

Appendix R

**STRATEGIC SEALIFT MIDSHIPMEN PROGRAM
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE**

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT ANNEX

SECTION 1 Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program Overview

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1. **Purpose of Appendix R:** The purpose of the annex is to provide specific guidance for the officer development of midshipmen affiliated with the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program (SSMP) at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) and the (6) State Maritime Academies (SMAs). Upon graduation and commissioning, these midshipmen are service assigned as Strategic Sealift Officers (SSOs), a Restricted Line Special Duty designator (1665) in the U.S. Navy Reserve (USNR).

Naval Service Training Command – Officer Development (NSTC OD) is responsible for the development of new accession Naval Officers and ensuring that all candidates meet commissioning requirements. Service assignment as an SSO is limited to graduates from USMMA and the six SMAs. In addition to the normal commissioning requirements, Strategic Sealift Midshipmen (SSM) must obtain a United States Coast Guard unlimited-tonnage license (3rd Mate or 3rd Assistant Engineer) and complete a prescribed Naval Science curriculum at the host institution. The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Maritime Administration (MARAD) provides all funding for the USMMA and direct financial incentives for midshipman participating in the SSMP at the SMAs.

The SSMP is fundamentally different from NROTC Scholarship and College Program in many respects. This annex addresses those differences and provides direction for the administration of the SSMP. *In the absence of specific guidance related to SSMP herein, refer to the general guidance in the applicable section of the ROD.*

Aligning with the Navy’s “Total Force”, despite the unique academic and licensed mariner training, SSM must be prepared for a career of commissioned service in a manner consistent with the preparation provided their counterparts destined for the Navy’s Active Component (AC).

2. **References and Guiding Instruction:**

- a) 46 United States Code Appendix, Chapter 27, Subchapter XIII 511-515
- b) Memorandum of Agreement between the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) and the Assistant Secretary of Maritime Affairs of 15 Nov 1976 (NOTAL).
- c) 46 United States Code §1285
- d) 46 Code of Federal Regulations, Ch. II, Part 310 – Merchant Marine Training
- e) 10 United States Code § 12201 to 12209
- f) Merchant Marine Act, Title 13
- g) Strategic Sealift Officer Program Authorization 221
- h) Maritime Training and Education Act of 1980
- i) OPNAVINST 1534.1E
- j) RESPERMAN 1534 Navy Reserve Personnel Manuals
- k) Maritime Administration’s Student Incentive Payment (SIP) Program (2014)

3. **Authorization for Departments of Naval Science:** The Departments of Naval Science (DNSs) at various maritime academies, colleges, and schools were established under authority of the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, the Maritime Act of 1958, and the Maritime Education and Training Act of 1980.

4. General Information:

- a. In compliance with references (a) and (b), Departments of Naval Science (DNS) have been established at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) and at selected state maritime academies (SMA). Primary responsibilities of these departments are to provide instruction in naval science to maritime students and to administer the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program (SSMP).
- b. Naval science instruction is conducted to provide training for future Strategic Sealift Officers in the operation of merchant marine vessels as a naval and military auxiliary. The naval science instruction is prescribed by the Commander of Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) through the Naval Service Training Command (NSTC) in accordance with reference (b).

5. Action: The Department of Naval Science shall comply with the guidance, procedures, and requirements set forth in this appendix to accomplish the mission and functions promulgated by references (d) and (e). Suggestions that enhance the efficient management of this program should be forwarded to NSTC OD.

6. Appendix Acronyms: A list of frequently used acronyms is located in *ROD Appendix A*.

SECTION 2 SSMP Administration

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1. Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program Overview:

- a. Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program, United States Naval Reserve (SSMP, USNR) has been implemented in compliance with and in support of the requirements of the references. The SSMP is an education and training program conducted by the DNS at the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) and six state maritime academies (SMAs). The program is designed to qualify participants for commissioned service into the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program (SSMP). Midshipmen who successfully complete the SSMP will receive a U.S. Navy Reserve Officer commission as a Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO), designator 1665, with the rank of ensign. Newly commissioned SSOs are part of the Strategic Sealift Readiness Force (SSRF), which is part of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) component. Program administration, eligibility, participation requirements, and training are directed by NSTC OD.
- b. For students attending the USMMA or State Maritime Academies (SMA), the SSMP provides an opportunity to apply for a commission as a Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO) upon graduation. Application for appointment as a midshipman is mandatory for all students attending the USMMA. An application for participation in the SSMP is mandatory for students at maritime institutions who apply for and receive Student Incentive Payments (SIP). Receiving SIP is not a requirement to be in the SSMP. Other students may voluntarily apply for this program.

2. SSMP Mission and Goals

- a. Mission: To provide instruction in naval science at maritime educational institutions to students eligible for commissions in the Naval Reserve. This instruction is to enable these officers to operate effectively within the Navy in time of peace, national emergency, or war; and to perform such other functions and tasks as directed by higher authority.
- b. Goals. The primary objectives of the DNS are to provide students at the various maritime academies with:
 - i. A basic understanding of the applicable concepts and principles of naval science presented in reference (1)
 - ii. A basic understanding of the relationship and interaction between the Merchant Marine and the Navy and projected employment of the Merchant Marine as a vital part of the defense structure in time of national emergency;
 - iii. The opportunity and encouragement to participate in the SSMP as an applicant for active or inactive appointments as an officer in the USNR;

