

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER
HQ AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER**

**AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER
INSTRUCTION 36-110**



29 AUGUST 2019

Personnel

FORCE SHAPING BOARDS

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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(Col Paul E. Swenson)

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This AFPC Instruction provides guidance and outlines internal operating procedures to be used in the administration and conduct of Force Shaping Boards (FSBs) for the United States Air Force at the Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center, USAF Selection Board Secretariat. This publication implements requirements in accordance with AFI 36-2501, *Officer Promotions and Selective Continuation*. This publication does not apply to Air Force Reserve Command Units. This publication does not apply to Air National Guard. This publication may not be supplemented or further implemented/extended.

Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Forms 847 from the field through the appropriate function chain of command. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with (IAW) Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records* and disposed of IAW the Air Force Records Information System Records Disposition Schedule.

This publication requires the collection and or maintenance of information protected by the Privacy Act of 1974 authorized by 10 United States Code 8013, Secretary of the Air Force; as implemented by Air Force Instruction 36-2608, *Military Personnel Records System* and Executive Order 9397 Social Security Number. The applicable System of Records Number F036 AF PC C, Military Personnel Records System is available at: <http://dpclo.defense.gov/Privacy/SORNs.aspx>

Vigilance must be taken to protect Personally Identifying Information (PII) when submitting or sending nominations, applications or other documents to Department of Defense agencies through government Internet, software applications, systems, e-mail, postal, faxing or scanning.

Waivers to this instruction are authorized. The authorities to waive wing/unit level requirements in this publication are identified with a Tier (“T-0, T-1, T-2, T-3”) number following the compliance statement. See AFI 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, for a description of the authorities associated with the Tier numbers. AFPC/CC has delegated the waiver approval authority for tiered and non-tiered items in this publication to Selection Board Secretariat, AFPC/PB. Waivers must be approved by AFPC/PB. Waiver requests will be submitted using the AF Form 679, *Air Force Publication Compliance Item Waiver Request/Approval*, or via e-mail or memorandum if the form is unavailable. To meet the intent of AFI 33-360, email finalized waivers (AF Form 679) to AFPC/PB Workflow (afpc.pb.taskmgmt@us.af.mil).

Waivers may be approved for a period not to exceed the requested waiver period or 30 calendar days after the approving commander’s tour length, whichever is shorter. Waivers automatically expire 30 days after a change of command unless the new commander renews the waiver. A copy of approved waivers are required to become part of the approver’s and requestor’s official records. Within 7 days of waiver approval notification, the appropriate waiver information is entered in the Management Internal Control Toolset.

Refer to **attachment 1** for Glossary of References and Supporting Information.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This document has been updated to include the waiver requirements to include the use of AF Form 679, *Air Force Publication Compliance Item Waiver Request/Approval* and updates office symbols throughout.

1. Scope. This operating instruction will govern how all Air Force Shaping Boards (FSBs) are conducted.

2. General. Selection Board Secretariat personnel are responsible for conducting officer FSBs for Air Force officers on the Active Duty List (ADL). **(T-3).** FSBs are designed to achieve a “right-sizing” of the force through a review and selection of the best qualified officers within specific Secretarial-designated groups (as defined in the board details), for retention on active duty. Those officers not selected for retention will be discharged, released from active duty, or transferred from the ADL to the Reserve Active-Status List on a date established by the Air Force. “Secretarial-designated groups” may be composed of officers in a competitive category, and may be further defined by year group, core AFSC or both. (For every board the criteria must be consistent with those prescribed by the statute authoring the board.)

3. Responsibilities. Secretariat personnel will ensure this instruction is adhered to for all FSBs. Board members and alternate board members should familiarize themselves with this instruction, as well as with other applicable instructions and directives. Alternate board members will remain on stand-by for the duration of the board.

3.1. AFPC/PB is the functional agency POC responsible for mission accomplishment of the board.

4. Rules Governing All Boards. When the board is in session, it works directly for the Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) under the supervision of the board president (BP). No person may direct a particular individual be selected or not selected by the board, censure, reprimand, or admonish the board or any member of the board for recommendations or for exercising any function within the discretion of the board, or attempt to coerce or influence, by any unauthorized means, any action of a board or any member of a board in formulating the board's recommendations.

5. Organizing Boards. FSBs will consist of a BP, voting board members, recorders, and administrative support staff. The same officer will serve as BP for all boards convened pursuant to the same Secretarial staff package. For FSBs considering competitive categories by core AFSCs, career areas will be grouped with similar skills when practical. Officer Selection Records (OSRs) will be distributed based on Secretarial-designated groups, commensurate with board composition.

