

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER  
TINKER AIR FORCE BASE**

**TINKER AIR FORCE BASE  
INSTRUCTION 36-2502**



**13 MARCH 2025  
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Personnel**

**SENIOR AIRMAN BELOW-THE-ZONE  
PROMOTION BOARD PROCEDURES**

**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY**

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This instruction establishes procedures to implement the Tinker AFB Senior Airman (SrA) Below-the-Zone (BTZ) program and implements AFI 36-2502, *Airman Promotion/Demotion Programs*. It applies to all Air Force active duty units and personnel assigned to Tinker AFB. It establishes the Central Base Board (CBB) for BTZ selection, provides information on quota distribution, defines responsibilities and provides BTZ procedures for Airmen in student status. This instruction does not apply to Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units. 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 Form 847 from the field through publications/forms managers. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Manual (AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*), and disposed of in accordance with Air Force Records Information Management System (AFRIMS) Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) located at <https://www.my.af.mil/afirms/afirms/afirms/rims.cfm>

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

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**1. Objective.** The BTZ program provides exceptionally qualified Airmen First Class (A1C) a one-time consideration for promotion to SrA ahead of their peers, effective six months prior to the normal promotion date. Selection opportunity is 15 percent of all eligible Airmen. For standard time-in-service (TIS), time-in-grade (TIG), and promotion eligibility, refer to AFI 36-2502, Table 2.1.

**Table 1. Significant Dates.**

PROCESSING MONTH	SELECTION MONTH	PROMOTION MONTH
January/February	March	Apr-Jun
April/May	June	Jul-Sep
July/August	September	Oct-Dec
October/November	December	Jan-Mar

**2. Responsibilities.**

2.1. The 72d Air Base Wing Commander (72 ABW/CC) is the selection authority for the CBB and will prescribe the procedures for large unit boards.

2.2. Quotas. According to AFI 36-2502, quotas are based on 15 percent of the eligible population (based on TIG and TIS only). 72 FSS/FSPD, Career Development Section, determines quotas and obtains 72 ABW/CC approval (approval authority has been delegated to the Military Personnel Flight Commander) before distribution to units. Large units with seven or more eligible Airmen receive quotas and promote at the unit level. Small units with six or less eligible Airmen are combined into one pool of eligible Airmen to form the CBB population.

**3. Computation.** The BTZ quota is determined by multiplying the number of eligible Airmen by 15 percent. Example: 13 eligible Airmen x 0.15 = 1.95 or 2 BTZ quotas. (Note: Fractions of 0.5 or more are rounded up)

**Table 2. Distribution.**

ELIGIBLE	QUOTA	ELIGIBLE	QUOTA
2-9	1	37-43	6
10-16	2	44-49	7
17-23	3	50-56	8
24-29	4	57-63	9
30-36	5	64-69	10

**4. Notification.** The 72 FSS/FSPD, Promotions, will notify large and small units of their eligible Airmen as soon as possible but not later than the second week of the processing month.

**5. Large and Small Unit Selection Procedures.**

5.1. Upon receipt of roster, perform a quality review of eligible Airmen. Follow guidelines outlined in the BTZ cover letter to determine nominees (see [Attachment 2](#) and [Attachment 3](#)). These actions must be accomplished by the established suspense date.

5.2. Commanders of large units (those with seven or more eligible Airmen) will use guidance provided in this instruction to implement their programs. (NOTE: Small units with less than seven eligible Airmen cannot combine their quotas with other units to make a large unit.) Once selections are made, commanders will turn in the signed board report to 72 FSS/FSPD, no later than the 15th day of the selection month (i.e. Dec, Mar, Jun, Sep).

5.2.1. The 72 FSS/FSPD, Promotions, is located at Bldg. 1, Rm. 174. Board results may also be sent to [72fss.fsmpd.promotions@us.af.mil](mailto:72fss.fsmpd.promotions@us.af.mil).