- iv. An appreciation of the Navy's role in national security;
 - v. A sense of personal integrity, honor, and individual responsibility; and
 - vi. Information on the SSOP and any other Navy Programs for which a student is eligible to apply.
- c. **Strategic Sealift Officer Accession Requirements:** Annual Strategic Sealift Officer accessions requirements are established between SSO key stakeholder: Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) via Chief of Naval Personnel (NAVPERS) and Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS-351), Maritime Administration (MARAD), Chief of Naval Operations - Strategic Mobility & Combat Logistics Division (CNO-N425), Military Sealift Command (MSC), and the SSO Program Manager (CNRFC N14). MARAD reviews program requirements and adjusts funding to support meeting SSO commissions. The number of SIP billets allocated is determined on trending interest at each Maritime Academy and discussions with the Maritime Academy Presidents.
- 3. Department of Naval Science Command Relationships:** In conformity with the provisions of existing law, the Department of Naval Science (DNS) is operated through appropriate directives issued by the Department of the Navy (DoN) and the Department of Defense (DoD). Naval Service Training Command Officer Development (NSTC OD) prescribes courses for theoretical and practical professional naval education of maritime school students; provides direction and supervision for administrations of the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program, U.S. Naval Reserve (SSMP, USNR); provides logistical support to DNSs; and authorizes such expenditures from proper Navy appropriations as necessary for the efficient maintenance of DNSs. NSTC is the administrative agent for naval science programs and exercises military command of all DNSs.
- 4. Department of Naval Science Locations**
- a. The SSMP is administered by the DNS at the following institutions:
 - California Maritime Academy
200 Maritime Academy Drive
Vallejo, CA 94590-0644
 - Massachusetts Maritime Academy
101 Academy Drive
Buzzards Bay, MA 02532-3132
 - Texas Maritime College
Texas A&M University at
Galveston, PO Box 1675
Galveston, TX 77553-1675
 - United States Merchant Marine Academy
Naval Science, Furusetth Hall
Kings Point, NY 11024-1699
 - Great Lakes Maritime Academy
Northwestern Michigan College

1701 East Front St.
Traverse City, MI 49686-3061

- b. Units at the State University of New York (SUNY) Maritime College and Maine Maritime Academy are officially Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) units which are assigned the additional duty of providing naval science instruction for maritime students and handling the administration of the SSMP.

State University of New York
Maritime College
Fort Schuyler
Bronx, NY 10465-4198

NROTC, Maine Maritime Academy
44 Pleasant St.
Castine, ME 04421- 0137

- c. All instruction will be conducted/overseen by the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the DNS and the Professor of Naval Science (PNS) or Commanding Officer (CO) of the NROTC unit.
- d. Due to the unique nature of certain functions assigned at the maritime institutions, direct liaison is authorized for routine administrative matters between the DNS and the cognizant staff members of the Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC), Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command – Strategic Sealift Officer Program Manager (CNRFC N14), Chief of Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED), Chief of Naval Personnel (NAVPERS), and the Maritime Administration (MARAD). NSTC OD shall be kept informed of such communications by the CO/OIC where appropriate.

5. **Memorandums of Understanding/Agreement (MOU/MOA) with Host Institution:** When in place, it is highly recommended that units review their MOUs every 10 years. NSTC OD will assist drafting and supporting DNS staff with DNS/host institution MOU/MOAs. The last DoD directed NROTC/host institution MOUs were completed July 2018. DNS unit MOUs are not included in the requirement. DNS OICs are not at the same level of academic status as a PNS, and therefore have limited bargaining powers or leverage to make changes at the host institutions.

6. **General Unit Policies**

- a. Supervision, control, and direction of DNSs will be administered by the Secretary of the Navy through NSTC OD.
- b. Heads of host institutions should have the same academic relationship with the DNS department heads that they have with other academic department heads of the institutions.
- c. DNS staff personnel, whether military or civilian, are not employed by the host institution and therefore may not be assigned by the institution administrators, nor consent to perform any duty which involves the safety and well- being of maritime students, facilities, or property. Navy personnel shall assume no more and no less responsibility than other academic departments for disciplinary programs of the maritime institutions. Navy personnel are not permitted to participate in the alteration, overhaul, or repair of training vehicles owned by, assigned to, or loaned to a maritime institution. Training ships and craft may be considered as classroom

extensions of the maritime institutions; as such the DNS may conduct instruction related to the naval science curriculum, observe and report upon aptitude for further Naval Reserve Officer status, and assist in appropriate collateral duties aboard these vessels. DNS staff personnel may also participate in field trips to civilian or military facilities or engage in other extracurricular activities to the extent considered advisable by the OIC and when approved by the heads of the maritime institution

7. Unit Staffing: Officer and Enlisted Personnel

- a. Detailing: The detailing and relief of officers and enlisted personnel for duty at the DNS is a function of the Chief of Naval Personnel (NAVPERS). Direct liaison is authorized between the units and NAVPERS in matters relating to the nomination and institutional acceptance of staff officers and personnel, as required. Nomination of OICs will be coordinated between NSTC OD and NAVPERS. Nominees for OIC, approved by NSTC OD, will be forwarded for presentation to academy authorities for institutional acceptance.
- b. Allowances: The number of officers and enlisted personnel assigned to duty with the DNS is determined by the Chief of Naval Operations. Requests for changes to allowances should be addressed to NSTC OD for action.
- c. OIC and AOIC FITREPS: BUPERSINST 1610.10(series) establishes procedures and reporting periods for officers. To facilitate preparation of meaningful reports, all unit personnel shall submit input to NSTC OD at least 45 days prior to the end of the regular reporting period or planned detachment date.
 - a. USMMA FITREP - OIC's FITREPs are signed by CNSTC. Instructor FITREPS are signed by the DNS OIC.
 - b. SMA DNS FITREP - OIC FITREPS are signed by CNSTC. AOIC FITREPS are signed by NSTC OD. OIC and AOIC FITREPs are only evaluated against officers with the same billet description.