6. Selection Board Members. Membership of each board consists of five or more officers on the ADL. Board members must be serving in the grade of colonel or higher. The board chair, (or panel chair if the board is subdivided into five member panels), will be a Line of the Air Force (LAF) brigadier general. For LAF boards considering competitive categories by AFSCs, board or panel chairs will not be from the career area of the records they will be considering. A FSB will include at least one voting member from each competitive category being considered by that board. For all FSBs considering competitive category by AFSC, at least one voting member will be from each AFSC being considered, regardless of the competitive category. Board membership for the Line of the Air Force Judge Advocate General (LAF-J), Chaplain (CHAP), and Health Professions competitive categories will be structured to ensure no more than two voting members (or not a majority or more for a larger board) are from the same competitive category (or competitive category and AFSC) under consideration. The remaining voting members will be line officers, except for boards considering health profession competitive categories where the other voting members will be officers from a health profession competitive category not under consideration on that board, if such officers are available. This does not preclude LAF officers substituting for these other voting members when it is deemed impractical for other health profession categories to be present. Board membership should reflect the eligible population in terms of minority and women officers and Major Commands of assignment, as much as practical. An officer cannot serve as a member of two successive boards considering officers of the same Secretarial-designated group.

7. Board President (BP). The BP is a nonvoting, non-scoring member of the board. He or she must be at least a major general. The BP will oversee the conduct of the board and ensure that the board is conducted in accordance with this instruction and SecAF guidance. While the BP may participate in the discussions of the board, he/she may not constrain the voting members of the board from selecting for retention those officers they consider best qualified to meet the needs of the Air Force. The BP will conduct a quality review of records in accordance with [Paragraph 26](#) of this instruction, including determining which letters written to the board expressly or implicitly request that the author not be retained ("Do Not Retain Me" letters). The BP will administer an oath to board recorders and the administrative staff before the board begins scoring records and perform other duties in connection with the board proceedings as may be required. The BP is the authorizing official for directing that a SecAF-approved alternate replace a primary board member and will make determinations on availability of a primary board

member to decide whether an alternate board member is required. The BP will advise the SecAF at the board outbrief if alternate(s) are used.

8. Board Members. The board members will perform their duties based on the best interests of the Air Force as directed in the SecAF Memorandum of Instructions (MOI). They will request relief from SecAF if they cannot, in good conscience, perform their duties without prejudice or partiality. They will request relief from the SecAF of their obligation not to disclose board proceedings if they believe the integrity of the board's proceedings has been affected by improper influence of senior military or civilian authority, misconduct by the BP or a member, or any other reason. Upon the granting of their request, the board member will report the basis for his or her belief to the SecAF.

9. Board Recorders. The board recorders ensure procedures outlined in this instruction are met. They will manage the flow of records to the board members, maintain the order of merit established by the board members' scores, answer administrative questions, review information for presentation to the board, and advise the BP and members on board processes and other administrative matters. Board recorders will complete a course of instruction approved by SecAF, during the previous 12 months, on recorder duties and responsibilities to ensure compliance with law and DoD policy. There will be at least one board recorder present during all board proceedings. A member will not serve as a recorder on boards for which they are being considered. If a recorder requires relief for any of the reasons described in [Paragraph 8](#), he or she will request relief from the SecAF and report as outlined in [Paragraph 8](#).

10. Administrative Support Staff. The board secretariat administrative staff answers administrative questions and follows standard written procedures governing the administrative support for boards.

11. Rules Governing Communications with Boards. The board recorders ensure all communication with the board is in writing, to include guidance from the SecAF (for letters from eligible officers, see [paragraph 12](#)). The board recorder will furnish all written communications to all board members and record it as part of the board's record. An audio or video recording is an acceptable means for providing guidance to the board, so long as a written transcript is a part of the board record. No one other than the SecAF or a person duly appointed by the SecAF may appear in person to address a selection board on any matter. Should the SecAF address a board in person, HQ AFPC/PB will provide a verbatim transcript of his or her remarks to every board member and include it in the record of the board. This does not restrict the staff from furnishing administrative information to the board. Board members, recorders, and administrative staff may orally communicate routine administrative information to the extent necessary to facilitate the board's work.