5.3. When a large unit board convenes, it must consist of at least four voting members in the grade of Master Sergeant (MSgt) or higher, a nonvoting recorder in the grade of SrA or higher, and a board president in the grade of Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt). If a CMSgt is not available to the unit, another Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) will be appointed by the unit's commander to be the board president.

5.4. When the small unit CBB convenes, it must consist of at least four voting members in the grade of Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt), a nonvoting recorder in the grade of SrA or higher, and a board president in the grade of Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt).

5.5. Small unit commanders will use the BTZ eligibility list and an appropriate evaluation process (i.e. a unit board, record review, recommendation from supervisors/first sergeants, among others) to determine their nominees for the CBB.

5.6. Small unit commanders must relinquish selection authority and all quotas to the CBB. Eligible A1Cs can only be considered once for BTZ promotion.

5.7. For AFMC units. After the completion of the selection folder scoring, all BTZ nominees that are ranked within the 50% of the top selectee's may be required to physically appear before the CBB and large unit boards. Commanders, First Sergeants, and Supervisors will take all necessary steps to ensure nominees are present to meet the board (i.e., members on leave in the local area, shift workers). Deployments or similar circumstances (i.e. TDY, emergency leave, projected out of town leave, and quarters) will be considered excused absences.

5.7.1. When a BTZ nominee that is in the top 50% is unable to physically appear before the CBB due to an excused absence, the CBB will turn into a package-only board for all nominees. In this instance, only the voting members, recorder and president will meet to discuss scores, splits and ties and establish an order of merit with the given quota.

5.8. The Large Unit and Small Unit (CBB) SrA BTZ results may not be released until the Convening Authority has approved the CBB report. The Wing/CCC will notify all Squadron Commanders and First Sergeants when the results may be released.

## **6. 72FSS/FSPD Responsibilities.**

6.1. Determine base quotas by using the unit eligibility roster provided by Personnel Systems Management (PSM); which is run prior to the first processing month.

6.2. Distribute unit rosters (large and small).

6.3. Establish a suspense date.

6.4. In accordance with AFI 36-2502, para. 2.3.5, the Military Personnel Commander will be the delegated approval authority for distribution of the BTZ quotas to the CBB and large units.

**7. Board Member Responsibilities.**

- 7.1. Familiarize with this instruction and ensure strict adherence.
- 7.2. Review the score sheet (see [Attachment 4](#)). Note what each category is worth and how the points are allocated.
- 7.3. Consider only the contents of the Selection Folder and face-to-face interview when scoring.
- 7.4. Assign proper points and rank accordingly. It is highly encouraged to take notes during the scoring process to be prepared to openly discuss considerations if the board president deems it necessary.
- 7.5. Board members will provide fair and impartial review of all nominees and refrain from personal bias. Board members have an affirmative obligation to fully disclose any personal bias or conflict of interest which may call into question their ability to objectively score a nominee. Upon disclosure of any bias or conflict of interest, the remaining members shall vote to determine whether the bias or conflict of interest shall rise to a level requiring removal of that board member's scoring privileges for a particular nominee.

**8. Board President's Responsibilities.**

- 8.1. Familiarize with this instruction and ensure strict adherence.
- 8.2. Oversee board operations.
- 8.3. Conduct a pre-brief with the board members and ensures each board member receives a complete selection folder for each nominee.
- 8.4. Review the score sheets (see [Attachment 5](#)).
  - 8.4.1. Ensure all board members have signed the score sheets.
- 8.5. Compute 6-10 scoring in conjunction with the order of merit and break any ties between nominees.
  - 8.5.1. The board president shall resolve any ties amongst board members in a determination of removal of scoring privileges for a particular nominee in accordance with [para. 7.5](#). In the event of such a scoring abstention, the board president shall score the nominee in place of the abstaining member.
- 8.6. Provide order of merit to convening authority.