SECTION 3 SSMP Applications and Acceptance

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1. General Information:

- a. Any U.S. citizen selected for appointment to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) must apply for and accept (if offered) an appointment as a Strategic Sealift Midshipman (SSM) in the U.S. Navy Reserve (USNR). Any eligible student at the State Maritime Academies (SMA) may apply for acceptance in the Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program (SSMP). SMA Strategic Sealift Midshipmen (SSM) must have accepted an enlistment in the SSMP prior to applying for the MARAD’s Student Incentive Payment (SIP) program.
- b. To facilitate processing, arrangements should be made with each maritime academy admissions office to provide advance information to prospective students. This advance information should include specific instructions regarding forms and documents new student must furnish on arrival. Students should be provided a letter explaining the SSMP and request that prospective applicants bring the following documents: the original or notarized copy of their birth certificate, immunization records, SAT/ACT scores, high school transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc. Units will make copies and return the originals to the applicant.

2. Application for Strategic Sealift Midshipman Program

- a. The PNS/OIC is authorized to enroll prospective SSM after establishing their eligibility for the program, including passing medical qualification. An interview with prospective SSMP applicants is at the discretion of the PNS/OIC. The PNS/OIC shall only enroll applicants that demonstrate the aptitude and motivation to succeed as a Naval Officer.
- b. USMMA:
 - i. Prospective USMMA midshipmen are offered academy appointments via a competitive process, including receiving a Congressional nomination. The DNS unit is not staffed to conduct interviews with all SSMP applicants. All USMMA midshipmen are qualified for the SSMP upon admission. USMMA entrance applications are handled by the school admission’s staff, who coordinated with DNS for final acceptance numbers. Documents will be gathered by the DNS soon after commencement of plebe indoctrination.
 - ii. The PNS/OIC shall send a “Welcome Aboard Packet” to the prospective student. In accordance with the *ROD Section 3-20* the packet shall include notification of Navy height/weight and physical fitness standards (i.e., Good Low for 20-24 year olds). Naval Science Welcome Aboard documents are hand delivered by the incoming candidate and gathered by the DNS at the commencement of plebe indoctrination. The packet shall also include the following:
 1. Application for Midshipman Status, SSMP, USNR

2. Proof of U.S. Citizenship – Birth Records
3. Dependency Application/Record of Emergency Data (NAVPERS 1070/602)
4. Security Clearance Application Screening Form
5. Physical Fitness Assessment
6. Military ID Card Request
7. Plebe Indoctrination Data Sheet
8. Department of Naval Science Checklist

c. SMA:

- i. Similar to the NROTC College Program Basic application process, SMA SSMP applications are handled locally by unit staff. Final selections are at the discretion of each unit's PNS/OIC. Requirements documents should be completed as soon as possible after the student submits the SSMP application. The decision should be based upon a student's ability to meet SSMP eligibility requirements outlined in this section. Remaining documentation should be completed in a timely fashion so the midshipman may receive appointment and enlistment. NSTC OD2 does not process SSMP applications.
- ii. SMA students must apply to be accepted in the SSMP no later than the beginning of their 2/C year. Sufficient time must be allowed for students to complete all USCG license requirements, complete Naval Science courses, and meet security clearance reviews for commissioning scrolls to be processed. 1/C and 2/C applicants are generally past the opportunity to apply for the SSMP, but individuals may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Students past application timelines should be informed of other USN, USNR, and SSO commissioning options.

3. **SSMP Eligibility Requirements**: Applicant must meet the following requirements to be eligible for enrollment in the SSMP:

- a. Meet the same basic enrollment requirements as NROTC midshipmen addressed in *ROD Section 2-1.2.a.* and *ROD Section 2-2.3.*
- b. Meet physical standards specified by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) for original licensing as a merchant marine officer. *Reference: USCG Navigation and Vessel Inspection NVIC 04-08.*
- c. Must be enrolled in a bachelor's degree program that is associated with a USCG Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) as a Third Assistant Engineer/Mate of unlimited horsepower/tonnage. The degree path is required to have all endorsements for Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW).
- d. **SSM Age Waivers**: In the interest of capturing a larger talent group, SSMP age waivers will be considered. The SSO Program Manager (CNRFC N14) is responsible for the policy and approval of SSM age waivers. Age waivers only apply to SMAs and not USMMA.

1. Automatic SSMP age waivers for prior enlisted service are allowed if ALL of the following conditions are met:
 - i. When the number of years of enlistment are subtracted from the applicant's current age, the result must be less than 27 years.
 - ii. The applicant attained the grade of E-4.
 - iii. The applicant's DD-214 must state "honorable discharge".
 - iv. The midshipman shall achieve a minimum "good low" PRT scores for his/her age range.
2. For SSMP applicants requiring an age waiver, the unit will submit a request to the SSO Program Office with the following information:
 - i. Major/License
 - ii. Cumulative GPA
 - iii. Estimated Graduation Date
 - iv. Age at time of Graduation
 - v. Unit Participation
 - vi. Prior Military, to include separation status (honorable, etc.)
 - vii. Military or Civilian Awards
 - viii. Additional Information
 - ix. Potential Issues hindering a commission
- e. SSMP Reenrollment: Midshipmen previously enrolled at USMMA may apply to reenroll in the SSMP. Applications and approval for SIP is at the discretion of MARAD.

4. SSMP Application Documentation

- a. SSMP applicants shall complete or furnish the application documents before they sign an enlistment contract. These documents will be maintained in the Student Administrative File.
- b. SSMP Application Letter: This letter constitutes an applicant's official request for appointment to midshipman status.
- a. Birth Certificate/Evidence of Citizenship: SSMP applicants shall meet requirements in *ROD Section 4-10*. Verification of citizenship is mandatory.

