

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE ARMED FORCES**

UNITED STATES,)	SUPPLEMENT TO THE
<i>Appellee,</i>)	PETITION FOR GRANT
)	OF REVIEW
v.)	
)	Crim. App. Dkt. No. S32782
CHANSON A. JOHNSON,)	
Master Sergeant (E-7),)	USCA Dkt. No. ____-____/AF
United States Air Force,)	
<i>Appellant.</i>)	March 12, 2025

ISSUES PRESENTED

I.

Whether 18 U.S.C. § 922 as applied to Master Sergeant Johnson is constitutional in light of recent Supreme Court precedent.

II.

Whether the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals abused its discretion by determining that Master Sergeant Johnson’s sentence is not inappropriately severe.¹

STATEMENT OF STATUTORY JURISDICTION

The Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals (AFCCA) reviewed this case pursuant to Article 66(d), Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), 10 U.S.C.

¹ Appellant raises the second issue on appeal under *United States v. Grostefon*, 12 M.J. 431 (C.M.A. 1982). Appendix C.

§ 866(d).² This Court has jurisdiction to review this case pursuant to Article 67(a)(3), UCMJ, 10 U.S.C. § 867(a)(3).

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On April 9, 2024, a military judge sitting as a special court-martial convicted Master Sergeant (MSgt) Chanson A. Johnson (Appellant), consistent with his plea, of one specification of divers use of methamphetamine, in violation of Article 112a, UCMJ, 10 U.S.C. § 912a. R. at 38; Entry of Judgment (EOJ) (April 29, 2024). The military judge sentenced MSgt Johnson to a reprimand, reduction in grade to E-4, confinement for 30 days, and a bad conduct discharge. R. at 77. The convening authority took no action on the findings or sentence. Convening Authority Decision on Action (April 22, 2024).

MSgt Johnson appealed his conviction pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 866(b)(1)(A). At the AFCCA, MSgt Johnson raised whether the firearm bar contained in his record of trial was constitutional as applied to him. *United States v. Johnson*, No. ACM S32782, *2 (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. Jan. 16, 2025) (Appendix A). On January 16, 2025, the AFCCA affirmed the findings as correct in law and fact and denied relief on the firearm issue, citing cases indicating the AFCCA believed it lacked jurisdiction to

² All citations to the UCMJ or Rules for Courts-Martial (R.C.M.) are to the versions in the *Manual for Courts-Martial, United States* (2019 ed.) (*MCM*).

address this issue. *Id.* (citing *United States v. Vanzant*, 84 M.J. 671, 681 (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. 2024)).

STATEMENT OF FACTS

MSgt Johnson pleaded guilty to wrongful use of methamphetamine on two occasions in a sixty-day window in 2022. R. at 22-23, DD Form 428, *Charge Sheet*. The facts at trial established the MSgt Johnson's use of methamphetamine was alone at home solely as a means to forget about his mental health symptoms stemming from combat trauma. R. at 22-27, 63, Def. Ex. C., Pros. Ex. 1. The military judge accepted MSgt Johnson's plea and found him guilty. R. at 38.

On 29 April 2024, over two years after MSgt Johnson's last established drug use, the Government determined the firearms prohibition applied under 18 U.S.C. § 922 by marking "Yes" on "Firearm Prohibition Triggered" on the Staff Judge Advocate's indorsement to the EOJ. 1st Ind., EOJ, MSgt Chanson A. Johnson. The Staff Judge Advocate's indorsement became the third page of the EOJ. *Id.*; EOJ. Notably, the document did not state what provision of 18 U.S.C. § 922 applied. *Id.*

MSgt Johnson challenged the firearm prohibition before the AFCCA. Br. on Behalf of Appellant at 1-11. He argued the AFCCA had jurisdiction under Article 66, UCMJ, and asked the AFCCA to correct the statement of trial results (STR) and EOJ. *Id.* at 11. The AFCCA denied relief, purportedly for lack of jurisdiction. Appendix A at *2 (citing *Vanzant*, 84 M.J. at 681).

REASONS TO GRANT REVIEW

This Court should grant review of this case as a trailer to *United States v. Johnson*, in which this Court is considering the same firearm prohibition issue along with preliminary questions of jurisdiction and standing. Order Granting Review, *United States v. Johnson*, No. 24-0004/SF, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 561 (C.A.A.F. Sept. 24, 2024). MSgt Johnson’s case involves the same questions, which remain unresolved by the AFCCA and this Court after *United States v. Williams*, __ M.J. __, No. 24-0015, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 501 (C.A.A.F. Sept. 24, 2024).

The AFCCA had jurisdiction³ to consider the post-trial processing error under Article 66(d)(2), UCMJ, which provides that the AFCCA “may provide appropriate relief if the accused demonstrates error . . . in the processing of the court-martial after the judgment was entered into the record” Raising and correcting the firearm-prohibition error is possible because of the timing and presence of the 18 U.S.C. § 922 prohibition in the EOJ. Unlike the Army, the Air Force completes its final 18 U.S.C. § 922 indexing after the EOJ, which it then incorporates into the judgment itself (*see* Article 60c, UCMJ, 10 U.S.C. § 860c). Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 51-201, *Administration of Military Justice*, ¶¶ 20.41,

³ Jurisdiction to review a case has two separate but related parts: first, whether there is jurisdiction over the case, and second, whether there is authority to act. *Williams*, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 501, at *8. The jurisdictional question here concerning AFCCA is focused on authority to act.

