



Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Ramón "CZ" Colón-López speaks with Servicemembers and Capitol Police Officer in Capitol building, Washington, DC, February 25, 2021 (DOD/Carlos M. Vazquez II)

History of the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

By Christopher D. Holmes

Every organization's leadership must understand the issues and concerns of its workforce to help that workforce meet its mission. This is particularly true in military units, where enlisted men and women

constitute most of the personnel. In the past, senior officers at military Service headquarters usually received advice on handling the concerns of their enlisted workforce informally. It was not until the early 1950s that a position on headquarters staffs was created to provide such counsel officially, a role complete with distinctive insignia to denote the unique status

of representing a Service's entire enlisted complement. Decades later, the combination of legislative reform that emphasized Services working together (*jointness*) and combat operations in the war on terror highlighted the need for a position that could best represent enlisted concerns common to the joint force. Because the role of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS)

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Marine Corps General Joseph Dunford, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaks to Army Command Sergeant Major John W. Troxell, then Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman during tour of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, February 8, 2018 (DOD/Dominique A. Pineiro)

addresses jointness, it made sense to identify a senior enlisted advisor to the Chairman (SEAC) who could offer such a perspective across the joint enlisted force. How the SEAC position developed mirrors how other such senior enlisted advisor positions began and reflects the evolution of jointness.

Origins

The first formal position of a Service senior enlisted advisor (SEA) originated at Headquarters Marine Corps immediately after the Korean War. Wartime requirements and increased technical specialization combined to grow the number of noncommissioned officer (NCO) billets in the Marine Corps to “58 percent of the total enlisted force.”¹ With such a sizable number, General Randolph M. Pate, then commandant of the Marine Corps, explored ways to streamline the flow of communications between those NCOs

and Headquarters Marine Corps as well as to recognize top performers.² By 1957, the concept of a focal point for all enlisted issues emerged as a way to fulfill both tasks. General Pate endorsed the idea of a senior enlisted position, having “seen firsthand the value of a senior sergeant major” while commanding a division during the Korean War.³ Accordingly, on May 23, 1957, Pate approved the establishment of a “principal advisor for issues affecting the enlisted men and women of the Marine Corps” and named Sergeant Major Wilbur Bestwick to the job as the first sergeant major of the Corps.⁴

Not to be outdone, the other Services followed suit. Each Service recognized the value of such a position that served as an “ombudsman and spokesman” for their enlisted force.⁵ The Army established a sergeant major of the Army (SMA) position on July 11, 1966, first filled by Sergeant Major William O. Wooldridge.⁶

Next came the Navy, appointing Master Chief Gunner’s Mate Delbert D. Black as master chief petty officer of the Navy on January 13, 1967.⁷ The Air Force subsequently appointed Chief Master Sergeant Paul W. Airey as chief master sergeant of the Air Force (CMSAF) on April 3 of that same year.⁸ A few months later, while not a part of the Department of Defense (DOD) but still an Armed Force, the Coast Guard established the position of master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard, with Master Chief Charles L. Calhoun appointed to the position on August 1, 1967.⁹ With each Service possessing a SEA, an overall joint SEA seemed unnecessary. But as joint warfare grew in importance and practice after the implementation of the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, and particularly after the onset of the war on terror in 2001, the need for a joint SEA became more apparent.

Evolution

By 2004, matters regarding a joint SEA gathered momentum after originating within the Joint Staff. An internal climate survey conducted earlier that year revealed deep-seated complaints. Enlisted members reported a perception that Joint Staff leadership “[did] not adequately address enlisted issues.”¹⁰ Respondents also pointed out a lack of a “single enlisted point of contact to address enlisted issues or concerns for all services/combatant commands.”¹¹ The J1 division chief tasked with tackling the matter pointed out that the Joint Staff had attempted to handle these concerns previously—with the creation of a senior enlisted council in 1996 and a proposal in 1998 for the designation of a single SEA for the Joint Staff.¹² Both efforts, however, had gained little traction by the time of the 2004 climate survey. Accordingly, J1 recommended the Joint Staff establish a SEA to the CJCS position.