- c. SSMP Training and Service Agreement: This contract establishes the formal agreement for a training and service agreement between the student/midshipman and U.S. Navy. It defines the SSMP requirements for eligibility and acceptance into the program, participation while a midshipman, and post-commissioning obligations as a commissioned Strategic Sealift Officer. It is important that each individual read and understand all requirements of the agreement before signing. The agreement is normally executed at the time of appointment/enlistment. Units shall continue using the SSMP Training and Service Agreement until an updated version is approved.
- d. SSM Student Administrative File: Units will maintain and arrange SSMP Student Administrative Files for each SSM in accordance with *ROD Section 4-9*. USMMA's DNS is allowed to maintain a reduced list of documents as the institution maintains a majority of these documents. The Student File Index can be modified as it pertains to the SSM.
- e. Enlistment/Reenlistment Document Armed Forces of the United States (DD form 4/1): The enlistment contract shall be signed once an applicant meets all SSMP eligibility requirements. SSM shall only be under one contract/agreement at a time. Appointees who are members of a reserve component must execute a new contract/agreement specifically for the SSMP. Applicants must have signed enlistment documents prior to submitting an application to MARAD for SIP. Instructions for filling out the DD Form 4 are listed in *ROD Section 4-16* and *ROD Appendix Q*.
 - i. The enlistment contract in the SSMP is for 8 years as a Strategic Sealift Officer (SSO) in an active reserve status. SSO obligation requirements are established in the SSMP Training and Service Agreement and OPNAVINST 1534.1(series).
 - ii. **DD Form 4 Section 8. The SSMP Training and Service Agreement and if applicable MARAD Contract (MA-889/890) shall be listed.**
- f. SSMP Concept of Honor: Applicants shall be briefed on the Navy's concept of honor and shall acknowledge by signing *NSTC Form 1533/121*. Units may modify wording to dovetail with the SSMP and academy's honor code. *Ref: ROD Section 4-14*.
- g. Drug Use Statement of Understanding: All SSM shall meet DoN requirements concerning use of drugs or alcohol in accordance with OPNAVINST 5350.8 series. Each unit shall explain these requirements to students before they execute the *SSMP Training and Service Agreement*, and ask that each student, as part of the application process, sign the *Drug and Alcohol Statement of Understanding NSTC 1533/153*. Random urinalysis testing is conducted by the Maritime Academies in accordance with Title 46 CFR 16.230. Urinalysis testing may occur if onboard USS vessels and during summer cruises.
- h. Privacy Act Statement: SSMP applicants shall execute the *General Purpose Privacy Act Statement (OPNAV 522/12)*. This file is maintained in the Student Administrative File.
- i. Dependency Application/Record of Emergency Data (NAVPERS 1070/602): Units will comply with instruction in *ROD Section 4-17*. SSM do not have access to NSIPS and therefore the information is recorded on paper and verified in OPMIS. This form is only required if a SSM is participating in a Navy summer cruise. The form will be submitted with the commissioning package for the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF). After commissioning, the SSO ENS will update this information in NSIPS.

- j. Privacy Act Statement – Health Care Records (DD Form 2005): Required to be completed for SSM and kept in the midshipman’s health record. For USMMA, records are maintained by USMMA contracted health service department located on campus.
- k. DoD Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB) Report of Medical Examination (DD Form 2351): This form is required for SSM as part of the pre-commissioning BUMED review. For USMMA, records are maintained by USMMA contracted health service department located on campus.
- l. DoD Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB) Report of Medical History (DD Form 2492): This form is required for SSM as part of the pre-commissioning BUMED review. For USMMA, records are maintained by USMMA contracted health service department located on campus.
- m. Request for Discharge or Clearance from Reserve Component – Conditional Release (DD Form 368) - (Only Applies to Currently Enlisted):
 - i. Occasionally prospective SSM are still affiliated with a reserve unit or another service. The conditional release must be forwarded to the applicant’s commanding officer for appropriate release, if release is required by the other service.
 - ii. Students with prior active duty service shall have a copy of their DD Form 214 placed in their Student Administrative File. The *DD Form 214* will be included as part of the commissioning package.
- n. Officer Appointment Acceptance and Oath of Office (NAVPERS 1000/4): Reference *ROD Section 4-51* for instructions. File the form in the Student Administrative File, and it is required as part of the commissioning package.
- o. Administrative Remarks (NAVPERS 1070/613) – “Page 13”: Official administrative remarks can be recorded on a Page 13 as part of the SSM’s official record.

5. Background Check and Security Clearance:

- a. Units shall only initiate NACLIC requests for students that have signed contracts (DD Form 4 and the *SSMP Training and Service Agreement*). Reference *ROD Section 5-23* for more guidance.
- b. The unit PNS/OIC may permit an SSM appointment without a completed NACLIC. SSM appointments and enlistments are made with the condition that any negative information which might be revealed by the NACLIC process which would preclude the granting of a security clearance could result in separation from the program.
- c. Questionnaire for National Security Positions (SF 86): SSM shall follow *ROD Section 4-19* for all security requirements. When the SSM has been granted a security clearance, the SF 86 may be returned to the MIDN, and OPMIS updated to reflect the clearance status.
 - i. At the SMAs, most students who are not selected for SIP will not pursue the SSMP. Therefore, the SF-86 should not be submitted for these SSM until fall semester of their 2/C year.

- ii. USMMA's DNS is allowed to track midshipmen security process in a spreadsheet, and not in individual Student Administrative Files.