**9. Scoring Scale/Selection Phase.**

- 9.1. Nominees will undergo a folder selection process based on the submitted AF Form 1206 that all panel members will score. The top 50% of nominees will be sent forward to undergo the face-to-face interview process. During the interview process, nominees will receive additional scoring to finalize placement of all the top 50% of nominees and solidify the selection results.
- 9.2. Board scores are based upon the material in each eligible nominee's selection folder. The board president may choose to use either:
  - 9.2.1. A "rack-n-stack" process by which each panel member rank orders all records from highest to lowest and all rankings are combined to develop an order of merit.

9.2.2. A panel or MLR scoring process by which the nomination folders are scored in 6-to-10 point increments.

**Figure 1. Scoring Scale.**

<i>Boards will use the following scale:</i>	
<i>Score:</i>	<i>Potential:</i>
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

9.3. The total scores will be given to the board president when all records have been scored. The board president computes the total score of each eligible Airman by adding the scores of all voting members (i.e. an Airman scored by the board as 7, 7.5, 8, 8.5 will receive a total of 31). After computing the total scores, they will determine an order-of-merit by ranking the highest score first and the lowest score last. In the event of two or more members having the same overall score; the board president will break the tie.

## **10. Convening Authority.**

10.1. The convening authority for all BTZ selections will be the 72d Air Base Wing commander (CBB) or unit commander (large units).

10.2. May approve the board's order-of-merit list or disapprove it entirely, directing a new board.

10.3. May elect not to use the full quota.

10.4. May disapprove the promotion of an Airman whose record does not, in his or her judgment, justify the BTZ promotion.

10.5. Provide the finalized board report to 72 FSS/FSPD, per this instruction, [para. 6](#).

## **11. BTZ Procedures for Airmen in Student Status.**

11.1. Students are not allowed to compete for BTZ with permanent party personnel.

11.2. If there are enough eligible Airmen to hold a student board, an exception to policy must be requested from HQ AFPC. If approved, AFPC will authorize supplemental consideration and issue the appropriate number of promotion quotas. The supplemental request must be made prior to the student board taking place.

11.3. If student board is approved, it must be accomplished IAW this regulation's permanent party board requirements.

## **12. Selection Requirements.**

12.1. The following procedures are required to ensure fair, equitable, and timely BTZ consideration:

12.2. Units will consider all individuals meeting TIS and TIG requirements, even if they are TDY, on leave, or have relocated during or prior to the processing month (i.e. Jan, Apr, Jul, and Oct). All individuals appearing on the eligibility listing must be considered; however, it does not mean they must be nominated. The commander reviews their personnel records, personal information file (PIF) and discusses the consideration with the individual's supervisor and chain of command, before making a final decision to nominate or not.

12.3. Alternates are identified within the board report. In the event a selectee becomes ineligible for promotion before their effective date of promotion, the first alternate will be promoted.

12.3.1. Alternates selected in this manner will receive the original BTZ date of rank (DOR) and effective date (for pay purposes) with the unit commander's approval. The 72 FSS/FSPD will assist in applying for a retroactive promotion effective date through HQ AFPC/DP2SPP.

12.4. If an individual should have been considered during the current board and an error is discovered before promotions are announced, large unit commanders will consider the Airman and adjust selections accordingly. The CBB will reconvene to consider small unit eligible Airmen and ensure selections are adjusted accordingly.

12.5. Commanders may request supplemental BTZ consideration for individuals who should have been considered by a previous board and an error was not discovered until after promotions were announced.

## **13. Selection Folder.**

13.1. Selection folders include the AF Form 1206, fitness assessment scores, SURF, and score sheet.

13.1.1. The AF Form 1206 will be accomplished for all nominees.

13.1.2. The AF Form 1206 must be written in narrative format, not to exceed 3 lines per narrative statement and 16 lines in total length. "Leadership and Job Performance in Primary Duty," consisting of 12 lines. "Whole Airman Concept", consisting of 4 lines.

## **14. Face-to-Face Board.**

14.1. The primary purposes of the face-to-face board are to promote professional development of assigned Airmen, to ensure professional military appearance, and assure they present themselves accordingly, commensurate with written performance.

14.2. If a face-to-face board is conducted, given all the nominees are present, three areas will be evaluated: military bearing, dress and appearance, and overall communication.