29.32, 29.33 (Apr. 14, 2022) (Appendix B). As a result, MSgt Johnson's case is factually distinct from *Williams*. *Cf. Williams*, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 501, at *13-15 (discussing how the Army's firearm prohibition indexing precedes the EOJ because it is only in the STR). Because the firearm prohibition occurs after the EOJ, the AFCCA had the authority to act and provide appropriate relief for the error MSgt Johnson raised.

However, the AFCCA denied relief because it seemed to determine that it did not have jurisdiction, citing case law found in Article 66(d)(1), UCMJ. Appendix A at 2 (citing *Vanzant*, 84 M.J. at 681). The AFCCA's determination that there was no jurisdiction to review the application of 18 U.S.C. § 922 to MSgt Johnson's case conflicts with this Court's decision in *Williams*. *Williams*, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 501, at *14; C.A.A.F. R. 21(b)(5)(B)(i). This Court should grant review to clarify the AFCCA's authority to act under Article 66(d)(2), UCMJ.

Because the AFCCA denied relief on whether 18 U.S.C. § 922 was constitutionally applied to MSgt Johnson, this Court has jurisdiction to review and act upon the firearm prohibition in the EOJ. Article 67(c)(1)(B), UCMJ. This is because the first indorsement containing the firearm prohibition is part of the military judge's judgment (the EOJ) as required by statute, the Rules for Courts-Martial, and regulation. Article 60c, UCMJ; Rule for Courts-Martial (R.C.M.) 1111(b)(3)(F), MANUAL FOR COURTS-MARTIAL, UNITED STATES (2024 ed.); DAFI

51-201, at ¶¶ 20.41, 29.32. And by denying relief, the AFCCA “affirmed” the judgment. Article 67(c)(1)(B), UCMJ.

As this Court determined in *Williams*, this Court can act on the STR in the EOJ. *Williams*, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 501, at *10. Like the STR, the firearm prohibition in the indorsement is a required part of the EOJ. *Id.* (citing Article 60c(a)(1)(A), UCMJ); DAFI 51-201, at ¶ 20.41. Thus, like the STR in *Williams*, the indorsement here is in the judgment, which this Court can act upon under Article 67(c)(1)(B), UCMJ. Because this Court independently has jurisdiction and authority to act, this Court should grant review because the Government’s indexing violates the Second Amendment. *N.Y. State Rifle & Pistol Ass’n v. Bruen*, 597 U.S. 1, 24 (2022); C.A.A.F. R. 21(b)(5)(B)(ii).

Specifically, the Government has not demonstrated barring MSgt Johnson from owning a firearm as a sober person who committed a non-violent offense is “consistent with the Nation’s historical tradition of firearm regulation.” *Bruen*, 597 U.S. at 24. The historical tradition took a narrower view of firearm regulation for criminal acts than that reflected in 18 U.S.C. § 922: [A]ctual “longstanding” precedent in America and pre-Founding England suggests that a firearms disability can be consistent with the Second Amendment to the extent that . . . its basis credibly indicates a present *danger that one will misuse arms against others and the disability redresses that danger*. C. Kevin Marshall, *Why Can’t Martha Stewart Have a Gun*,

32 HARV. J.L. & PUB. POL’Y 695, 698 (2009) (emphasis added). Prior to 1961, “the original [Federal Firearms Act] had a narrower basis for a disability, limited to those convicted of a ‘crime of violence.’” *Id.* at 699. MSgt Johnson’s offense has no element of, nor factual basis in, violence.

The Supreme Court recently addressed the validity of 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8)(C)(i), which applies once a court finds a defendant “represents a credible threat to the physical safety” of another and issues a restraining order. *United States v. Rahimi*, 602 U.S. 680, 688 (2024). The Supreme Court concluded that the historical analysis supported the proposition that when “an individual poses a clear threat of physical violence to another, the threatening individual may be disarmed.” *Id.* at 698.

But the historical analogue breaks down when applied here. In *Rahimi*, the Supreme Court noted that the “surety” and “going armed laws” supporting a restriction involved “whether a particular defendant likely would threaten or had threatened another with a weapon.” *Id.* at 699. Additionally, the majority pointed out that 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8) “involved judicial determinations,” comparable to the historical surety laws’ “significant procedural protections.” *Rahimi*, 602 U.S. at 696, 699.

By contrast, this case never involved any violence, had no procedural protections at the time the firearm prohibition was imposed, and the firearm

prohibition under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3) (the only possible applicable category) has not been interpreted to restrict a sober person's right to bear arms. *United States v. Connelly*, 117 F. 4th 269, 175-76 (5th Cir. 2024). In applying the standard set forth by *Rahimi*, the Fifth Circuit determined 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3) cannot constitutionally apply to a sober person based solely on past substance use, nor to a nonviolent, occasional drug user of sound mind. *Id.* at 273-76. This Court should grant review so it can correct the AFCCA's error of constitutional magnitude. C.A.A.F. R. 21(b)(5)(A).