The CJCS, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and director of the Joint Staff met on June 15, 2004, to discuss the J1 recommendation. They agreed that the senior enlisted member filling that position might “improve communication” with enlisted members assigned to the Joint Staff and provide “military advice” on enlisted issues to senior leadership.¹³ The three senior officers agreed to create a SEAC position to “give CJCS a dedicated voice on enlisted matters, visibly demonstrate CJCS support for the enlisted force, provide a direct counterpart to service SEAs, and streamline means to identify and adjudicate key Joint Staff enlisted issues.”¹⁴ But as the three originally conceived, the SEAC’s focus would be merely the Joint Staff itself. The Chairman also requested the reestablishment of an enlisted council on the Joint Staff headed by the SEAC. General Peter Pace, then the Vice Chairman, endorsed the idea and proposed expanding SEAC’s responsibilities, stating a SEAC might focus on enlisted issues “outside the Pentagon as well as inside . . . and could deal directly with his counterparts at the combatant commands.”¹⁵

In early December 2004, seemingly unaware of activities already under way on the Joint Staff, Congressman Ike Skelton (D-MO) wrote the CJCS a letter soliciting his views on establishing a SEA position like that of each of the Services. Skelton indicated such an advisor would be a “prime advocate” for enlisted members in “joint military affairs.”¹⁶ He rationalized that “as warfare becomes more joint at lower levels . . . the time has come to more actively include [senior noncommissioned officers] in that evolution.”¹⁷ Skelton further explained his vision of what such an advisor might do, such as developing joint courses for enlisted professional military education (EPME) or promoting the inclusion of senior enlisted billets on “joint battle staffs.”¹⁸ Skelton’s letter served as a prelude to cosponsored language in the fiscal year 2006 National Defense Authorization Act to formally create a joint SEA position. The Joint Staff congressional liaison office noted that both Republican and Democratic leaders of the House Armed Services Committee supported Skelton’s proposal.¹⁹

Each of the Service chiefs weighed in on the proposal. General John P. Jumper, chief of staff of the Air Force, best summed up their thoughts in his letter to the Chairman. He first stated such a proposal ought to be formally vetted through each Service chief and SEA.²⁰ He further noted that, although he did not oppose the idea, specifics were needed on how such a position differed from the Service SEAs.²¹ The Army cautioned about the “uncertain” relationship between this new position and the Service SEAs, while the Navy stated simply that what was not being done currently that could be done by an individual in this new position needed to be better articulated.²² The Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) reinforced these views, arguing the legislation had to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of not only the new position but also those of all SEAs, whether at the Service or the unified command level.²³

The concept went before a “tank” meeting of the CJCS and the Service chiefs on January 28, 2005. The

J1 presented slides that addressed General Jumper’s concerns. Overall, the argument for the position was that the joint SEA, much as its Service counterparts, could provide “unfiltered advice on enlisted and force cohesion issues . . . [and] on joint enlisted and force integration issues.”²⁴ The argument further claimed that, unlike a Service SEA who focused solely on his or her Service’s needs, a joint SEA could deliver an overarching view across the joint force on a variety of morale and welfare issues, from operations tempo to quality of life to advising the United Service Organization and the American Red Cross.²⁵

General Richard B. Myers, serving as the 15th CJCS, subsequently asked to meet with Service and combatant combat SEAs to gauge their opinions. Although the meeting scheduled for March 7, 2005, ultimately did not occur due to other events, written input submitted to the Chairman echoed the Service chiefs’ sentiments. Of note was the addition that such a SEA could also liaise with SEAs in foreign militaries.²⁶ Because operations in Iraq and Afghanistan at that time greatly involved coalition partners, this additional task made sense. Furthermore, the advisors recommended creating a nominative process to select an individual for the position. They argued that this method would present the best candidates from whom the Chairman could select an advisor—and by not allowing the Chairman simply to select an individual, the Service chiefs could eliminate any perception of a “good old boy network” and avoid placing someone who is “close to the boss,” which might cause the enlisted force to “distrust” the position.²⁷

The Service chiefs and the Chairman met on March 21, 2005, to formalize and finalize their positions. Among the settled recommendations was that this new SEAC would “be equal in stature” to the Service SEAs but “senior” to those in the combatant commands.²⁸ The chiefs also agreed to the roles and responsibilities of the SEAC. The position’s primary focus was to be the enlisted force as a whole, with the SEAC

...serving as a “tangible and special link” between that force, the CJCS, and the Secretary of Defense.²⁹ Moreover, the SEAC was to concentrate on joint enlisted matters, particularly to ensure continuity across combatant commands and to collate inputs on policy decisions that crossed Service boundaries.³⁰ The SEAC was also to foster the inclusion of joint concerns in EPME and represent the enlisted perspective in matters of joint force readiness.³¹