12. Letters to the Board. Officers eligible for the FSB may write a letter to the board. Eligible officers may submit the letter, not to exceed 10 pages to include attachments (5 sheets if written on both sides), in good faith, and ensure it contains accurate information to the best of their knowledge. The letter must be signed and dated. The eligible officer will send the letter to the AFPC Retirements and Separations Branch HQ AFPC/DP2STM. Letters arriving after the date and time specified in the directing Personnel Service Delivery Memorandum (PSDM) will not be presented to the board for consideration. Letters arriving after that time will not be presented to the board for consideration. Address letters IAW instructions in the PSDM. Immediately after completion of the FSB, the letter will be removed from the individual's selection folder and a

copy will be stored in the member's master personnel record for historical, legal, and appeal purposes only. Access will be limited to only those who have a need to know. If the letter writer requests return of the letter, he/she must provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Letters on behalf of other officers are not permitted, although individuals may provide relevant attachments to their own letter. Attachments or documents of the type that can become a permanent part of the officer's record; e.g., draft/proposed/final Retention Recommendation Forms (RRFs) or Promotion Recommendation Forms (PRFs), unsigned draft/proposed Officer Performance Reports (OPRs) and Training Reports (TRs) or decoration narratives, are not permitted. HQ AFPC/DP2STM advises the officer when a letter does not meet the above requirements and collects all letters to the board and forwards to HQ AFPC/PB for use during the board.

13. Information Meeting the Board. Only the following information is authorized to meet the board:

13.1. The name and Officer Selection Record (OSR), outlined in AFI 36-2608 of each eligible officer including the Officer Selection Brief (OSB) and RRF.

13.2. Letters submitted to the FSB by eligible officers (see [paragraph 12](#)).

13.3. Information not part of the official military personnel record of an officer, but which the SecAF or a civilian official, appointed by the President and with the advice and consent of the Senate and designated by the SecAF, determines as substantiated and which could reasonably and materially affect board deliberations. The SecAF, or designee, must ensure the procedures for identifying and proposing such information for consideration apply to all eligible officers for the board concerned. In these cases, the SecAF ensures the officer is notified and provided a copy of the information, or a factual summary of the information if it is not totally available for reasons of national security or other lawful reasons, and allowed a reasonable opportunity to submit written comments, which if submitted will be attached to any such information considered by the board.

13.4. Information described in [paragraph 13.3](#) will not meet a subsequent FSB unless the information is in the official military personnel record of the officer, or the SecAF or designee, makes a new determination. When rendering a new determination, the officer will have the opportunity to comment upon notification.

13.5. Administrative information amplifying or clarifying the official military records, instructions, and information provided to the board.

14. Instructing Boards. The MOI, which provides policy and guidance to the board, will be approved by the SecAF for each FSB. Do not modify, withdraw or supplement the instructions after the board submits its report to the SecAF.

15. Board Member Preparation. The Selection Board Secretariat will pre-brief the BP on the board agenda, SecAF MOI, BP responsibilities, and the trial run exercise (practice scoring session). Board recorders will conduct the first day administrative briefing to the board. The BP will then read the SecAF MOI verbatim to the board and a copy will be provided to each board member. To acknowledge receipt, each board member will sign a copy of the MOI which will be maintained in the permanent record. Oaths are administered to board members, recorders, and administrative support staff. A trial run exercise will then be conducted to familiarize board members with the selection records and situations the board may encounter during actual scoring.

16. Conducting Trial Runs. A board recorder provides board members pre-identified records to set their scoring standard and to acquaint them with some situations they may encounter during the actual scoring for the record. A member will not score a record during the trial run that he or she may be asked to score during the actual scoring process. After the trial run, a guided discussion facilitated by a recorder will occur to answer questions board members may have, address unique situations which may occur during the board's conduct, ensure board members' familiarity with the record format and its contents and ensure all members are comfortable with their scoring baseline. There is no requirement for uniformity of scores. The board members make the determination if a subsequent trial run is needed.

17. Record Distribution Procedures. Records are distributed to each board scoring the appropriate specific Secretarial-designated groups (as defined in the board details). Each eligible record within each Secretarial-designated group will be assigned a record number which is based on the reverse of the member's social security number. All records will then be numerically sequenced using these numbers and distributed to the appropriate board.

18. Reviewing Records. Each board considers records within a Secretarial-designated group and receives quotas (see [Paragraph 24](#)) that correspond to the appropriate losses needed for each particular Secretarial-designated group.