MSgt Johnson has standing to raise this issue. The deprivation of his constitutional right to bear arms is caused by the Government's unconstitutional indexing in the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) that is promulgated by the indorsement in the EOJ and prevents him from purchasing or possessing firearms. *See Lujan v. Defs. of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555, 560-61 (1992) (discussing that standing requires (1) injury, (2) causation and (3) redressability). NICS is used nationwide by federal firearm licensees (FFL) to determine if someone is eligible to obtain a firearm. ABOUT NICS, <https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/more-fbi-services-and-information/nics/about-nics> (last visited March 8, 2025). The Air Force reporting that MSgt Johnson cannot possess firearms would cause NICS to issue a "denied" response were MSgt Johnson to attempt to acquire a firearm from an FFL. 28 C.F.R. § 25.6(c). This has

the practical effect of depriving MSgt Johnson of his right to bear arms. A finding that 18 U.S.C. § 922 does not apply to him would correct the error because the Air Force is required to update NICS following an appeal. Department of the Air Force Manual (DAFMAN) 71-102, at ¶ 4.4.3.1 (July 21, 2020) (incorporating guidance memorandum from Sept. 10, 2024), https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/saf_ig/publication/afman71-102/afman71-102.pdf (last visited March 8, 2025); *see* NICS Indices, <https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/more-fbi-services-and-information/nics/nics-indices> (last visited March 8, 2025) (noting it is the contributing agency's responsibility to remove an individual from NICS Indices if their prohibitor is no longer valid). The correction of the erroneous indorsement has a significant likelihood of securing the requested relief. *Utah v. Evans*, 536 U.S. 452, 464 (2002).

WHEREFORE, MSgt Johnson respectfully requests this Court grant review.

Respectfully Submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF FILING AND SERVICE

I certify that I electronically filed a copy of the foregoing with the Clerk of Court on March 12, 2025, and that a copy was also electronically served on the Air Force Government Trial and Appellate Operations Division at AF.JAJG.AFLOA.Filng.Workflow@us.af.mil on the same date.



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CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE
WITH RULES 21(b) & 37

This supplement complies with the type-volume limitation of Rules 21(b) because it contains approximately 1,965 words. Appendix C complies with the page limitation of Rule 21A(a) because it consists of 6 pages.

This filing complies with the typeface and type-style requirements of Rule 37 because it has been prepared in a proportional typeface using Microsoft Word with Times New Roman 14-point typeface.



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Appendix A

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS**

No. ACM S32782

UNITED STATES
Appellee

v.

Chanson A. JOHNSON
Master Sergeant (E-7), U.S. Air Force, *Appellant*

Appeal from the United States Air Force Trial Judiciary

Decided 16 January 2025

Military Judge: Adam D. Bentz.

Sentence: Sentence adjudged 9 April 2024 by SpCM convened at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. Sentence entered by military judge on 29 April 2024: Bad-conduct discharge, confinement for 30 days, reduction to E-4, and a reprimand.

For Appellant: Major Nicole J. Herbers, USAF.

For Appellee: Major Vanessa Bairos, USAF; Major Brittany M. Speirs, USAF; Mary Ellen Payne, Esquire.

Before ANNEXSTAD, DOUGLAS, and PERCLE, *Appellate Military Judges*.

**This is an unpublished opinion and, as such, does not serve as
precedent under AFCCA Rule of Practice and Procedure 30.4.**

PER CURIAM:

A military judge sitting as a special court-martial convicted Appellant, in accordance with his pleas and pursuant to a plea agreement, of one specification of wrongful use of methamphetamine, a Schedule II controlled substance,

on divers occasions, in violation of Article 112a, Uniform of Code Military Justice (UCMJ), 10 U.S.C. § 912a.¹ The military judge sentenced Appellant to a bad-conduct discharge, confinement for 30 days, reduction to the grade of E-4, and a reprimand. On 22 April 2024, the convening authority took no action on the findings or sentence.

Appellant raises two issues on appeal: (1) whether the post-trial processing of Appellant's case was improperly completed when the staff judge advocate found 18 U.S.C. § 922 applied to Appellant's conviction of a nonviolent offense; and (2) whether Appellant's sentence is inappropriately severe.²

We have carefully considered the issues raised by Appellant and find they do not require discussion or relief. *See United States v. Guinn*, 81 M.J. 195, 204 (C.A.A.F. 2021) (citing *United States v. Matias*, 25 M.J. 356, 361 (C.M.A. 1987)); *see also United States v. Vanzant*, 84 M.J. 671, 681 (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. 2024) (holding the 18 U.S.C. § 922 firearm prohibition notation included in the staff judge advocate's indorsement to the entry of judgment is beyond a Court of Criminal Appeals' statutory authority to review), *rev. granted*, __ M.J. __, No. 24-0182, 2024 CAAF LEXIS 640 (C.A.A.F. 17 Oct. 2024).

As entered, the findings are correct in law, and the sentence is correct in law and fact, and no error materially prejudicial to the substantial rights of Appellant occurred. Articles 59(a) and 66(d), UCMJ, 10 U.S.C. §§ 859(a), 866(d). *Manual for Courts-Martial, United States* (2024 ed.). Accordingly, the findings and sentence are **AFFIRMED**.



FOR THE COURT

Carol K. Joyce

CAROL K. JOYCE

Clerk of the Court

¹ *Manual for Courts-Martial, United States* (2019 ed.).

² Issue 2 was personally raised by Appellant pursuant to *United States v. Grostefon*, 12 M.J. 431 (C.M.A. 1982).

Appendix B

is earlier, via email to the recipients listed on the template memorandum located on the VMJD. If any portion of the punishment is deferred, suspended, set aside, waived, or disapproved, the memorandum must include the terms. A template memorandum can be found on the VMJD.

20.38.2. 24 Hour Memorandum. If the EoJ is published more than 14 days after the sentence is announced, the SJA of the office that prosecuted the case must send a memorandum within 24 hours after the EoJ via email to the recipients listed on the template memorandum located on the VMJD. If any portion of the punishment is deferred, suspended, set aside, waived, or disapproved, the memorandum must include the terms. A template memorandum can be found on the VMJD.