SECTION 4 SSMP Operations

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1. SSMP Contracted and Obligated Status

A. Defining contracted and obligated status is important as this determines how administrative processes are conducted. SSM contract and obligation thresholds are defined in law (46 USC Ch 513 and 515). Enlistment in the Navy is accomplished administratively by signing the DD Form 4 and the *SSMP Training and Service Agreement*. SSMs that apply for and receive MARAD’s SIP also agree to a separate but connected service agreement. Specific obligations in the event of non-completion/default are contained in the provisions of 46 United States Code Appendix, subchapter XIII.

B. Contracted: Navy and/or MARAD:

1. SSM Contracted with the US Navy: Contracted students have signed the Oath of Enlistment (*DD Form 4*) and the *SSMP Training and Service Agreement*.

- a. SMA: Conditional upon meeting all eligibility requirements, SSMP applicants can sign contracts with the SSMP/Navy up to the start of their 2/C fall semester.
- b. USMMA: Midshipmen sign a contract with the SSMP/Navy freshmen year.

2. SSM Contracted with MARAD:

- a. SSM are not required to sign contracts with MARAD. There are multiple reasons why midshipmen do not receive SIP: being ineligible (age), were not selected, do not want post-graduation/commissioning obligation to MARAD, receiving SIP negatively affects institution financial aid, etc.
- b. MARAD’s Student Incentive Payment (SIP) Program provides financial support in exchange for maritime service post-graduation. SMA SSM willing to accept the terms and conditions sign the *Service Obligation Contract for State Maritime Academies (MA-889)*.
- c. USMMA SSM sign the *Service Obligation Contract for USMMA (MA-890)*.

C. Obligation Status:

1. Obligated to the US Navy: The Department of the Navy does not provided any financial support to any SSM. SSM are obligated to the USN once the *Oath of Office (DD Form 4)* and *SSMP Training and Service Agreements* are signed. Until policies change, the Navy considers all SSMP in a non-obligated status. This includes all non-SIP recipient SSM. Non-obligated SSM may commission in a non-obligated status.
2. Obligated to MARAD: MARAD updated SIP contract requirements in 2018. Financial obligation thresholds have been reduced from \$20,000 to \$8,000.
 - a. Non-Obligated Status
 - i. SSM SIP Recipients: SSM SIP recipients are in a non-obligated status prior to receiving a 5th SIP payment and/or receiving greater than \$8,000.
 - ii. USMMA: USMMA SSM are in a non-obligated status up to the 1st day of their 2/C year.
 - b. Obligated Status
 - i. SIP Recipient SSM: SSM are obligated to MARAD after receiving a 5th SIP payment, and/or receiving greater than \$8000. SIP recipients are typically obligated to MARAD during the fall semester of the 2/C year.
 - ii. USMMA SSM: USMMA SSM are obligated to MARAD at the start of their 1st day of their 2/C fall trimester.

2. Active Enlisted Service and Recoupment

- A. US Navy's Interest: As per 46 USC§1395 c 4.9, Active Enlisted Service (AES) for obligated SSM is at the discretion of the Secretary of Defense. The authority to determine AES for NROTC MIDN has been delegated to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The authority to disenroll contracted non-obligated SSM is delegated to the PNS/OIC. Until policies change, the US Navy considers all SSM in a non-obligated status and is not interested nor willing to pursue AES. The needs of the Navy will flex as environments and conditions change, and any SSM under contract shall understand that AES is a possibility if they break their contract.
- B. Should AES be considered, representatives from SSMP stakeholders (Naval Service Training Command, Officer Development (NSTC OD), Maritime Administration (MARAD), Chief of Navy Operations (CNO) N42, Military Sealift Command (MSC), and Commander Navy Reserve Forces Command – Strategic Sealift Program (CNRFC N14) will form a working group to discuss conditions and the process for implementing SSMP to AES. This discussion most likely will happen in a war-time environment when the Navy is looking for all avenues to meet recruiting goals.

- C. MARAD's Interest – Recoupment of any SIP is at the discretion of the Maritime Administrator. Although funds have been given and contracts have been signed (MA-889/890), MARAD's current policy states that it will not pursue financial recoupment for contracted, non-obligated SSMP who attrite. MARAD may pursue recoupment for obligated SSM.

3. SSMP Participation and Status Tiers: There are three levels of participation in the SSMP:

- A. SSMP-C Applicants/Candidate: Students that have expressed interest in the SSMP, yet have not met eligibility requirements to sign a contract. Only requires a sports physical to participate. It is at the discretion of the unit's PNS/OIC to determine the requirement for mentorship/counseling and participation in unit activities.
- B. SSMP-B: Students have met all eligibility requirements to join the SSMP. SSM Applicants become contracted and enlisted in the USNR. SSMP-B are in a non-obligated status as follows. SSMP-B can be compared to NROTC's College Program Basic.
- C. SSMP-A: Students have met all requirements of SSMP-B. They are contracted and enlisted in the USNR. SSMP-A are in their 1st or 2nd class year and are in an obligated status with MARAD. SSMP-A can be compared to College Program Advanced Standing.

