

INFORMATION PAPER

SUBJECT: Relief for Cause

1. **PURPOSE.** To summarize the procedures for initiating a relief for cause and subsequent Relief for Cause OER when a senior commander loses confidence in the performance of a subordinate commander, due to misconduct, poor judgment, or his or her inability to complete assigned duties.

2. **DISCUSSION.**

a. When a senior commander loses confidence in a subordinate commander's ability to command due to misconduct, poor judgment, the subordinate's inability to complete assigned duties, or for similar reasons, the senior commander has the authority to relieve the subordinate commander.

b. The Relief for Cause Process.

(1). When a senior commander decides to relieve a subordinate commander, the relief should be preceded with formal counseling unless it is not deemed appropriate. Any commander may temporarily suspend a subordinate from command, but the final action to relieve an officer from any command position will not be taken until after written approval by the first general officer in the chain of command of the officer being relieved is obtained (AR 600-20 para. 2-17a).

I. Majors and below in command positions will not be relieved until the first general officer in their chain of command approves the relief in writing. Officers and command sergeants major (CSMs) may be suspended from assigned duties by a member of their chain of command or supervisory chain, pending the decision on whether or not to relieve for cause (Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 15, date 18 April 2006).

II. Colonels or lieutenant colonels in command positions and CSMs will not be relieved until the appropriate USAREUR major subordinate commander or the Director, IMA-EURO, has notified USAREUR commander. After the USAREUR commander has been notified, the first general officer in the chain of command must approve the relief in writing (Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 15, date 18 April 2006).

(2). If a relief for cause is contemplated on the basis of an informal investigation under AR 15-6, the referral and comment procedures must be followed before initiating or directing relief. (This does not preclude a temporary suspension from assigned duties pending completion of the procedural safeguards contained in AR 15-6 (AR 600-20 para. 2-17b)).

(3). Any action purporting to initiate or direct a relief for cause on the basis of an informal investigation under AR 15-6 taken prior to completion of the procedural safeguards of AR 15-6 will be considered for all purposes as a temporary suspension from assigned duties.

c. Relief for Cause Reports

(1). When a commissioned or warrant officer is officially relieved of duties a Relief-for-Cause Report is subsequently prepared IAW AR 623-3, para 3-58. Relief-for-cause reports require referral to the rated officer as described in AR 623-3, para 3-36. The immediate rater must then draft a Relief-for-Cause OER for the officer being relieved per AR 623-3 para. 2-19a.

d. Procedure for Reviewing Relief Reports are:

(1). If the relief is directed by the rater or intermediate rater, the senior rater will do the review provided he or she is a U.S. Army officer. Otherwise, the first U.S. Army officer in the chain of command or supervision above the individual directing the relief will review the reports (AR 623-3c).

(2). If the senior rater is qualified to serve as reviewer and is satisfied that the report is clear, accurate, complete, and fully in accord with the provisions of the regulation, he or she may continue to process the report.

(3). If the senior rater (reviewer) finds that the report is unclear, contains errors, or is in violation of AR 623-3, the senior rater, will return the report to the rater or intermediate rater, indicating what is wrong. NOTE: The senior rater will avoid all statements and actions that may influence or alter an honest evaluation by the rater or intermediate rater.

(4). The approval authority signs The Relief for Cause Memo, Approving or Disapproving the request.

4. APPROVED: