



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
CHIEF OF NAVAL AIR TRAINING  
250 LEXINGTON BLVD SUITE 102  
CORPUS CHRISTI TX 78419-5041

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**MEMORANDUM**

**From:** Chief of Naval Air Training

**Subj:** CHIEF OF NAVAL AIR TRAINING (CNATRA) CALL SIGNS POLICY

- 1. Purpose.** This memorandum sets forth procedures for Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) and Fleet Replenishment Squadron (FRS) commands on assigning call signs to Naval Aviators (Pilots and Naval Flight Officers).
- 2. History.** Call signs have a rich naval heritage and are a time-honored tradition in Naval Aviation. Carriers, air wings, and squadrons all have defined call signs and it is only natural that individual aircrew would as well. They have proven valuable as another level of authentication/identification in making a clear distinction between aircraft in the air, particularly during times of intense, fast-paced operations. They provide brevity in communication among the tightly knit fabric of naval aviation that squadrons represent. Originally required for tactical communication during operations where radio transmissions could be intercepted, call signs prevented individuals from outside of the naval unit from identifying the speaker. Call signs remain an important symbolic representation of the warrior culture that exists throughout Naval Aviation.
- 3. Today.** By linking a proud history with modern Naval Aviation, call signs create a sense of camaraderie and belonging, and should enhance morale and promote esprit-de-corps among ready room personnel. However, if a call sign is inappropriately assigned, it becomes a distraction to the command and can deny the individual receiving the call sign their rightful sense of belonging in the squadron.
- 4. Action.** Each member of the Navy is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, and to work in an environment free of harassment and unlawful discrimination. Our call signs must be in keeping with this directive and continue to promote a sense of camaraderie and belonging among all Naval Aviators. Accordingly, call signs shall not be lewd, graphic, or sexual in nature, nor should they be assigned on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion.
- 5. Procedure.** Call signs may be assigned through a formal or informal process, including call sign review boards, kangaroo courts, or detachment student reviews. However, multiple members of the command shall assemble to review and recommend all call signs. To the extent practicable, the call sign process should include as diverse a membership as possible. The Commanding Officer (CO) shall provide oversight and shall approve all call sign assignments in writing. The CO may delegate this authority to the Executive Officer.

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a. Call signs can be instructive or play off a first name or surname. Good humor, creativity, and cleverness is encouraged, but call signs shall not bring shame or discredit to the Navy or to the individual receiving the call sign, nor shall they be offensive, malicious, or hostile.

b. In the call sign process, the CO must be made aware of any secondary meanings or pop culture references. Call sign review members shall advise the CO of such secondary meanings or pop culture references even if they are unintentional to the call sign assignment.

c. All Navy personnel shall be cognizant of the changing nature of public perception when determining the appropriateness or continuing appropriateness of a call sign.

d. When a call sign is issued, the individual receiving the call sign shall be advised of the rationale behind the assignment. If an individual believes their call sign is not in accordance with the directives outlined in paragraph four, they are strongly encouraged to inform their CO of the issue to provide the command an opportunity to address their concern.

6. Leadership. Leaders are responsible for setting an appropriate command environment and culture. We will guide our personnel to the right behavior and demand change when required. We must be sensitive to those situations in which a call sign is not in alignment with our ethos because it humiliates, demeans, belittles or intimidates someone within our community. This is our ready room, in our fleet; Naval Aviators are expected to take ownership of this issue and address any inappropriate conduct immediately. What is appropriate for a call sign will evolve, and we must continue to recognize and embrace those changes.



G. N. HARRIS

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