



HISTORY OF THE CHIEF

A U.S. NAVY TRADITION

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HUMBLE ORIGINS

The earliest known use of the title "Chief" dates back to 1776 when Jacob Wasbie, a Cook's Mate, was pronounced "Chief Cook" aboard USS Alfred. The title was largely informal and was used to denote him as the foremost cook aboard the ship.

History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade, Lester B. Tucker



APRIL 1, 1893

Date the rate of the Chief Petty Officer was officially established. Ceremonies are held across the fleet and include a cake cutting ceremony in which the youngest and oldest Chief present cut the cake together.

History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade, Lester B. Tucker

LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP



Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) is a unique enlisted rate created in 1967. The officer of MCPON was established to ensure clear communication up and down the chain of command between deckplate leaders and commissioned officers and serves as the liaison of enlisted members directly to Chief of Naval Operations. The MCPON is appointed by the CNO.

History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade, Lester B. Tucker



Master chief petty officers are the most senior enlisted personnel in the fleet. They often serve in a position known as the "command master chief." As the senior enlisted person in the chain of command, they directly assist their commanding officers in issues of quality of life, discipline, training and morale. Master chiefs constitute the top 1.25% of enlisted members of maritime forces.

10 U.S.C § 517, History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade, Lester B. Tucker



Senior chief petty officers, in addition to their roles as chiefs, provide assistance and guidance to chief petty officers. A chief petty officer can only advance to senior chief if they have four years in grade and a board of master chiefs approves. Senior chief petty officers make up just 2.5% of the total enlisted force of the Navy.

10 U.S.C § 517, History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade, Lester B. Tucker



Chief petty officers are servant leaders that constitute the backbone of the senior enlisted leadership in the U.S. Navy. All chief petty officers act as subject matter experts and serve as the link between commissioned officers and enlisted. Chiefs also provide effective discipline, supervise their work and act as advocates for their Sailors' best interests.

History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade, Lester B. Tucker

THE OLDEST CONTINUOUS RATES



Since 1797, only two ratings for chiefs that remained in continuous use: Boatswain's Mate and Gunner's Mate.

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A NEW UNIFORM FOR NEW AUTHORITY

The foul anchor cap device was approved in 1905.

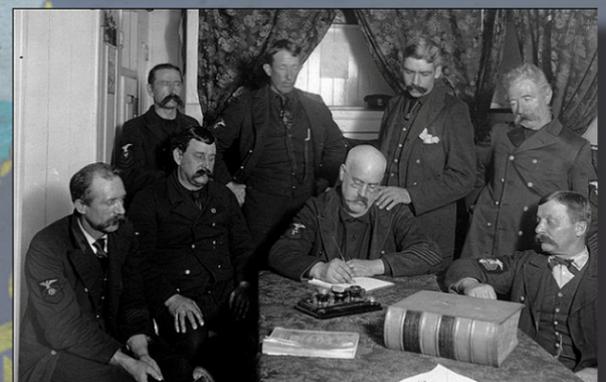
Collar devices didn't become official until 1959.

The advent of a rocker device was the first distinction and was originally borrowed from the Master-at-Arms rating and became official in 1894.



"ASK THE CHIEF."

When confronted with a problem, the age-old catchphrase "ask the Chief," is a household phrase in and out of the Navy. Required to be a font of wisdom, an ambassador of goodwill, chiefs provide vital solutions to both officer and enlisted personnel making them a lynchpin to the success of daily operations in the Navy.



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