14.3. Each board member will prepare and ask one open-ended question.

14.3.1. Questions will be from the following four categories: current events, standards of conduct, dress and appearance, and customs and courtesies.

14.3.1.1. All questions will be based on AFPAM 36-2241, *Professional Development Guide*, and current media such as local and base newspapers, Air Force Times, among others.

14.4. The maximum score for the face-to-face board is 10 points; 3 points for dress and appearance, 3 points for military bearing, and 4 points for communication skills.

**15. A1C Departing PCS.** 72 FSS/FSPD must verify BTZ eligibility for all A1Cs relocating to ensure a BTZ selection folder has been prepared by the unit prior to departure, if necessary.

ABIGAIL L.W. RUSCETTA, Colonel, USAF  
Commander, 72d Air Base Wing

**Attachment 1**

**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

***References***

DAFI 36-2502, *Airman Promotion/Demotion Programs*, 20 December 2023

AFI 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, 28 July 2021

***Adopted Forms***

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*, 15 April 2022

AF Form 1206, *Nomination for Award*, 18 January 2024

***Abbreviations and Acronyms***

**A1C**—Airman First Class

**ABW**—Air Base Wing

**AFRIMS**—Air Force Records Information Management System

**BTZ**—Below-the-Zone

**CBB**—Central Base Board

**CC**—Commander

**CMSgt**—Chief Master Sergeant

**DOR**—Date of Rank

**IAW**—In Accordance With

**MSgt**—Master Sergeant

**OPR**—Office of Primary Responsibility

**PIF**—Personnel Information File

**PSM**—Personnel Systems Management

**RDS**—Records Disposition Schedule

**RIP**—Report on Individual Personnel

**SNCO**—Senior Noncommissioned Officer

**SrA**—Senior Airman


**TIG**—Time-In-Grade

**TIS**—Time-In-Service

## Attachment 2

## SMALL UNIT BTZ COVER LETTER, SAMPLE

Table A2.1. Small Unit BTZ Cover Letter, Sample.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE</b> 72D FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON (AFMC) TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, OKLAHOMA</p>	DATE
MEMORANDUM FOR (SQUADRON)/CC		
FROM: 72 FSS/FSPD (Promotions)		
SUBJECT: Senior Airman Below-the-Zone Listing for the XXX Quarter of 20XX		
1. The attached roster identifies individuals assigned to your organization who are eligible for consideration for SrA BTZ this quarter. The following instructions apply:		
Your unit has six or less eligible members (small unit) and may nominate quality individuals to meet the Central Base Board (CBB). The time and location of the CBB will be provided at a later date.		
<b>Please specify whether you recommend or non-recommend next to every eligible member's name, sign and date at the bottom and annotate any additional comments on the roster. Please return the signed BTZ Roster NLT (Date). Please return the nominees' AF 1206, Fitness Report, and an AMS SURF to the Promotions Office at 72fss.fsmpd.promotions@us.af.mil NLT (Date).</b>		
2. The attached roster is in three parts. <b>Part I</b> identifies individuals with no quality force indicators in their record. <b>Part II</b> identifies individuals with quality force indicators that may disqualify them from BTZ promotion. <b>Part III</b> identifies individuals who meet the Time-in-Grade and Time-in-Service requirements but cannot be selected due to promotion ineligibility. Conditions are listed in AFI 36-2502, Table 1.1. <b>Your roster may not contain parts II or III.</b>		
3. Carefully review the members' quality force indicators (i.e., poor performance, derogatory EPB remarks, UIFs, etc.) before making your selection. <b>Please remember that you are not required to use the full quota or make a selection.</b> Please ensure that all eligible Airmen have been properly identified and, most importantly, ensure that their personal data is accurate and complete.		

4. The Large Unit and Small Unit (CBB) SrA BTZ results may not be released until the 72 ABW/CC approves the CBB minutes. The 72 ABW/CCC will notify all Group Commanders and First Sergeants when the results may be released.

