targeted toward your commanders, it will also provide you with an excellent desk-top reference. Your CBPO Chief will be happy to get one to you.

CASUALTY ASSISTANCE

One of the most important, and certainly the most sensitive, jobs the CBPO performs is casualty assistance. Notification and assistance to next-of-kin (NOK) of seriously injured/ill or deceased military members is accomplished and/or orchestrated by the CBPO through the Customer Assistance Section. Actual notifications are performed by senior officers under your command with assistance provided by the hospital and the base chaplain. Survivor assistance and counseling is performed by trained CBPO personnel who know the survivor benefits programs well and also know how to cut through the red tape.

Chapter Six

DO YOU KNOW...?

...WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE PULLS THE PLUG ON YOUR COMPUTER?

As you are aware, the CBPO--and most of your other mission support areas--have become more and more dependent on the use of computers to get the job done faster and more accurately. The day of reliance on the stubby pencil, manual posting of records and ledgers, is long gone. What happens, then, if computer support is suddenly lost--through machine malfunction, electrical supply problems or sabotage?

It's not a happy thought, but at least we're studying and exercising the possibility through Inspector General scenarios and Air Force-wide planning groups. One result of these efforts was the actual no-notice testing of stateside and overseas bases where the computer was "sabotaged" and we were not allowed to use its capabilities for 30 days. Contingency support and alternate site processing plans were put to the test and we found some holes that needed plugging.

Each CBPO must now have an Operating Instruction (OI), developed in conjunction with the base data automation facility, that will tailor local mission needs to available computer assets. Entitled "Loss of Computer Support," this OI should include such information as location of alternate site computer processing capability, specific responsibilities of each CBPO workcenter when loss of computer support is experienced, how to get required information to and from the alternate site--and in what format (e.g., punched cards), and what continuing training is required to insure CBPO personnel will know their jobs.

...THERE IS A CENTRAL IN-HOUSE REFERRAL AGENCY IN THE CBPO?

The Customer Service Center was established in all CBPO's in 1974 with two themes: Provide one central office that could effectively respond to most of our customer inquiries and requirements; and, reduce the amount of walk-in traffic in CBPO workcenters. This allows the staff to concentrate available time on those customer actions that require significant effort and personal attention (e.g., assignment processing, retirement/separation counseling and processing).

Some of the routine actions performed at the Customer Service Center include assistance in filling out assignment preference statements, identification card applications for members and their dependents, applications for special duty assignments, and updating the member's Record of Emergency Data (DD Form 93) to insure the Air Force has correct information on next-of-kin. In those instances where the Customer Service

Center is unable to completely assist the member, a referral appointment is made to the appropriate CBPO workcenter. This eliminates the "hassle" of the member trying to find the right office, and insures that he will get the right help in the least time and be able to get back to work quickly.

...WHAT THE AIR FORCE RETIREE COUNCIL IS?

Established in 1972, the Air Force Retiree Council has become an organization of volunteer officer and enlisted retirees who actively participate in retiree activities. Members of the Council provide retirees and the Air Force a common voice for communicating with each other on a regular basis. The Council, through local base Retiree Activities Offices (RAO), enables all retirees to have a voice in their affairs and assures them that their inputs will be listened to and necessary action will be taken. The Council chairperson, a retired Air Force general officer, reports directly to the Air Force Chief of Staff. Council members are selected to represent 13 geographical areas of the United States and serve a 4-year term.

Your base will have a Retiree Activities Office (RAO) as your focal point for conducting retiree activity business. The RAO is manned by volunteers and your deputy commander is usually the link between the RAO, your staff, and the base community. You may also wish to promote the establishment of a retiree council which can be used to assist the RAO and your staff in promoting active retiree involvement in local and Air Force programs. Remember, retirees are a valuable resource for your command and the Nation. Meet with your RAO Director and keep the ball rolling.

Chapter Seven

SUPPORT IS A TWO-WAY STREET: WE CAN DO IT TOGETHER!

The CBPO is, first and foremost, a service organization dedicated to providing the best possible support to you, your mission, and your people. As this guide previously discussed, we do a lot of things which affect our customers--some are "bad" and, hopefully, most are "good." We don't do them in a vacuum and take great pride in keeping everyone informed of current and projected personnel programs and policies. CBPO members are always available to speak to any organization that wants to know more about what we do--and why. Our bottom line is that we will do everything we can to provide the best possible personnel support to our customers. But sometimes we don't know that our customers need, or want, our help.

Your efforts to encourage a positive relationship between the CBPO and the rest of your staff will certainly help keep the train on track. The CBPO, in turn, will work positively with your commanders and staff to provide timely and accurate service. When we all work together our mission is easily met. Your CBPO is committed to this goal and your leadership is appreciated.