After agreeing to the SEAC concept, the Chairman sent Congressman Skelton a letter on April 8, 2005, confirming his support. He told Skelton he agreed that a SEAC “would provide critical advice and perspective on joint and combatant command issues that impact the enlisted force.”³² General Myers pointed out the role such an advisor could play in developing joint EPME and how enlisted Servicemembers might be utilized on joint battle staffs.³³ Finally, he noted that a SEAC might aid the Chairman in better meeting his legal responsibilities in Title X.³⁴

With the Chairman’s support, establishment of the SEAC rapidly moved along two parallel and simultaneous tracks. On the legislative side, OSD enthusiastically telegraphed its support for the position, remarking that “the importance of this new position cannot be overstated.”³⁵ OSD went on to articulate the duties of the SEAC: first, serving

*as an advisor to the Chairman on all matters concerning joint and combined total force integration, utilization, and development. Additionally, the incumbent will help develop NCO-related joint professional education, enhance utilization of our senior NCOs on joint battle staffs, and support the Chairman’s Title X responsibilities.*³⁶

Finally, OSD noted that, because of the “immense importance of these duties, combined with the elevated status of this senior enlisted position,” pay and allowances of the position should match that “afforded all of the Service senior enlisted advisors.”³⁷

Concurrently, armed with the knowledge that Congress would shortly vote the SEAC position into law, Lieutenant General Norton A. Schwartz, director of the Joint Staff, met on May 16, 2005, with a senior enlisted advisory panel comprising the Service operations deputies to map out a way ahead.³⁸ Panel members drafted a detailed plan of how the position might operate. Their deliberations resulted in a recommendation on August 31, 2005, to formally establish an office of the SEAC, with the SEAC assisted by three E7s.³⁹ General Pace, who had by then become the Chairman, appointed Army Command Sergeant Major William J. Gainey to become the first SEAC on October 1, 2005. This, coupled with the passage of the fiscal year (FY) 2006 National Defense Appropriation Act and its signing into law by President George Bush on January 6, 2006, formally created the position of a SEAC who took a position equal to that of his Service peers.

Sergeant Major Gainey served until his retirement on April 25, 2008. The CJCS at the time of Gainey’s retirement, Admiral Michael Mullen, elected not to fill the position during his tenure as Chairman. He believed that SEAs could best use their leadership and experience to address issues by being among the troops rather than serving on a staff.⁴⁰ Upon replacing Admiral Mullen as Chairman on October 1, 2011, General Martin Dempsey revived the SEAC position and selected Marine Corps Sergeant Major Bryan Battaglia to fill it. He deeply believed that senior NCOs gave invaluable “support and guidance” throughout all levels of command and consequently believed it important to have such a position accompany him as Chairman.⁴¹ Battaglia served until he retired on December 11, 2015. CJCS General Joseph Dunford replaced Battaglia with Army Sergeant Major John W. Troxell, stating he wanted an enlisted leader with a “wide range of experience, a proven track record as a leader, a teacher, a mentor, and a warrior,” and someone who would provide him “advice with candor.”⁴² Troxell also served 4

years. The CJCS at the time of Troxell’s retirement, General Mark Milley, selected Air Force Chief Master Sergeant Ramón Colón-López as Troxell’s replacement because he desired someone who would “lead by example” and who possessed a “wealth of operational experience.”⁴³ Chief Master Sergeant Colón-López took the oath of office to become the fourth SEAC on December 13, 2019.

Order of Precedence

After creation of the SMA position in 1966, Army protocol conferred on it a significantly high status. This came about due to the “prestige and importance of the office” in representing the Army’s entire enlisted force.⁴⁴ As such, the Army order of precedence enumerated the SMA as “just beneath” the director of the Army staff and “above all lieutenant generals on staff.”⁴⁵ The other Services afforded no similar privileges to their senior enlisted leaders, sowing resentment. CMSAF Frederick J. “Jim” Finch recalled a meeting with CJCS General Hugh Shelton in mid-2000 at which the SEAs aired their grievance about this unequal protocol treatment, particularly at joint events.⁴⁶ Shelton agreed that Service SEAs should receive equitable treatment and wrote OSD recommending a change to put all Service SEAs on the same level. The responsible office at OSD acquiesced, and the 2001 official OSD order of precedence included for the first time “senior enlisted advisors” at the distinguished visitor code 4 level, just above lieutenant generals and vice admirals.⁴⁷