4. SSMP Inter-Service Transfer

- A. SSM midshipmen may seek appointments to any service academy or ROTC program. Midshipmen desiring to transfer to other accession programs will be placed on interim LOA and processed as a DOR. The disenrollment shall be effected one day prior to appointment by the other ROTC program or service academy. Inter-service transfers are not available at every Maritime Academy. If obligated to MARAD, the SSM will remain obligated until all service obligations are fulfilled. Procedures vary per program type.
- B. SSMP to Marines: SSM may apply to a Marine Corps commissioning program at any time. However, they must complete USMC OCS prior to being commissioned. USMMA DNS will complete a Conditional Release (DD Form 368) for midshipmen to attend OCS. If their request is approved, midshipmen must complete OCS. They remain in the SSMP until graduation but commission as second lieutenants. All requests shall be submitted to MCRC (ON/E) via NSTC OD4.
- C. SSMP to Air Force or Army (ROTC): SSM must apply and be accepted before their senior year. Midshipmen shall be disenrolled from the SSMP as a DOR.
- D. SSMP to Navy (ROTC):
 - 1. SSM are allowed to apply for NROTC side-load scholarships while still being enrolled in the SSMP. SSM compete in a status similar to a College Program Basic applicant. These requests are most likely received from SSM attending SMAs with both NROTC and SSMP programs.
 - 2. Upon selection for a side-load scholarship, the SSM will be disenrolled from the SSMP as a DOR. A conditional release from the SSMP (DD Form 368) will be required, as this releases

the SSM from the *DD Form 4* and *SSMP Training and Service Agreement*. The disenrollment shall be effected one day prior to an NROTC appointment. SSM in an obligated status will remain obligated until all service obligations are fulfilled. If the SSM is a SIP recipient, the unit will notify MARAD that the SSM has accepted an NROTC Scholarship Refer to *ROD Sections 2-14* and *4-32* for Change of Option Requests. SSM will be processed as per the College Program Basic process. Reference *Appendix Q* for the scholarship activation process.

- E. College Program Basic to SSMP. The midshipman must be in a USCG license track program.
- F. USNA/USMMA to SMA SSMP: Applicants must meet all SSMP eligibility requirements. A letter or statement of intent to join SSMP shall be addressed to unit PNS/OIC. Transcript from previous school will be required to process. The midshipman will most likely require a new DoDMERB as the pre-commission physical is only valid for 5 years, and the MIDN will be past this date at time of estimated commission at the SMA. The request will be processed through OD4 as a “reactivation” in OPMIS.

5. MARAD’s Student Incentive Pay (SIP) (Not Applicable to USMMA SSM)

- A. SSMP Student Incentive Pay (SIP) Program. The MARAD SIP Program is available to State Maritime Academy (SMA) students. Students who enroll in the SIP program receive funding to offset the cost of uniforms, books, subsistence, and tuition in return for a service obligation. The SIP Program is offered at all six State Maritime Academies. The SIP students are eligible to receive tuition assistance not to exceed four (4) years or \$32,000. In exchange for this financial assistance, graduates of the SIP Program all incur a service obligation.
- B. MA-890 (SMA) – Once approved by MARAD, SSM are required to sign this form in order to receive SIP. These forms are the equivalent of NROTC’s Scholarship Agreement. These forms shall be kept in the Student’s Administrative File. The MA-889 is only required for SSM receiving SIP. These forms should be included in the commissioning package to PERS as part of the build for the OMPF record. MARAD manages and controls the MA-890.
- C. SIP Obligations upon graduation. Having successfully completed the course of instruction at a State Maritime Academy for a maritime degree and upon receiving a U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) with an officer endorsement, the graduate’s service obligation includes the following:
 - a. Service/employment in the maritime industry for three (3) years (afloat employment is priority);
 - b. Maintaining a USCG MMC for six (6) years with the appropriate national/international endorsements and certifications required by the USCG for service aboard domestic and international vessels. Maintaining a document of continuity does not fulfill this portion of the obligation, and there is no grace period. Graduates must also maintain a valid Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) for six (6) years following graduation and maintain a valid USCG medical certificate.
 - c. A Navy Reserve commission as an SSO for eight (8) years; and

- d. Conducting an annual compliance reporting to MARAD until all service obligation components are fulfilled.
 - e. Fulfillment of the SIP Service Obligation requires completion of all elements listed above. The only exception to this is individuals who, serve as a commissioned officer on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States or as a commissioned officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) or the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). Those SIP graduates following graduation who provide five (5) years of honorable Active Duty service will fulfill their MARAD obligation, with the exception of their annual reporting.
- D. MARAD is responsible for providing guidance for the selection and processing of SIP applications. They determine criteria for ranking, the interview process, and which applicants are selected to receive SIP. NROTC/DNS staff can participate as a member of the SIP application review board.
- E. Unlike NROTC scholarship program, SSM do not compete nationally for MARAD's SIP program. The number of SIP allocations are determined by MARAD. Students compete internally within each Maritime Academy. Eligibility and selection process is outlined in MARAD's SIP Manual.
- F. NROTC/DNS units will provide a list of SSM that are applying for SIP to a Maritime Academy point of contact. The list should be alphabetical to prevent presenting any indication of conflicts of interest. The timeline for requiring applications is described in MARAD's SIP Manual.
- G. There is no equivalent NROTC Educational Cost Breakdown Form (NSTC 1533/113) for SIP. Payment tracking information is handled by MARAD, and the unit is not required to tract monthly payments.
6. **SSMP and Navy Internships/Summer Cruises.** SSM that express a strong interest in active Naval Service following graduation are eligible to participate in summer cruises (or internships) similar to those of NROTC midshipmen. SSM as are ineligible for NROTC Program funding and generally pay all expenses out-of-pocket, including transportation, lodging and meals. Summer cruise/internships for SSM can be arranged through NSTC OD3 on case-by-case basis, conditional upon availability and resources. Due to Maritime Academy and USCG sailing requirements, SSM Navy internships may be scheduled outside of NROTC traditional summer cruise periods. Navy internships should be noted on the SSM Active Duty application package.
7. **SSM Performance Evaluation and Counseling.** Units shall conduct SSM Performance Evaluations and Counseling as close to ROD Chapter 6 instruction as possible. Since the SMA and DNS programs have significantly small staffs, variations to SSM performance evaluation and counseling is allowed.
8. **SSM and Sea Time on USS Ships** - SSM on USS ships may be eligible for USCG sea time. Acceptance of sea days is at the discretion of the USCG. SSM should research USCG requirements prior to relying on USS sea days to graduate.
9. **SSMP Disenrollments and Performance Review Boards (PRB)**