Section 20I—EoJ (R.C.M. 1111; Article 60c, UCMJ).

20.39. General Provision. The EoJ reflects the results of the court-martial after all post-trial actions, rulings, or orders, and serves to terminate trial proceedings and initiate appellate proceedings. The EoJ must be completed in all GCMs and SPCMs in which an accused was arraigned, regardless of the final outcome of the case. For post-trial processing in an SCM, see **Section 23F**. In any case in which an accused was arraigned and the court-martial ended in a full acquittal, mistrial, dismissal of all charges, or is otherwise terminated without findings, an EoJ must be completed (to include the first indorsement) when the court terminates. For cases resulting in a finding of not guilty by reason of lack of mental responsibility, the EoJ must be completed after the subsequent hearing required by R.C.M. 1111 (e)(1) and R.C.M. 1105.

20.40. Preparing the EoJ.

20.40.1. Minimum Contents. Following receipt of the CADAM and issuance of any other post-trial rulings or orders, the military judge must ensure an EoJ is prepared. **(T-0).** Military judges should wait five days after receipt of the CADAM to sign the EoJ. This ensures parties have five days to motion the military judge to correct an error in the CADAM in accordance with R.C.M. 1104 (b)(2)(B). The EoJ must include the contents listed in R.C.M. 1111(b), and the STR must be included as an attachment. **(T-0).** Practitioners must use the format and checklists for the EoJ that is posted on the VMJD.

20.40.2. Expurgated and Unexpurgated Copies of the EoJ. In cases with both an expurgated and unexpurgated Statement of Trial Results, both an expurgated and unexpurgated EoJ must be prepared and signed by the military judge. In arraigned cases in which the court-martial ended in a full acquittal, mistrial, dismissal of all charges, or is otherwise terminated without findings, refer to **paragraph 20.8** to determine whether an expurgated EoJ is required and the distribution requirements for expurgated and unexpurgated copies.

20.41. First Indorsement to the EoJ. After the EoJ is signed by the military judge and returned to the servicing legal office, the SJA signs and attaches to the EoJ a first indorsement, indicating whether the following criteria are met: DNA processing is required; the accused has been convicted of a crime of domestic violence under 18 U.S.C. 922(g)(9); criminal history record indexing is required under DoDI 5505.11; firearm prohibitions are triggered; and/or sex offender notification is required. See **Chapter 29** for further information on this requirement. Templates are located on the VMJD. The first indorsement is distributed with the EoJ. **Note:** This requirement is not delegable. Only the SJA or other judge advocate acting as the SJA may sign the

first indorsement. In the latter case, the person signing the first indorsement indicates “Acting as the Staff Judge Advocate” in the signature block.

20.42. Distributing the EoJ. The EoJ and first indorsement must be distributed in accordance with the STR/EoJ Distribution List on the VMJD within five duty days of completion.

Section 20J—Post-Trial Confinement

20.43. Entry into Post-Trial Confinement. Sentences to confinement run from the date adjudged, except when suspended or deferred by the convening authority. Unless limited by a commander in the accused’s chain of command, the authority to order post-trial confinement is delegated to the trial counsel or assistant trial counsel. See R.C.M. 1102(b)(2). The DD Form 2707, *Confinement Order*, with original signatures goes with the accused and is used to enter an accused into post-trial confinement.

20.44. Processing the DD Form 2707.

20.44.1. When a court-martial sentence includes confinement, the legal office should prepare the top portion of the DD Form 2707. Only list the offenses of which the accused was found guilty. The person directing confinement, typically the trial counsel, fills out block 7. The SJA fills out block 8 as the officer conducting a legal review and approval. The same person cannot sign both block 7 and block 8. Before signing the legal review, the SJA should ensure the form is properly completed and the individual directing confinement actually has authority to direct confinement.

20.44.2. Security Forces personnel receipt for the prisoner by completing and signing item 11 of the DD Form 2707. Security Forces personnel ensure medical personnel complete items 9 and 10. A completed copy of the DD Form 2707 is returned to the legal office, and the legal office includes the copy in the ROT. Security Forces retains the original DD Form 2707 for inclusion in the prisoner’s Correctional Treatment File.

20.44.3. If an accused is in pretrial confinement, confinement facilities require an updated DD Form 2707 for post-trial confinement.

20.44.4. Failure to comply with these procedural processes does not invalidate or prevent post-trial confinement or the receipt of prisoners. See Articles 11 and 13, UCMJ.

20.45. Effect of Pretrial Confinement. Under certain circumstances, an accused receives day-for-day credit for any pretrial confinement served in military, civilian (at the request of the military), or foreign confinement facilities, for which the accused has not received credit against any other sentence. *United States v. Allen*, 17 M.J. 126 (C.M.A. 1984); *United States v. Murray*, 43 M.J. 507 (AFCCA 1995); and *United States v. Pinson*, 54 M.J. 692 (AFCCA 2001). An accused may also be awarded judicially ordered credit for restriction tantamount to confinement, prior NJP for the same offense, violations of R.C.M. 305, or violations of Articles 12 or 13, UCMJ. See e.g., *United States v. Pierce*, 27 M.J. 367 (C.M.A. 1989).

20.45.1. When a military judge directs credit for illegal pretrial confinement (violations of Articles 12 or 13, UCMJ, or R.C.M. 305), the military judge should ensure credit is listed on the STR and EoJ.