Because the FY06 act made the SEAC equivalent to the other Service SEAs, the SEAC’s protocol precedence automatically became equivalent to that of the other Service SEAs. It meant that the SEAC, too, was considered under distinguished visitors code 4, just above lieutenant generals and vice admirals. In March 2018, the Joint Staff requested OSD slightly amend the order of precedence to move the director of the Joint Staff and equivalent Service staff directors ahead of the SEAC and Service SEAs



Then—Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman Major Bryan B. Battaglia addresses audience during roll out for *The Noncommissioned Officer and Petty Officer: Backbone of the Armed Forces*, published by NDU Press, in Pentagon Auditorium, December 17, 2013 (DOD/Sean K. Harp)

to “ensure consistent precedence across the Department as well as highlight the unique role of the director of the Joint Staff and directors of the Service staffs.”⁴⁸ The DOD order of precedence issued on May 10, 2019, reflected this change. The specific wording directed that the SEAC and other Service SEAs “may be afforded the precedence of their principal, if the principal is in attendance when participating in some national level events and ceremonies. . . . [But] when not accompanied by their chiefs, [they] may be afforded precedence immediately after lieutenant generals and vice admirals.”⁴⁹

Insignia

SEAC’s Flag. One of the most visible ways to identify a senior position in the military is via flags. The SEAC has a positional flag; its origins come from a similar flag for the SMA. In 1992, the NCO in charge of Army staff pro-

ocol recommended the SMA have a positional flag to match that of other senior Army positions.⁵⁰ This move complemented other aspects of protocol regarding the “prestige and importance” of the SMA position.⁵¹ Though flag creation and approval took 7 years, the SMA officially possessed positional colors by 1999.⁵² The SMA flag is “divided diagonally in scarlet and white [bearing] the SMA’s shield insignia at its center.”⁵³ It also incorporates four stars to symbolize the chief of staff of the Army’s office, since the SMA serves as the chief of staff’s principal enlisted advisor.

Concurrent with his appointment of Sergeant Major Gainey as SEAC in 2005, General Pace authorized the creation of a positional flag for the role. He approved the creation of a flag that illustrates the position’s prestige just like the one the Army Institute of Heraldry created for

the SMA, particularly because of the “symbolism and tradition a flag holds in the military.”⁵⁴ Instead of the scarlet and white of the Army, the SEAC’s flag incorporates a base “diagonally divided” between the “defender’s blue” and white colors used for the CJCS flag; the DOD eagle stands in the center.⁵⁵ Also like the SMA flag, the SEAC flag incorporates four stars to represent the rank of the office the SEAC advises.

The Air Force later recognized the importance of a flag to visibly identify its most senior enlisted member. As such, it requested the Institute of Heraldry’s assistance in designing a flag for the CMSAF. CMSAF James A. Roy unveiled the flag on January 24, 2013, during a ceremony when he transferred responsibility of the CMSAF office to Chief Master Sergeant James A. Cody.⁵⁶ The colors of the CMSAF flag incorporate the blue and white from the positional colors for



U.S. Army Sergeant Major William J. Gainey, then Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman meets with Army recruiters during visit to East Wichita Recruiting Station with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, in Wichita, Kansas, August 9, 2007 (DOD/Cherie A. Thurlby)

the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. In the center, a representation of the unique cap badge worn by the CMSAF connotes the position; the flag also bears four stars, signifying the level at which the position serves.

Distinctive Rank Insignia. Though the SEAC serves as the SEA to the highest-ranking officer in the U.S. military, the actions of 2005 did not develop a unique or distinctive rank insignia to identify the position, though Service SEAs wear such insignia. In fact, in 2005, the Army disapproved of designing unique rank insignia.⁵⁷ By 2018, however, it had become clear that, without a distinctive rank insignia, the SEACs wore their respective Service's E9 chevrons, meaning they displayed a rank technically inferior to the SEAC's Service counterparts.⁵⁸ As such, Sergeant Major Troxell called together the Service SEAs, and in April 2019 the group collectively agreed on the concept of a unique rank insignia for the SEAC position. The group proposed several options that