- A. The PRB process was designed to work at fully staffed NROTC units for NROTC Midshipmen. It does not take into consideration the minimally manned DNS units or the lack of capacity of NROTC/DNS staff to support a full PRB process for both NROTC midshipmen and SSMs. The SMA DNS's are allowed specific exceptions to requirements to reduce issues such as conflicts of interest (e.g., staff member is also the class advisor), units to rely 100% on outside unit support, and SSMP commercial sailing schedules.
- B. Disenrollment Authority
- i. 46 USC identifies that the SSM disenrollment authority is the Secretary of Defense, with authority delegated to the Secretary of the Navy. Through the Assistant Secretary of the Navy and CNSTC, disenrollment authority for the SSMP is delegated as follows:
 - ii. Contracted and Non-Obligated: Disenrollment authority is delegated to the unit PNS/OIC.
 - iii. Contracted and Obligated: Disenrollment authority is delegated to NSTC OD.
 - iv. SSMP Disenrollment Documents to MARAD: NSTC OD will support MARAD by providing paperwork required to support financial recoupment.
- C. SSMP Disenrollment: SSMP disenrollments are based upon the SSM's obligation status.
- i. SSMP-C Applicants: SSMP applicants can be disenrolled at the unit.
 - ii. SSMP-B Disenrollment (*contracted, non-obligated status*)
 - a. Disenrollment authority for SSMP-B is delegated to the unit PNS/OIC. The PNS/OIC may forward any disenrollment to NSTC OD to review and make a disenrollment decision.
 - b. PRB's are not required for contracted SSM that are disenrolling for the following reasons: (1) drop-on-request, (2) dropped by institution, (3) medical disqualification, (4) academic, and (5) failure to meet security requirements. Holding a PRB for any of these disenrollments is at the discretion of the PNS/OIC, and the MIDN may waive the right to the PRB.
 - c. Aptitude/Disciplinary PRB process is required to be initiated. SSM may not waive the right to the PRB.
 - d. Any SSM that wants to argue their case to remain in the SSMP can request a PRB. Final disenrollment authority for these situations shall be NSTC OD. NSTC OD will inform MARAD and the unit of any SSMP disenrollments.
 - e. Disenrollment Paperwork: Once disenrolled, the unit will notify the SSM via a standard Navy letter stating the SSM is disenrolled from the SSMP. A copy of the disenrollment letter shall be kept in the Student's Administrative File along with any supporting documentation: trigger document, transcripts, probation/warning letters, etc. The unit shall attrite the MIDN from OPMIS.

- f. NSTC OD will inform MARAD of all contracted SSMP disenrollments.
- iii. SSMP-A Disenrollment (*contracted, obligated status*)
 - a. Disenrollment authority for SSMP-A is delegated to NSTC OD.
 - b. PRB's are required for all SSMP-A disenrollments.
 - c. Any SSM that wants to argue their case to remain in the SSMP can appeal. In these cases, final disenrollment authority for these situations is CNSTC. NSTC OD will inform MARAD and the unit of any SSMP disenrollments.

10. SOP for DNS/NROTC Units Requesting Reserve Support

- a. Reserve Support through CNRFC N14 – Military Sealift Command (MSC) is the SSO Flag Sponsor, and funding is often prioritized for operations and exercises. CNRFC N14 and MSC understand the importance of having an SSO presence at the units to support SSMP training and mentorship. SSOs bring a unique perspective to the DNS/NROTC program and they understand how to simultaneously balance Navy Reserve and Merchant Marine careers.
- b. Units will coordinate with ODSSO, who will notify CNRFC N14 a minimum 3 months prior to units requesting SSO ADT support. This allows for appropriate time for N14 to post the announcement, receive and rank applications, and review SSO readiness status (medical, PHA/PFA, etc.). N14 will prioritize SSO applicants based on maritime experience (upgraded licenses and sailing experience), completed advanced education and JPME courses, previous Post Commissioning Indoctrination (PCI) assistance, and SSO ADT experience. N14 will discuss ADT applicants with the PNS/OIC prior to approving any orders.
- c. Reserve Support through CNSTC: Units can submit requests to NSTC N1 for ADT or ADSW support.
- d. ADT Order Lengths Options:
 - i. 365 ADT orders: Every effort shall be taken to have the SSO attend *Teaching in Higher Education: NROTC Instructor Preparation Course* offered twice per year.
 - ii. 135 ADT orders
 - iii. 2-week ADT orders: case-by-case basis for USMMA and the other SMAs.

11. Service Assignment for SSM

- A. The US Navy highly values the SSM's technical merchant mariner skillsets. USN accession quotas are controlled at BUPERS and managed by Officer Community Managers (OCM). Most SSM commission in the USNR as SSOs. SSM are able to apply for a limited and highly competitive number of Navy URL and RL Active Duty billets. OCM's set the community requirements standards and entertain SSM applications on a case-by-case basis. SSM selection is not guaranteed and is dependent on qualification, class ranking, and needs of the Navy. Taking into account the Maritime Academy commercial schedules, SSM Active Duty Navy service assignment applications are not collected until the MIDN's 1/C year.

