

“What Have You Done for Me Lately?”

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Many times I see postings and messages in which the writers wonder what the USAWOA has “done for them or the Corps?” This will be part of my answer to those warrant officers.

Please read the 3 Jan 05 Army Times article by Rick Maze on Unequal Pay on page 16. One paragraph states and I quote “As pay scales are adjusted, the coalition wants hikes for warrant officers because of concerns that raising pay for enlisted ranks could diminish the financial incentive to “go warrant.” So what? What does this article have anything to do with USAWOA and its members?

The article states that the Military Coalition has priorities and warrant officer pay is one of them. Through the work of Don Hess and Ray Bell as the USAWOA representative at the TMC table, we have elevated warrant officer pay issues and convinced the TMC that this is a worthy issue. Additionally, both Ray Bell and Dave Welsh have spoken with Rick Maze in the past on warrant officer pay and other issues, thus keeping WO issues in the forefront.

Ray Bell briefed the Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) on the “pay compression” issue and they finally saw the light. As a result, the USAWOA was instrumental in responding to historical WO documentation, which resulted in the first Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report pertaining to WOs. Future QRMC’s will have the WO pay compression study and the WO CBO document as research documents on WO pay. Prior to these actions there was no documentation on the rationale for WO pay; wasn't done until the USAWOA made it happen.

Aviators: Current flight pay levels are a result of the battles USAWOA fought. I am going to step on some toes but need to set the record straight. Equal flight pay was an issue that USAWOA took on because warrant officers received less flight pay than their LT, CPT, and MAJ counterparts did. During briefings to the Armed Services Committee in the early 70’s, Les Aspen (chair at the time) stated that he thought: “warrant officers were just co-pilots for the commissioned officers” until he heard the facts and promised to rectify the situation. **As a result, warrant officers receive equal flight pay.** Some say that AUSA was responsible; but the facts are that AUSA did not jump on the band wagon until after the train left the station and equal flight pay was going to be a reality (because of the work of the USAWOA). By the way, I am a retired Cobra pilot and was a member of both organizations at the time. I put some of my extra flight pay to work in support of the organization that got it for me, USAWOA!

CW5 Rank: Through USAWOA support for the Total Warrant Officer Study (TWOS) and the Warrant Officer Management Act (WOMA) the Army now has a CW5 rank. The USAWOA initiated processes to keep continued visibility on the Warrant Officer Corps and rank structure in order to make these things happen. AUSA, AUSA, MOAA did not initiate these discussions. Certainly some came on board to support and I thank those organizations, but they did not initiate or surface these issues.

The proposed WOMA legislation was lying dormant in OMB until USAWOA convinced Rep. Bennett of Florida to introduce a separate bill on the floor of the House. This bill was then incorporated into the Defense Authorization Bill and became law. (Cont)

Timing was extremely critical; if the legislation was not acted on at the time the Defense Authorization bill was being considered, odds are that it would not have made it on its own. If it wasn't for the continued push for visibility by the USAWOA, I wonder if we would have a CW5 rank today?

ATLDP: Since 1972 the USAWOA has singly supported and fought for 90% of the recommendations. We did not have the support back then to make those happen. Through the evolution of the Warrant Officer Corps and the continued pressure for visibility of Warrant Officers by USAWOA, the result was Warrant Officers were listened to by the senior Army leadership and the ATLDP was approved. Is it the "End-All -- Do All" for the Corps? No, but it is light years ahead of where the Corps was in 1972. As the Warrant Officer Initiatives are worked from the ATLDP recommendations the USAWOA will be there to weigh in on the process and continue to be an honest broker for the Warrant Officer Corps and its members.

These are just a few areas where the USAWOA impacted the Warrant Officer Corps and our Army. These advances did not take place in a year, two years, or even five years -- but over many years in order to make the Corps better and improve the individual as well as the whole. I am proud to be part of an organization that influences the big Army to make changes to benefit just 15% of their officer population and only 2% of their total population.

In 2005, the USAWOA will continue to work the issues that benefit our members, our Corps, and our Army. I wish you the best in this New Year and continued success to our Association. Remember those deployed soldiers in your prayers.

FOR THE CORPS!

(Editors Note: This article first appeared in the January 2005 *NEWSLINER*)

USAWOA Online 3/17/2005

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