ELIGIBLE: 0  
INELIGIBLE: 0  
QUESTIONABLE: 0


FIRST M. LAST, Capt, USAF  
Flight Commander, Military Personnel Flight

Attachment: 1. Senior Airman Below-the-Zone Roster

## Attachment 3

## LARGE UNIT BTZ COVER LETTER, SAMPLE

Table A3.1. Large Unit BTZ Cover Letter, Sample.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE</b> 72D FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON (AFMC) TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, OKLAHOMA</p>	DATE
MEMORANDUM FOR (SQUADRON)/CC		
FROM: 72 FSS/FSPD (Promotions)		
SUBJECT: Senior Airman Below-the-Zone Listing for the XXX Quarter of 20XX		
<p>1. The attached roster identifies individuals assigned to your organization who are eligible for consideration for SrA BTZ this quarter. The following instructions apply:</p>		
<p>Your unit has seven or more eligible members (large unit) and may select one (1) or more individuals for promotion, <u>depending on your quota listed below</u>. <b>Please specify whether you recommend or non-recommend next to every eligible member's name, sign and date at the bottom and annotate any additional comments on the roster. Please return the signed BTZ Roster (Date) and the completed board report NLT (Date) to the Promotions Office at 72FSS.FSMPD.Promotions@us.af.mil.</b></p>		
<p><b>Results must include the board minutes, which will include name/rank of the board members, as well as the names of all the individuals who met the board. The minutes will indicate whether <u>each individual</u> was selected for promotion, was selected as an alternate, or was not selected.</b></p>		
<p>2. The attached roster is in three parts. <b>Part I</b> identifies individuals with no quality force indicators in their record. <b>Part II</b> identifies individuals with quality force indicators that may disqualify them from BTZ promotion. <b>Part III</b> identifies individuals who meet the Time-in-Grade and Time-in-Service requirements but cannot be selected due to promotion ineligibility. Conditions are listed in AFI 36-2502, Table 1.1. <b>Your roster may or may not contain parts II or III.</b></p>		

3. Carefully review the members' quality force indicators (i.e., poor performance, derogatory EPB remarks, UIFs, etc.) before making your selection. **Please remember that you are not required to use the full quota or make a selection.** Please ensure that all eligible Airmen have been properly identified and, most importantly, ensure that their personal data is accurate and complete.

4. The large unit and small unit SrA BTZ CBB results may not be released until the 72 ABW/CC approves the CBB minutes. The 72 ABW/CCC will notify all Group Commanders and First Sergeants when the results may be released.

ELIGIBLE: 0  
INELIGIBLE: 0  
QUESTIONABLE: 0  
QUOTA: 0

FIRST M. LAST, Capt, USAF  
Flight Commander, Military Personnel Flight

Attachment: 1. Senior Airman Below-the-Zone Roster





**Attachment 6****GUIDELINES FOR AF FORM 1206**

**A6.1. Leadership and Job Performance.** Describe significant leadership accomplishments and how well the member performed assigned primary and additional duties. Define the scope and level or responsibilities and the impact on the mission and unit. Include any new initiatives or techniques developed by the member that positively impacted the unit and/or mission. Include results of Air Force, MAJCOM, Numbered Air Force-level inspections and/or evaluations. Include awards received such as quarterly, annual awards, and decorations.

**A6.2. Whole Airman Concept.** Describe how the member developed or improved skills related to primary duties; i.e., formal training, Career Development Course enrollment or completions, on-the-job training, certifications, education related to primary duties, and so forth. Include completion of any professional military education as well as awards earned during in-residence attendance. Include any off-duty education not directly related to primary duties; i.e. class, course, degree enrollment and/or completion or grade point average. Cite any other relevant training or activity that significantly enhanced the member's value as a military citizen. This concept also defines the scope and impact of the member's professional leadership, image, and involvement in both the military and civilian community. Include leadership, membership or participation in unit advisory councils, professional military organizations, associations and events; i.e., President of Dorm Council, enlisted dining in/out committees, Base Honor Guard, Sunday School teacher, and so forth.