



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE SURGEON GENERAL
5109 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH VA 22041-3258



April 4, 2003

DASG-HSZ

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEFS OF STAFF, REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMANDS AND
MACOM COMMAND SURGEONS

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI) for Medial Board Examinations To Be
Disseminated to the Field

1. Currently 535 Medical Officers are eligible for medical board examinations, to include re-certification examinations in Calendar Year (CY) 2003. There are more than 30 physicians deployed and an additional 90 at risk for deployment by virtue of their Professional Filler System (PROFIS) assignments. The enclosed LOI has been developed outlining the policy guidance for accomplishing board examinations for CY 2003 for Medical Corps Officers who are deployed, deploying, or PROFIS to units participating in the Global War on Terror, to include Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

2. This policy is effective immediately. My point of contact is LTC V. Norvell Coots, Tertiary Care Staff Officer, who can be reached at (703) 681-0102; DSN 761-0102; or, email address: Norvell.Coots@otsq.amedd.army.mil

FOR THE SURGEON GENERAL:

KENNETH L. FARMER, JR., M.D.
Major General
Deputy Surgeon General

Encl



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**MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEFS OF STAFF, REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMANDS AND MACOM
COMMAND SURGEONS**

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI) for Medical Corps Board Examinations During Global War on Terrorism

1. Purpose. To prescribe the policy and procedures for Calendar Year (CY) 2003 medical specialty board examinations for Medical Corps Officers either Professional Filler System (PROFIS), or deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).
2. Objectives. The objective of this policy is to describe the plan for assisting board eligible medical officers who wish to complete their specialty board examinations in CY 2003, but are in jeopardy of missing these examinations due to support for Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Applicability of this policy is directed toward medical officers in direct support of GWOT.
3. Responsibilities.
 - a. The Directorate of Health Policy and Services (HP&S) exercises responsibility for the overall plan to assist with board completion.
 - b. Commanders of Major Subordinate Commands are responsible for ensuring that PROFIS medical officers within their commands are properly identified and notified of this plan.
 - c. Commanders of MEDCENS and MEDDACS are responsible for notification of board eligible PROFIS medical officers, verification of application for each specific board examination, and reporting back through channels to HP&S the name, specialty, type of examination (oral or written), and date of examination.
 - d. Combatant Command (COCOM) Surgeons are responsible for identification and notification of deployed board eligible medical officers, verification of intent to take the board examination, verification of application for the board examination, and reporting that information by name, specialty, type of examination, and date of examination to HP&S.
 - e. COCOM Surgeons are also responsible for providing the appropriate advice to the commander in order to identify those medical officers needing backfill replacement should they re-deploy to CONUS for the specified board preparation and execution period.
4. Definitions.
 - a. Board Examination. For the purposes of this policy, the term board examination will refer to specialty board certifying examinations, either written or oral, and will include specialty re-certification examinations if taken in the final year of re-certification eligibility.

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b. Board Eligible. Any medical officer who has completed residency, or sub-specialty fellowship, training and has not yet completed the subject matter specific certifying examination for that training.

5. Policy.

a. It is the policy of Office of The Surgeon General (OTSG) that the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) will plan for board preparation and completion by board eligible medical officers in support of GWOT. While GWOT operational conditions will determine the availability of medical officers to re-deploy for board exams, every attempt should be made to re-deploy those eligible individuals from the operational theater for a period not to exceed three weeks (including travel time to and from CONUS). Those medical officers identified as needing backfill replacement will be programmed for a replacement from the available active component inventory, or from the reserve component as available.

b. Deployed and deploying Medical Officers.

(1) COCOM Surgeons will contact all medical unit commanders and will ascertain the number of board eligible medical officers currently in their AOR.

(2) Verification will be made that each board eligible medical officer does or does not plan to complete their respective board examination in CY 2003.

(3) For those planning on board completion CY 2003, verification will be made that they have completed the required time-sensitive application process, to include payment of fees, for the board examination.

(4) Once verified, the information will be provided to HP&S at OTSG, in the following format: rank, last name, first name, middle initial, specialty board examination, date of examination, TOE unit of assignment, and AOC of assignment (ex. if an allergist is assigned as a GMO, internist, or Flight Surgeon).

(5) POC at HP&S OTSG is LTC Coots at (703) 681-0102; or, DSN 761-0102. LT Coots' email address is: norvell.coots@otsg.amedd.army.mil. Additionally, this information should be provided to the MEDCOM Consultant Program Manager, Ms Cyndi Perry at (703) 681-0102; or, DSN 471-7987. Ms. Perry's email address is: cyndi.perry@amedd.army.mil.

(6) COCOM Surgeons will identify those medical officers needing backfill replacement during the maximum three-week board re-deployment period and will provide that information, via command channels, to OTSG Current Operations SIPERNET at OTSGOPSCENTER21OPNS@hqda-s.army.smil.mil.

c. PROFIS Medical Officers.

(1) Any board eligible medical officer currently assigned to a PROFIS position is considered at risk for deployment.

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(2) MEDCEN and MEDDAC commanders will contact each board eligible medical officer currently assigned to a PROFIS position and will verify that the medical officer does or does not plan to complete their respective board examination.

(3) For those planning to complete the examination, verification will be conducted to ensure that the required time-sensitive application process has been completed, to include payment of fees.

(4) Once verified, the information will be provided to HP&S via command channels in the following format: rank, last name, first name, middle initial, specialty board examination, date of examination, MTF of assignment, and PROFIS unit of assignment.

(5) POC at HP&S, OTSG is LTC Coots, (703) 681-0102; or, DSN 761-0102. LTC Coots' email address is: norvell.coots@otsg.amedd.army.mil. Additionally, this information should be sent to the MEDCOM Consultant Program Manager, Ms Cyndi Perry, (210) 221-7987; or, DSN 471-7987. Ms. Perry's email address is: cyndi.perry@amedd.army.mil.

(6) Commanders will ensure that each PROFIS position vacated during the board examination period is temporarily filled with a fully qualified and deployment ready medical officer.

d. Officers electing to withdraw board applications

(1) Those deployed board eligible medical officers who elect to withdraw their application for board examination, due to operational constraints, should individually contact their specific board directly.

(2) In all cases of withdrawal due to GWOT, the boards have indicated that they will either refund all application fees; or, allow the fees to roll over to the next available examination date.

(3) Candidates for oral board examinations in the surgical specialties will not be required to collect new cases, but will be allowed to test with their current case set.

e. Officers unable to take medical boards.

Those deployed board eligible medical officers who, due to operational requirements, will not be able to re-deploy from the AOR during the board examination period (or, who elected not to apply for the board examination in CY 2003 due to operational concerns) will be covered by 37 USC, Chapter.5, Section 303b (i.e., Waiver Of Board Certification Requirements), which specifies that a medical officer, dental officer, or non-physician health care provider, who was unable to complete the required specialty board examination due to assignment in support of a contingency operation, will receive retroactive board pay to the period of eligibility provided that they successfully complete the board examination at the next available date after their return from the contingency operation.

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f. Effective Date. This policy will be effective 1 April 2003 and will remain in effect until otherwise rescinded.

6. Point of contact is LTC Coots at (703) 681-0102; or, DSN 761-0102. LTC Coots' email: norvell.coots@otsg.amedd.army.mil.

FOR THE SURGEON GENERAL:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth L. Farmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "F".

KENNETH L. FARMER, JR., M.D.
Major General
Deputy Surgeon General