20.45.2. Any credit for pretrial confinement should be clearly reflected on the STR, EoJ and DD Form 2707, along with the source of each portion of credit and total days of credit awarded.

Chapter 29

SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION, CRIMINAL INDEXING AND DNA COLLECTION

Section 29A—Sex Offender Notification

29.1. General Provision. If the member has been convicted of certain “qualifying offenses” potentially requiring sex offender registration the DAF is required to notify federal, state, and local officials. **(T-0).** As noted in the STR/EoJ Distribution List on the VMJD, a copy of the STR and EoJ, to include attachments and the first indorsements, including any placement of the accused on excess or appellate leave status, must be distributed to the AFSFC, afcorrections.appellateleave@us.af.mil, and DAF-CJIC, daf-cjic@us.af.mil.

29.2. Qualifying Offenses. See DoDI 1325.07 for a list of offenses which require DAF notification to federal, state, and local officials.

29.2.1. Federal, state and local governments may require an individual to register as a sex offender for offenses that are not included on this list; therefore, this list identifies offenses for which notification is required by the DAF but is not inclusive of all offenses that trigger sex offender registration.

29.2.2. When a question arises whether a conviction triggers notification requirements, SJAs should seek guidance from a superior command level legal office. Questions about whether an offense triggers notification requirements may be directed to the DAF-CJIC Legal Advisor (HQ AFOSI/JA)

29.3. Notification Requirement. The DAF must notify federal, state, and local officials when a DAF member is convicted of a qualifying offense at GCM or SPCM. This requirement applies regardless of whether or not the individual is sentenced to confinement. See DoDI 1325.07, and AFMAN 31-115, Vol 1. The DAF executes this requirement via AF confinement officer/NCO/liaison officer notification to the relevant jurisdictions using the DD Form 2791, *Notice of Release/Acknowledgement of Convicted Sex Offender Registration Requirements*. See AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 3.

29.4. Timing of Notification.

29.4.1. In cases where the member is sentenced to and must serve post-trial confinement, the notification must be made prior to release from confinement. **(T-0). Note:** The member may not be held beyond the scheduled release date for purposes of making the required notifications. This notification is accomplished by the security forces confinement officer, or designee responsible for custody of the inmate, in accordance with the requirements detailed in AFMAN 31-115, Vol 1; AFMAN 71-102; and DoDI 5525.20, *Registered Sex Offender (RSO) Management in Department of Defense*. **(T-0).**

29.4.2. In cases where the offender will not serve post-trial confinement either because (1) no confinement was adjudged, or (2) confinement credit exceeds adjudged confinement, the SJA must notify the servicing confinement NCO/officer or SFS/CC in writing within 24 hours of conviction. Once informed by the SJA that the member was convicted of a qualifying offense, the confinement officer or SFS/CC ensures the notifications are made in accordance with AFMAN 71-102, AFMAN 31-115V1, and DoDI 5525.20.

29.5. Legal Office Responsibilities. SJAs are not responsible for directly notifying federal, state and local law enforcement of qualifying convictions. However, SJAs must ensure their support responsibilities are accomplished in order to ensure the DAF is meeting its obligations under federal law and DoD policy. SJAs facilitate the notification requirement in two ways: (1) completion and distribution of post-trial paperwork in accordance with this instruction and the STR/EoJ Distribution List on the VMJD; and (2) notification of the installation confinement officer/NCO in cases where the offender is convicted but not required to serve post-trial confinement, in accordance with this instruction. See [paragraph 29.6](#) and [paragraph 29.7](#) and AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 3.

29.6. STR and EoJ. If a member is convicted of a qualifying offense referred to trial by general or special court-martial on or after 1 January 2019, the appropriate box must be initialed on the first indorsement of the STRs and the EoJ by the SJA. The first indorsement format, and guidance for completion are located on the VMJD.

29.7. Notification to the Installation Confinement Officer/NCO. In cases where the member was convicted of a qualifying offense at a general or special court-martial but no post-trial confinement will be served, the SJA must notify, in writing, the confinement officer (or SFS/CC if no confinement officer/NCO is at that installation) of the conviction and sentence within 24 hours of announcement of the verdict. The corrections officer, or the SFS/CC, as appropriate, ensures that the notifications required in AFMAN 31-115, Vol 1 and AFMAN 71-102 are made.

29.8. Convictions by a Host Country. Service members, military dependents, DoD contractors, and DoD civilians can be convicted of a sex offense outside normal DoD channels by the host nation while assigned overseas. When compliance with [Section 29A](#) is required in these cases, the SJA notifies the confinement officer or SFS/CC, as required. It is the SJA's responsibility to ensure the offender completes their portion of the DD Form 2791, or equivalent document, upon release from the host nation. The DD Form 2791 and copies of the ROT must be provided to the appropriate federal, state, and local law enforcement in accordance with [paragraph 29.3](#) and [paragraph 29.4](#), and DoDI 1325.07.

Section 29B—Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) and Fingerprint Collection and Submission (28 U.S.C. § 534, Acquisition, preservation, and exchange of identification records and information; appointment of officials; 28 C.F.R. §§ 20.30, et seq., Federal Systems and Exchange of Criminal History Record Information; DoDI 5505.11)

29.9. General Provision. The DAF, through OSI and Security Forces, submits offender CHRI and fingerprints to the FBI when there is probable cause to believe an identified individual committed a qualifying offense. **(T-0).** See AFMAN 71-102; DoDI 5505.11; 28 C.F.R. §§ 20.30, et seq.; and 28 U.S.C. § 534. Such data is submitted to and maintained in the Interstate Identification Index (III), maintained as part of the FBI's National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

29.10. Criminal History Record Information. CHRI reported in accordance with DoDI 5505.11 and AFMAN 71-102 consists of identifiable descriptions of individuals; initial notations of arrests, detentions, indictments, and information or other formal criminal charges; and any disposition arising from any such entry (e.g., acquittal, sentencing, NJP; administrative action; or administrative discharge).