19. Scoring Records. Records are scored on a best-qualified basis unless otherwise directed by SecAF. Records will be scored separately by each Secretarial-designated group. Officers within the same Secretarial-designated group will compete only among themselves for retention. Scores are based on the items referenced in [Paragraph 13](#) and any guidance the SecAF may provide to that board. Generally, scoring is by secret ballot and without benefit of discussion, unless a significant disagreement (a "split" see [Paragraph 21](#)) occurs in the scores on a particular record. If a board member identifies a record-based matter that causes concern, he/she will surface the matter to a board recorder who may discuss it with the BP. The BP may approve bringing that matter to the attention of the appropriate board members. Board members may discuss their own personal knowledge and evaluation of the professional qualifications of eligible officers as long as they discuss only matters documented in information provided under [Paragraph 13](#) and any guidance the SecAF may provide to that board. In such discussions, board members may rely upon their own experience and knowledge of the Air Force. Board members may not discuss or disclose the opinion of a person not a member of the board concerning the officer unless that opinion is in the material presented to the board.

20. Scoring Scales. Boards will use the following scoring scale to score an officer's potential for retention:

Table 1. Scoring Scales.

Score	Potential for Retention
10.0	Absolutely superior
9.5	Outstanding
9.0	Few could be better
8.5	Strong
8.0	Slightly above average
7.5	Average
7.0	Slightly below average
6.5	Well below average
6.0	Lowest

21. Defining "Splits." A "split" is a significant disagreement between voting board members about the score of a record. For a five person board (or panel), a "split" is considered a difference in a score of two or more points between any two or more board members (e.g., 6 and 8, or 8 and 10) evaluating the records within a Secretarial-designated group.

22. Resolving "Splits." All voting board members must be present and may discuss the record involved in a "split." Only members with split scores may change their scores in the process of resolving a split.

23. New Documents. If new information (e.g., decoration citation, officer performance report, updated officer selection brief) concerning an individual's record is acquired during board scoring, the affected records will be brought back to the same board for rescoring as long as the final order of merit for that Secretarial-designated group has not been derived.

24. Quota. Finalized quotas are staffed, reviewed, and approved by the SecAF, or designated representative, prior to the board convening and will be available to the board for its use.

25. Establishing the Gray Zone. After board scoring is complete, establish an order of merit for each Secretarial-designated group, and establish a gray zone. In the event the retain quota is completely exhausted by all the records in a score category (i.e., a clean cut), then the gray zone will consist of the score category that exhausted the quota and the next lower score category. In the event the retain quota is exhausted in a score category where there are more records tied at the score category than there is available quota, (i.e., not a clean cut), then the gray zone will consist of that score category, plus the next higher and the next lower score categories. The appropriate respective quota will accompany the records to gray zone. See [attachment 2](#) for illustration.

26. Board President's Quality Review. The BP conducts a quality review prior to beginning the gray zone resolution process of all records above and below the gray zone with the characteristics within them listed in [Paragraphs 26.1](#) and [26.2](#). If, in the BP's opinion, one or more of these records is of comparable quality or appears to have been inconsistently scored compared to those records in the gray zone, he or she may add those records to the gray zone for the board's final determination. If a record above the gray zone is added to the gray zone, the associated quota is added to gray zone as well.

26.1. The BP may add selection records to the gray zone that are above the gray zone which have any of the following characteristics within them:

- 26.1.1. A court-martial.
- 26.1.2. An Article 15.
- 26.1.3. A letter of reprimand (LOR).
- 26.1.4. A "Do Not Retain" RRF.
- 26.1.5. A "do not retain me" letter.
- 26.1.6. Referral OPR on top.
- 26.1.7. Current prisoner or appellate leave.

26.2. The BP may add selection records to the gray zone that are **below** the gray zone which have any of the following characteristics within them:

- 26.2.1. Students attending school in PCS status.
- 26.2.2. Medal of Honor recipient.
- 26.2.3. Prisoner of war (POW)/former POW.
- 26.2.4. Missing in action (MIA)/former MIA.
- 26.2.5. Wounded Warrior.
- 26.2.6. Any officer possessing a skill (to include capabilities, experiences, and other attributes) approved by SecAF and identified in the board details as critical to the Air Force.

27. Gray Zone Resolution. After the BP has conducted a quality review and adds any records to the gray zone, the records are scored again using the scoring scale described in [Paragraph 20](#).

