



Will There Ever be a Chief Warrant Officer of the Army?

by CW5 (Ret) [Jerry Dillard](#) on 22 Apr 07, 1:51 PM

During my tenure as WO Advisor to the CSA, and since then (I retired in 2006), I have been occasionally asked why we don't have a Chief Warrant Officer of the Army. I am still sometimes approached for advice on warrant officer issues, and a recent request for advice by a field grade officer brought the CWOA issued back to my mind, and reminded me exactly why I feel we don't have a Chief Warrant Officer of the Army now, and probably won't in the foreseeable future. Since this is the mentorship topic, I thought I would pass my thoughts on the subject on to you.

The advice requested concerned how a couple of senior warrant officers (CW4 and CW5) should be treated. These two WOs work at staff level and have been consistently invited to social functions along with all the other FG officers and senior NCOs (SGM/CSMs). Instead of taking advantage of these invitations to involve themselves as members of the team, these two have ignored the invitations, not even bothering to RSVP. This behavior has, of course, been duly noted. Now the Commanding General is preparing to PCS and has asked that all FG officers and SGMs on the staff be scheduled for individual outbriefs with him. The question posed to me by the officer who will schedule these office calls was "should the CW4/CW5 be included and scheduled for office calls." My recommendation was no, they should not since they haven't participated and acted as responsible "field grade" officers. The Army is a profession, and social functions are part of the team building aspects of the profession. These WO's forfeited any right to consideration as senior "FG" officers through their failure to act as team members. When they see all of the field grade officers and sergeants major getting a final word with the CG, they will probably complain that they should have been included, or maybe they don't care. What they have done is lost the opportunity to make a favorable impression for the WO Corps on a senior officer.

The field grade officers that these two WO's work with will grow into Bde, Div, and Corps commanders, and one might even be the CSA one day. These are the officers who decide how senior warrant officers are treated, and whether or not there will be a Chief Warrant Officer of the Army. Their memories of these two will affect their judgment if and when it comes time for a decision, just as the judgment of our current Army leadership is affected by the warrant officers they grew up with.

In Aug 05 I was invited to serve as the guest speaker for the graduation of a WOBC class. A portion of my remarks follow: "Not only will you be expected to know your stuff, you'll also be expected to act as an officer, supporting the commander on and off duty. Social gatherings are no longer an option for you, they're your responsibility to attend if you want to be a member of the team and viewed with respect as an officer. And yes, your spouses are also members of the team. Get those dress blues ready! So many Warrant Officers complain that they're forgotten and not respected as officers and leaders, but those same Warrant Officers don't want to participate in PT, in Officer Professional Development sessions, attend off duty functions, or salute Lieutenants, but they want to be saluted by Sergeants Major. Don't make these mistakes. Be professional and support your chain-of-command. Also, support and mentor those young commissioned officers that you have the opportunity to serve with and influence. If you teach and help them to succeed they will grow to respect you and other Warrant Officers. If you snub them and treat them shabbily, they will develop not only a dislike for you, but all Warrant Officers. Remember, the LT you work with today will someday be the Colonel or General that you work for tomorrow. Raise them to be the type of senior leaders that you would be proud to work for and serve with. Be professionals."

I still firmly believe in the professionalism I describe above, and extend that to include senior warrant officers and their relationships with all commissioned officers, both company and field grade. Professionalism is paramount, and a lack of it in one affects us all. Like it or not, warrant officers are viewed as a cohort. When Warrant Officers are viewed by senior officers as members of the officer leadership team rather than just technicians, THEN there might be a chance to create a Chief Warrant Officer of the Army position. But as long as we have senior warrant officers behaving like those noted above, the chance is slim to none.

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