29.11. Identified Individuals.

29.11.1. The DAF submits CHRI and fingerprints on any military member or civilian investigated by a DAF law enforcement agency (OSI or Security Forces) when a probable cause determination has been made that the member committed a qualifying offense.

29.11.2. The DAF submits criminal history data for military service members, military dependents, DoD employees, and contractors investigated by foreign law enforcement organizations for offenses equivalent to those described as qualifying offenses in AFMAN 71-102 and DoDI 5505.1 when a probable cause determination has been made that the member committed an equivalent offense.

29.12. Disposition Data. The DAF, through DAF-CJIC, OSI and Security Forces, is responsible for updating disposition data for any qualifying offense for which there was probable cause. This disposition data merely states what the ultimate disposition of any action (or no action) taken was regarding each qualifying offense. The disposition includes no action, acquittals, convictions, sentencing, NJP, certain administrative actions, and certain types of discharge. Failure to comply with this section will result in inaccurate disposition data, which can have adverse impacts on individuals lawfully indexed in III.

29.13. Qualifying Offenses. Qualifying offenses for fingerprinting requirements constitute either (1) serious offenses; or (2) non-serious offenses accompanied by a serious offense. See 28 CFR. 20.32. A list of offenses that, unless accompanied by a serious offense, do not require submission of data to III is located in AFMAN 71-102, Attachment 5.

29.14. Military Protective Orders. Issuance of an MPO also triggers a requirement for indexing in NCIC. See [paragraph 29.39](#) and AFMAN 71-102; 10 U.S.C. § 1567a, *Mandatory notification of issuance of military protective order to civilian law enforcement*.

29.15. Qualifying Offenses Investigated by Commander Directed Investigation (CDI). If any qualifying offense was investigated via CDI or inquiry and is subsequently preferred to trial by SPCM or GCM, then CHRI and fingerprints must be submitted to III in accordance with AFMAN 71-102 and DoDI 5505.11. SJAs must ensure they advise commanders as to the requirement to consult with SFS and OSI to obtain and forward CHRI and fingerprints in accordance with that mandate. **Note:** If charges are not preferred, then CHRI and fingerprints are not submitted to III; however, if charges are preferred and later withdrawn, CHRI and fingerprints must be submitted. **(T-0).**

29.16. Probable Cause Requirement. Fingerprints and criminal history data will only be submitted where there is probable cause to believe that a qualifying offense has been committed and that the person identified as the offender committed it. See AFMAN 71-102; DoDI 5505.11. The collection of fingerprints under this paragraph is administrative in nature and does not require a search authorization or consent of the person whose fingerprints are being collected.

29.17. SJA Coordination Requirement. The law enforcement agency (e.g., OSI or Security Forces) coordinates with the SJA or government counsel to determine whether the probable cause requirement is met for a qualifying offense. The SJA or government counsel must ensure they understand the applicable indexing requirements in order to advise OSI or Security Forces for purposes of criminal history indexing. **(T-0).**

29.18. Process for Submission of Criminal History Data. After the probable cause determination is made, the investigating agency (e.g., OSI or Security Forces) submits the required data in accordance with AFMAN 71-102 and DoDI 5505.11.

29.19. Legal Office Final Disposition Requirement.

29.19.1. The final disposition (e.g., conviction at GCM or SPCM, acquittal, dismissal of charges, conviction of a lesser included offense, sentence data, nonjudicial punishment, no action) is submitted by OSI or Security Forces for each qualifying offense reported in III or NCIC. OSI or Security Forces, whichever is applicable, obtains the final disposition data from the legal office responsible for advising on disposition of the case (generally the servicing base legal office). If an accused was arraigned at a court-martial, the final disposition is memorialized on the STR and EoJ. A first indorsement signed by the SJA must accompany the STR and EoJ.

29.19.2. The required format for the first indorsement is located on the VMJD.

29.19.3. The servicing legal office will provide disposition documentation to the local Security Forces, OSI, and DAF-CJIC within five duty days of completion of the documents discussed in paragraphs [29.19.4-29.19.7](#).

29.19.4. Because the EoJ may differ from the adjudged findings and sentence, both the STR and EoJ must be distributed to the local DAF investigative agency that was responsible for the case (e.g., OSI or Security Forces) and DAF-CJIC within five duty days of completion of the EoJ.

29.19.5. For information regarding final disposition where the final disposition consists of NJP, see DAFI 51-202.

29.19.6. In cases where the allegations involve offenses listed in paragraphs [10.2.1.1-10.2.1.3](#), and the convening authority decides not to go forward to trial, the GCMCA review must be forwarded to the local OSI detachment and DAF-CJIC in accordance with [paragraph 10.3.2](#)
Note: Do not forward the sexual assault legal review, only the convening authority notification memorandum.

29.19.7. For all other final dispositions which must be submitted in accordance with [Section 29E](#), AFMAN 71-102, and DoDI 5505.11, the SJA must ensure disposition data is provided to ensure timely and accurate inclusion of final disposition data. See [Section 29E](#) for further distribution guidance.