Troxell then outlined to General Milley in November 2019. General Milley opted for insignia that incorporated the DOD's eagle and four stars, both of which represent the office SEAC advises.⁵⁹ The Army Institute of Heraldry created formal designs for each Service, which Troxell then coordinated with each Service's SEA. Because Troxell was close to retirement and being replaced by Air Force Chief Master Sergeant Colón-López, the Army and the Air Force were the first to approve the design, with the Army doing so on December 9, 2019, and the Air Force following suit in the subsequent days. With CJCS approval and Service concurrences, the director of the Joint Staff officially established the unique rank insignia for all Services on December 17, 2019.⁶⁰

Army Distinctive Insignia. Finally, for Soldiers serving as SEAC, the Army designated a unique collar device as well as a distinctive unit insignia. While developing the flag for the SEAC, the Army Institute of Heraldry concurrently

designed these special Army insignia. Like the flag, the insignia incorporates the DOD eagle on a base "divided diagonally" with the "defender's blue" and white of the CJCS flag, and it has four stars to represent the position the SEAC advises.⁶¹ The Army formally approved both insignia in December 2005.⁶²

This brief history of the SEAC position demonstrates the evolution—and arguably institutionalization—of jointness. That it took 18 years after the passage of Goldwater-Nichols for the idea of a joint SEA to emerge indicates how much the concept of jointness needed to mature and take root. But this history also illustrates the continued commitment of the military's senior leadership to those whose work enables the joint force to meet its mission day in and day out. This is evidenced not only by the SEAC position but also most recently by the appointment of Chief Master Sergeant Roger A. Towberman to serve as SEA of the newest armed force—Space Force.

He took office exactly 53 years to the day after the first CMSAF.⁶³ Most of all, what the SEAC story clearly demonstrates is that jointness is a concept applicable to all Servicemembers, regardless of rank or Service. JFQ

Notes

¹ John C. Chapin, *Uncommon Men: The Sergeants Major of the Marine Corps* (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1993), 3. ² *Ibid.*, 4.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Ernest F. Fisher, Jr., *Guardians of the Republic: A History of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps of the U.S. Army* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001), 343; Chapin, *Uncommon Men*, 5.

⁵ Fisher, *Guardians of the Republic*, 343.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Naval History and Heritage Command, “MCPON Delbert D. Black: First Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy,” September 25, 2020, available at <<https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/people/master-chief-petty-officers/black-bio.html>>.

⁸ U.S. Air Force, “CMSAF Paul W. Airey,” adapted from *The Evolution of Airmen: Conversations with the Chief Master Sergeants of the Air Force*, ed. Lee E. Hoover, Jr. (Montgomery, AL: Air University Press, March 2017), available at <<https://static.dma.mil/usaf/cmsaf50/EvolutionOfAirmen.pdf>>.

⁹ U.S. Coast Guard Historian’s Office, “Notable People: Master Chief Charles L. Calhoun,” available at <<https://www.history.uscg.mil/Browse-by-Topic/Notable-People/All/Article/1776787/master-chief-charles-l-calhoun/>>.

¹⁰ Colonel Anne Sobota, USAF, J1, 5x8, “Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA),” July 16, 2004.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Colonel Anne Sobota, USAF, J1, 5x8, “Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA),” July 9, 2004.

¹³ Colonel Paula Thornhill, special assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), memorandum to CJCS General Richard Myers, “CJCS Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA) Follow-Up,” September 8, 2004.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ General Peter Pace, note to CJCS on Joint Staff action package J-1A 00313-04, June 18, 2004.

¹⁶ Congressman Ike Skelton, proposed letter to CJCS General Richard Myers, enclosed in JCS staff package KJ-59, “CJCS Response to Congressman Skelton—SUBJ: Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CJCS,” November 30, 2004.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Kent Jacocks, staff summary, JCS staff package KJ-59, “CJCS

Response to Congressman Skelton—SUBJ: Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CJCS,” November 30, 2004.

²⁰ General John P. Jumper, USAF, draft of letter to CJCS, attached to AF/XO email to director, Joint Staff, “Joint Staff Senior Enlisted Advisor Positions,” December 28, 2004.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² J1 slides for tank meeting, “Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” January 28, 2005, slide 7.

²³ *Ibid.*, slide 9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, slide 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, slide 5.