After scoring, an order of merit will be established and the remaining quota applied to it. If records are tied at the score which would result in retention, this establishes a new "gray zone". The board will continue to resolve any "gray zone", without further BP quality review, until all available quotas are filled. Prior to scoring any records in the first gray zone, the BP will personally instruct all members to re-read the SecAF's MOI. On boards conducting gray zone resolution the BP may instruct the board to re-read the MOI on subsequent designated groupings.

28. Board Report. Those officers not selected for retention will be recommended for involuntary separation. Board members, recorders, and administrative assistants will sign a board report that verifies the specific certifications in the SecAF's MOI for that board were followed in their entirety and includes lists of those officers selected for retention as well as those selected for involuntary separation. Certifications are as follows, unless otherwise provided by the SecAF:

28.1. That, to the best of their knowledge, the board complied with the Secretary's Instructions, including those related to the critical skills needed by the Air Force;

28.2. That he or she was not subject to or aware of any censure, reprimand, or admonishment resulting from the recommendations of the board or the exercise of any lawful function within the authorized discretion of the board;

28.3. That he or she was not subject to or aware of any attempt to coerce or influence improperly any action in the formulation of the board's recommendations;

28.4. That he or she was not a party to or aware of any attempt at unauthorized communications;

28.5. That, to the best of their knowledge, the board carefully considered the records of each officer whose name was furnished to the board;

28.6. That the officers recommended for early separation are, in the opinion of the majority of the scoring members of the board who reviewed the records of the officers, those officers whose early separation best serves the needs of the Air Force.

29. Out-briefing Board Members. Recorders out-brief the board members (discuss cautions and destroy all notes).

30. Board Anomalies. Procedural anomalies occurring during a board that may require variation from established procedures require BP resolution. During the board, the BP may bring any matter to the attention of the SecAF, or designated representative, if he or she determines that SecAF-level decision is required. The BP will advise the SecAF of any significant procedural anomalies during his or her outbrief of the board. These responsibilities of the BP do not limit in any way the right of a board member or Board Secretariat member to communicate with the SecAF as provided by other authority.

31. Lists and Other Documents to be Retained. All scoring runs (which include and identify those records in, above and below the initial "gray zone" as well as the BP Quality Review) will be filed with the formal record of the Board, but not made part of that record. These scoring runs will not reflect individual member scores. Additionally, a copy of the final board room graphic will be maintained as permanent documents. They will be marked "For Official Use Only". These records must not be released under Freedom of Information Act or the Privacy Act but could become subject to discovery in litigation.

32. Oaths. The following oaths will be administered to board personnel as appropriate:

32.1. **Board Members:** "I solemnly swear or affirm that I will, without prejudice or partiality, having in view both the special fitness of the officers and the efficiency and effectiveness of the United States Air Force, perform the duties imposed upon me and that I will not reveal information about the board conduct and results except as may be provided by the Secretary."

32.2. **Recorders and Administrative Support Staff:** "I solemnly swear or affirm that I will keep a true record of the proceedings of the board and that I will not reveal information about the board conduct and results except as may be provided by the Secretary."

33. Disclosure of Board Recommendations and Board Proceedings. Before the report is signed by each board member, board recorders and administrative support staff, the recommendations may be disclosed only to the board members, board recorders, and those administrative support personnel designated in writing by the SecAF. Results of the board will not be released until after the SecAF approves the FSB report. Board proceedings will not be disclosed without the authority of the SecAF. **(T-3)**.

34. Summary. These selection board procedures were developed to give all eligible officers fair and equitable consideration, not for ease of administration. These procedures will remain in effect until otherwise modified in writing or incorporated into AFI 36-3207, *Separating Commissioned Officers*.

ANDREW J. TOTH, Major General, USAF
Commander

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

Title 10, U.S.C., Chapter 36, *Promotion, Separation, and Involuntary Retirement of Officers on the Active-Duty List*

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

AFI 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, 1 December 2015

AFI 36-3207, *Separating Commissioned Officers*, 18 October 2011

AFI 36-2608, *Military Personnel Records System*, 26 October 2015

Adopted Forms

AF Form 679, *Air Force Publication Compliance Item Waiver Request/Approval*

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

AF Form 3538, *Retention Recommendation Form*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADL—Active Duty List

AFSC—Air Force Specialty Code

BP—Board President

CHAP—Chaplain

CORE AFSC—Unless otherwise defined by the Secretary of the Air Force, a core AFSC is a core ID as defined in AFI 36-2101 (the first three digits of the AFSC an officer was classified into when originally accessed into EAD, retrained, or approved for a competitive category transfer).