29.20. Expungement of Criminal History Data and Fingerprints. Expungement requests are processed in accordance with guidance promulgated in AFMAN 71-102.

Section 29C—DNA Collection (10 U.S.C. §

1565; DoDI 5505.14, DNA Collection and Submission Requirements for Law Enforcement)

29.21. General Provision. The DAF, through OSI and Security Forces, collects and submits DNA for analysis and inclusion in the Combined Deoxyribonucleic Acid Index System (CODIS), through the U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Laboratory (USACIL), when fingerprints are collected pursuant to DoDI 5505.11. **(T-0).** See DoDI 5505.14; 10 U.S.C. 1565; 34 U.S.C. §

40702, *Collection and use of DNA identification information from certain federal offenders*; 28 C.F.R. § 28.12, *Collection of DNA samples*.

29.22. Qualifying Offenses. DNA collection and submission is required when fingerprints are collected pursuant to DoDI 5505.11. DNA is not collected or submitted for the non-serious offenses enumerated in AFMAN 71-102, Attachment 5 unless they are accompanied by a serious offense requiring fingerprint collection in accordance with DoDI 5505.11.

29.23. Probable Cause Requirement. DNA collection occurs only where there is probable cause to believe that a qualifying offense has been committed and that the person identified committed it. The collection of DNA under this paragraph is administrative in nature and does not require a search authorization or consent of the person whose DNA is being collected.

29.24. SJA Coordination Requirement. The law enforcement agency (e.g., OSI or Security Forces) coordinates with the SJA or government counsel prior to submission of DNA for inclusion in CODIS in accordance with AFMAN 71-102. The SJA or government counsel must ensure they understand the applicable indexing requirements in order to advise OSI or Security Forces for purposes of criminal history indexing. **(T-0).**

29.25. Timing of Collection and Forwarding. OSI, Security Forces and Commanders (through collection by Security Forces) collect and expeditiously forward DNA in accordance with the procedures in DoDI 5505.14 and AFMAN 71-102. If not previously submitted to USACIL, the appropriate DAF law enforcement agency (i.e., OSI or Security Forces) will collect and submit DNA samples from service members: against whom court-martial charges are preferred in accordance with RCM 307 of the MCM; ordered into pretrial confinement after the completion of the commander's 72-hour memorandum required by RCM 305(h)(2)(C) of the MCM; and convicted by general or special court-martial.

29.26. STR and EoJ. In cases where specifications alleging qualifying offenses were referred to trial on or after 1 January 2019 and the accused is found guilty of one or more qualifying offenses, the appropriate box must be completed on the first indorsement of the STR and EoJ by the SJA.

29.27. Final Disposition Requirement. As DNA may be forwarded to USACIL at various times during the investigation or prosecution of a case, final disposition of court-martial charges must be forwarded to OSI and Security Forces to ensure DNA is appropriately handled.

29.27.1. The final disposition is memorialized on the following forms: STR and EoJ, whichever is applicable. A first indorsement signed by the SJA must accompany the STR and EoJ.

29.27.2. Formats for the STR, EoJ, and first indorsement are located on the VMJD.

29.27.3. In cases where the allegations involve offenses listed in paragraphs **10.2.1.1-10.2.1.3**, and the convening authority decides not to go forward to trial, the GCMCA review must be forwarded to OSI in accordance with **paragraph 29.19.6**.

29.27.4. For all other dispositions, the SJA must ensure disposition data for qualifying offenses is provided to ensure timely and accurate inclusion of final disposition data. Disposition documentation must be distributed to the local OSI detachment, Security Forces and DAF-CJIC within five duty days of completion of the final disposition. See **Section 29E** for further distribution guidance.

29.28. Expungement of DNA. DoD expungement requests are processed in accordance with guidelines promulgated in AFMAN 71-102 and DoDI 5505.14.

Section 29D—Possession or Purchase of Firearms Prohibited (18 U.S.C. §

921-922, Definitions; 27 C.F.R. § 478.11)

29.29. General Provision. 18 U.S.C. § 922, *Unlawful acts*, prohibits any person from selling, transferring or otherwise providing a firearm or ammunition to persons they know or have reasonable cause to believe fit within specified prohibited categories as defined by law. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g) prohibits any person who fits within specified prohibited categories from possessing a firearm. This includes the possession of a firearm for the purpose of carrying out official duties (e.g., force protection mission, deployments, law enforcement). Commanders may waive this prohibition for members of the Armed Forces for purposes of carrying out their official duties, unless the conviction is for a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence or felony crime of domestic violence, prohibited under 18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(9) and 922 (g)(1), respectively, as applied by DoDI 6400.06. For further guidance, see AFMAN 71-102. Persons who are prohibited from purchase, possession, or receipt of a firearm are indexed in the National Instant Background Check System (NICS).

29.30. Categories of Prohibition (18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g), 922(n); 27 C.F.R. § 478.11; AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 4).

29.30.1. Persons convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year.

29.30.1.1. If a service member is convicted at a GCM of a crime for which the maximum punishment exceeds a period of one year, this prohibition is triggered regardless of the term of confinement adjudged or approved. **Note:** This category of prohibition would not apply to convictions in a special court-martial because confinement for more than one year cannot be adjudged in that forum.

29.30.1.2. If a conviction is set aside, disapproved or overturned on appeal, the prohibition under this section is not triggered because the conviction no longer exists. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1).