- B. 46 USC and 46 CFR allow SIP recipients to apply for Active Duty commissions in any branch of military service, including the NOAA and Public Health Service.
- C. SSMP Active Duty Navy Options: SSM can apply for all USN URL and RL designators. The following paragraphs provide specific information for specific USN communities.
- i. Pilot/NFO - Maritime Academies should schedule the best SSM candidates interested in Navy flight billets for flight physicals starting in the MIDN's 2/C year. SSM sent for flight physicals should complete the pilot and NFO physicals during the same physical. The minimum recommended ASTB scores should be 6-6-6 for AVN community. AVN OCM will not consider any applications if MIDN is not flight physically qualified.
 - ii. SWO/EDO: Marine Engineering majors should be encouraged to pursue SWO/EDO option. Requests for EDO should be accepted at the beginning of 1/C year, as these billets are limited even for NROTC.
 - iii. SEAL/EOD: Any SSM interested in SEAL/EOD Active Duty billets must apply and attend the 1/C SEAL/EDO SOAS summer programs. The SEA/EOD communities will most likely not select any SSMP Active Duty billets without competing SOAS.
 - iv. Restricted Line Communities – Restricted Line (RL) communities review applications and make selections on case-by-case basis. These billets are extremely competitive.
 - i. USMMA SSMP and the USMC. USMMA SSM should continue combined training with USNA (i.e., leatherneck). SMA SSM can participate in NROTC USMC summer cruise programs, but expenses will be paid for by the MIDN. Most likely the full 12-week USMC OCS will be required. NSTC OD3 Training Officer (Normally a USMC O-4) will be the POC for arranging USMC summer cruises and OCS/ODS scheduling.
- D. Active Duty Requests
- i. SSM who request active duty must submit a service assignment request package to NSTC OD per the service assignment timelines in this paragraph. In doing so, each maritime academy unit shall rank order their midshipmen per first choice designator. Packages are required to be submitted no later than 18 October to NSTC OD4. Service assignment packages received after that date may not be accepted. Upon receipt of the service assignment package, OD4 will liaison with each community manager to determine service assignment. The results will be passed to NSTC OD4 and each maritime academy.
 - ii. SSM Active Duty Application Request: The application paperwork shall include the following:
 - a. SSMP Designator Request Transmittal Letter
 - b. Interviewer's Appraisal Sheet, NAVCRUIT 1131/5, completed by a Naval Officer
 - c. Proof of pre-commissioning physical (i.e., DoDMERB-approved DD 2808) or BUMED/NMOTC approved waiver recommendation
 - d. Application for Recall to Extended Active Duty, NAVPERS 1331/5
 - e. Student Resume
 - f. At least (3) Letters of Recommendation
 - g. Current Unofficial Academic Transcript

- h. Most Recent Evaluations
 - i. Personal Letter (addressing work history, personal achievements, extracurricular activities, leadership potential, and interest in the community)
 - j. If necessary, applications or any documents required for certain designators (ex: ASTB scores)
 - iii. With input from the DNS/NROTC units, the applicants are rank ordered per their first choice designator. Service assignment packages received after this date may jeopardize the student's opportunity for active duty assignment through this process. Upon receipt of the service assignment package, NSTC ODSSO will liaison with each community manager to determine service assignment. Official results will be sent to the DNS/USNR units via Official Mail Message from NSTC OD.
 - iv. Officer Community Managers (OCM) review applicants and inform NSTC OD of the primary and alternate selections. SSMP applicants are allowed 2 weeks to respond with an accept/decline response. Any declined responses will be filled by the alternates, which are allowed 2 weeks to respond. By the end of November, the SSM to Active Duty list is finalized and distributed to Maritime Academies, NSTC OD, and the OCM's.
 - v. If selected for Active Duty Navy, the commissioning package will follow ROD guidance for the NROTC scholarship process.
- E. Reserve Duty Requests: All documents required for commissioning shall be forwarded to PERS-8 at least six months prior to the midshipman's commissioning date. At the same time, all reserve commissioning scrolls shall be prepared by the unit and forwarded to NSTC OD4.
- F. SSM Scrolls - When preparing commissioning scrolls, SSM who request active duty must appear on both the regular and reserve commissioning scrolls. This is required because not all SSM who request active duty are approved for active duty when commissioning scrolls are due.
- G. Other than USN Commissions:
- i. SSM that do not apply or are not selected through NSTC's Active Duty Navy application and selection process remain eligible to seek active duty commissions in other branches of service. SSM who seek an appointment as a commissioned officer in another service, as an officer with NOAA or the Health Service Corps, must be accepted by the other service and conditionally released from the SSMP. If disapproved, the midshipman remains obligated to accept a USNR/SSO commission if qualified for active duty assignment.
 - ii. If approved, the SSM shall be disenrolled and discharged from the Naval Service the day preceding appointment in the other service.
 - iii. It is highly recommended that the application process be started as early as possible to reduce potential delays in the commissioning process.
 - iv. A conditional release (DD-368) will be required for commissions other-than-USN. Conditional releases are not guaranteed, as the SSM has signed a contract with the USN. Conditional release authority is only delegated if the Navy is allowing conditional releases. For SMA NROTC units and USMMA, conditional release authority is at the discretion of the

PNS/OIC. For the SMA DNS units, conditional release authority is at the discretion of NSTC OD. NSTC ODSSO maintains communication with SSO key stakeholders and will inform NSTC OD if the Navy is not allowing SSM conditional releases.

- ii. Air National Guard Commission. There is no direct commission option for SSM to the Air National Guard. A conditional release is required for the SSM to commission to the USAF Reserve, and then laterally transfer to the Air NG. This paperwork process and commission can be signed on the same day.

12. Delayed Commissioning

- A. Extenuating circumstances occasionally prevent SSM from commissioning as scheduled. Sometimes additional sea time or coursework/sea projects are required prior to graduating. Occasionally SSM did not pass the license on the first attempt.
- B. A SSM has 3 months from the time of graduation to pass the USCG license (Ref: 46 USC). Each SMA's program is different, and some allow MIDN to graduate without passing the USCG license. Not passing the license will be processed as an Academic PRB.