FSB—Force Shaping Board

Health Professions—Medical Corps (MC); Dental Corps (DC); Nurse Corps (NC); Medical Service Corps (MSC); and Biomedical Sciences Corps (BSC)

LAF—Line of the Air Force

LAF-J—Line of the Air Force Judge Advocate

LOR—Letter of Reprimand

MIA—Missing in Action

MOI—Memorandum of Instructions

OPR—Officer Performance Report

OSB—Officer Selection Brief

OSR—Officer Selection Record

PAS—Privacy Act Statements

PCS—Permanent Change of Station

PII—Personal Identifying Information

POW—Prisoner of War

PRF—Promotion Recommendation Form

PSDM—Personnel Service Delivery Memorandum

RDF—Records Disposition Schedule

RRF—Retention Recommendation Form

TR—Training Report

**Attachment 2
ILLUSTRATIONS**

A2.1. "Establishing the Gray" slide illustration.

Figure A2.1. "Establishing the Gray" Clean Cut.

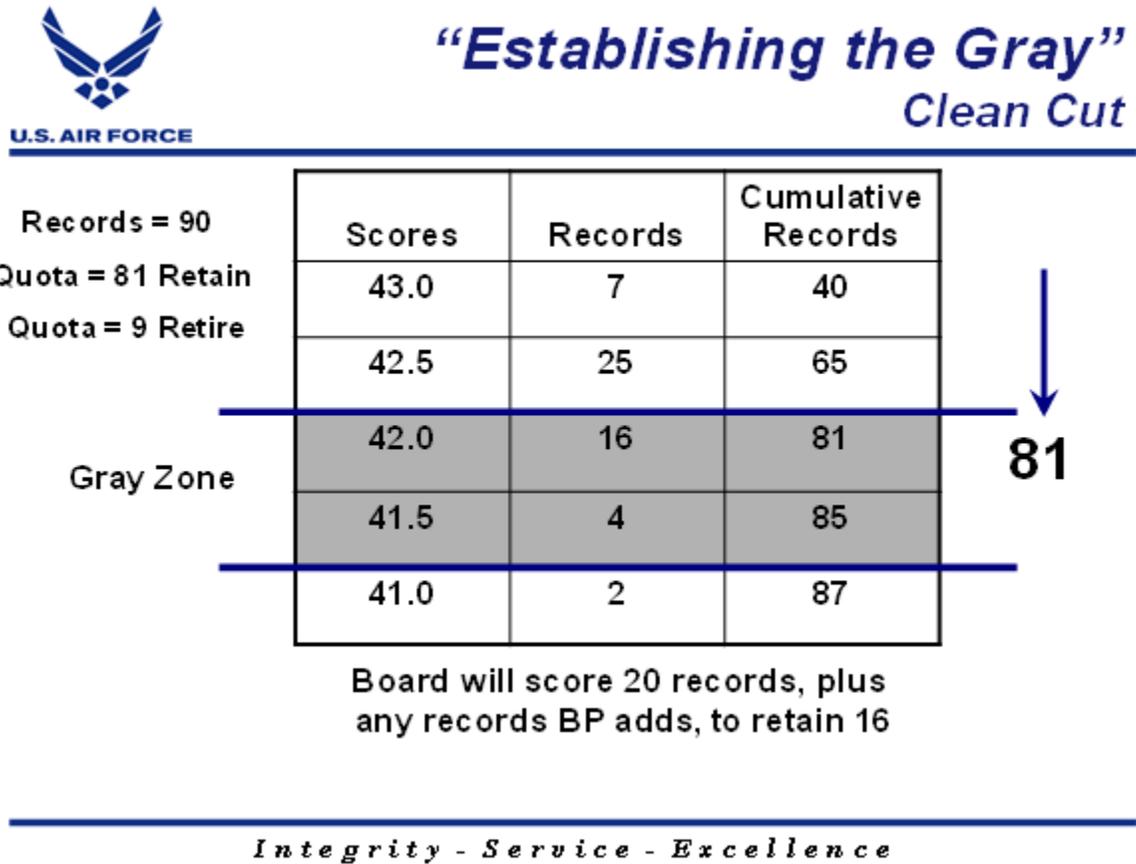


Figure A2.2. "Establishing the Gray" Not a Clean Cut.