²⁶ Joint Staff action package J-1A00161-05, “Senior Enlisted Advisor Summaries,” February 28, 2005.

²⁷ Sergeant Major William Kinney, Pacific Command senior enlisted advisor, email to J1, February 22, 2005.

²⁸ J1 slides for tank meeting, “Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” March 21, 2005, slide 9.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, slide 7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, slide 6.

³¹ *Ibid.*, slide 7.

³² General Richard Myers, CJCS, letter to Congressman Ike Skelton, April 28, 2005.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Rear Admiral Donna Crisp, J1, submission to OSD Comptroller, “Department of Defense Appeal, FY 2006 Defense Authorization Bill: Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—Establishment of Base Pay Rate and Personal Money Allowance,” June 13, 2005.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ J1 briefing (with info paper), “Joint Staff Senior Enlisted Advisory Panel,” May 16, 2005.

³⁹ Brigadier General Maria Owens, USAF, J1, memorandum to director, Joint Staff (LTG Walter L. Sharp, USA), “Est. of Joint Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA) Support Staff,” August 31, 2005.

⁴⁰ Admiral Michael G. Mullen, proposed email to Chief Master Sergeant (Ret.) Lani Burnett, Joint Staff action package 09-30484, “Reserve Senior Enlisted Advisor on the Joint Staff,” March 6, 2009.

⁴¹ General Martin E. Dempsey, “Remarks on Swearing-In of Sergeant Major Bryan Battaglia,” October 1, 2011, audio, 22:47, available at <<https://www.dvidshub.net/audio/30583/cjcs-sea-gen-martin-dempsey>>.

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[as-chairmans-eyes-and-ears-to-joint-force/](https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2065447/new-seac-to-serve-as-chairmans-eyes-and-ears-to-joint-force/)>; General Mark Milley, Twitter post, December 14, 2019, 7:57 P.M.

⁴⁴ Robert M. Mages et al., *The Sergeants Major of the Army*, CMH Pub. 70-63-1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1995), 44.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ U.S. Air Force, “CMSAF Frederick ‘Jim’ Finch,” adapted from *Evolution of Airmen: 1967–2017*, ed. Lee E. Hoover, Jr., available at <<https://static.dma.mil/usaf/cmsaf50/Finch.html>>.

⁴⁷ Secretary of Defense, “Table of Precedence,” Department of Defense (DOD), February 8, 2001.

⁴⁸ Joint Staff, Joint Staff action package 18-00886, March 22, 2018.

⁴⁹ Secretary of Defense, *2019 Department of Defense Order of Precedence* (Washington, DC: DOD, May 10, 2019).

⁵⁰ Mages et al., *Sergeants Major of the Army*, 40.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 40.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ General Peter Pace, USMC, memorandum for the Institute of Heraldry, “Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Flag,” CM-0072-05, November 30, 2005.

⁵⁵ U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry, Design 22571, 5-1-882, November 15, 2005.

⁵⁶ U.S. Air Force, “CMSAF Transition Ceremony,” Joint Base Andrews, January 28, 2013, available at <<https://www.jba.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/336541/cmsaf-transition-ceremony/>>.

⁵⁷ Colonel John J. Spinnell, U.S. Army, memorandum, “Approval for Establishment and Development of Rank and Unit Insignia for the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the CJCS,” Army Planner DACS-ZD-JDA Memorandum Number 1235-05, December 20, 2005.

⁵⁸ Master Sergeant Robert Couture, Office of the SEAC, “SEAC Rank Proposal” staff working papers, September 17, 2018.

⁵⁹ General Mark A. Milley, USA, email reply to SEAC Sergeant Major Troxell, “SEAC Unique Rank Insignia,” November 20, 2019.

⁶⁰ Lieutenant General Glen D. VanHerck, USAF, memorandum, “U.S. Army and Air Force Rank Insignia for the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,” DJSM-0156-19, December 17, 2019.

⁶¹ U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry, Design 22571, B-2-68, November 15, 2005.

⁶² Spinnell, “Approval for Establishment and Development.”

⁶³ Sara Keller, “CMSgt Towberman Sworn In as the First Senior Enlisted Advisor for the U.S. Space Force,” *Space Force News*, April 3, 2020, available at <<https://www.spaceforce.mil/News/Article/2135959/cmsgt-towberman-sworn-in-as-the-first-senior-enlisted-advisor-for-the-us-space>>.