29.30.2. Fugitives from justice. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(12).

29.30.3. Unlawful users or persons addicted to any controlled substance as defined in 21 U.S.C. § 802, *Definitions*. See 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3) and 27 C.F.R. 478.11.

29.30.3.1. This prohibition is triggered where a person who uses a controlled substance has lost the power of self-control with reference to the use of a controlled substance or where a person is a current user of a controlled substance in a manner other than as prescribed by a licensed physician. Such use is not limited to the use of drugs on a particular day, or within a matter of days or weeks before, but rather that the unlawful use has occurred recently enough to indicate that the individual is actively engaged in such conduct. See 27 C.F.R. 478.11.

29.30.3.2. An inference of current use may be drawn from evidence of a recent use or possession of a controlled substance or a pattern of use or possession that reasonably covers the present time, e.g., a conviction for use or possession of a controlled substance within

the past year; multiple arrests for such offenses within the past five years if the most recent arrest occurred within the past year; or persons found through a drug test to use a controlled substance unlawfully, provided that the test was administered within the past year. 27 C.F.R. 478.11.

29.30.3.3. For a current or former member of the Armed Forces, an inference of current use may be drawn from recent disciplinary or other administrative action based on confirmed drug use, e.g., court-martial conviction, NJP, or an administrative discharge based on drug use or drug rehabilitation failure. 27 C.F.R. 478.11.

29.30.3.4. Qualifying Prohibitors. See AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 4, for additional information on drug offenses and admissions that qualify for prohibition under 18 USC 922(g)(3).

29.30.4. Any person adjudicated as a mental defective or who has been committed to a mental institution.

29.30.4.1. If a service member is found incompetent to stand trial or not guilty by reason of lack of mental responsibility pursuant to Articles 50a or 76b, UCMJ, this prohibition may be triggered. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(4).

29.30.4.2. SJAs should ensure commanders are aware of the requirement to notify DAF-CJIC when a service member is declared mentally incompetent for pay matters by an appointed military medical board. See AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 4.

29.30.4.3. SJAs should ensure commanders are aware of the requirement to notify installation law enforcement in the event any of their personnel, military or civilian, are committed to a mental health institution through the formal commitment process. For further information, see AFMAN 71-102; 18 U.S.C. § 922; 27 C.F.R. 478.11.

29.30.5. Persons who have been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(6). This condition is memorialized on the STR and EoJ, which must be distributed in accordance with the STR/EoJ Distribution List on the VMJD. **Note:** This prohibition does not take effect until after the discharge is executed, but no additional notification must be made to the individual at that time. See **paragraph 29.33.2**. The original notification via AF Form 177, *Notification of Qualification for Prohibition of Firearms, Ammunition, and Explosives*, and subsequent service of the Certification of Final Review or Final Order, as applicable, operate as notice to the individual.

29.30.6. Persons who have renounced their United States citizenship. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(7).

29.30.7. Persons convicted of a crime of misdemeanor domestic violence (the “Lautenberg Amendment”) at a GCM or SPCM. See 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(9). **Note:** Persons convicted of felony crimes of domestic violence at a GCM or SPCM are covered under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(1).

29.30.7.1. A “misdemeanor crime of domestic violence” for purposes of indexing under this section is defined as follows: an offense that— (i) is a misdemeanor under Federal, State, or Tribal law; and (ii) has, as an element, the use or attempted use of physical force, or the threatened use of a deadly weapon, committed by a current or former spouse, parent, or guardian of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabiting with or has cohabited with the victim as a spouse, parent, or

guardian, or by a person similarly situated to a spouse, parent, or guardian of the victim. Note: Exceptions to this definition can be located at 18 USC § 921(g)(33). See also 27 CFR 478.11.

29.30.7.2. SJAs should look at the underlying elements of each conviction to determine whether it triggers a prohibition under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(9). If a conviction is set aside, disapproved or overturned on appeal, the prohibition under this section is not triggered because the conviction no longer exists. The term “qualifying conviction” does not include summary courts-martial or the imposition of NJP under Article 15, UCMJ.

29.30.7.3. Government counsel and law enforcement must look at this prohibition on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the charged offense (e.g., violations of Articles 120, 120b, 128, 128b, 130, UCMJ, etc.) meets the statutory criteria for a “misdemeanor crime of domestic violence.” See 10 U.S.C. § 1562; DoDI 6400.07.

29.30.8. Persons accused of any offense punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, which has been referred to a general court-martial. 18 U.S.C. § 922(n).

29.30.9. Persons who are aliens admitted under a nonimmigrant visa or who are unlawfully in the United States. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(5).

29.30.10. Persons subject to a protective order issued by a court, provided the criteria in 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(8) are met. This prohibition is triggered only by a court order issued by a judge. A military protective order does not trigger this prohibition; but does trigger indexing under [Section 29B](#).

29.31. Notification to the Accused of Firearms Prohibition. When a service member becomes ineligible to possess, purchase, or receive a firearm under 18 U.S.C. § 922, the DAF provides notification to that service member of the prohibition. See AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 4.

29.31.1. **Form of Notice.** A service member is notified of the applicability of 18 U.S.C. § 922 via AF Form 177.

29.31.2. **SJA Responsibility to Notify.** In all cases investigated by DAF involving an offense which implicates a firearms prohibition, the SJA must be aware of the nature of the prohibition and the entity responsible for making the notification. See AFMAN 71-102, Table 4.1 and Chapter 4, generally. However, in the following cases, the SJA is responsible for ensuring the notification to the accused is made:

29.31.2.1. Conviction at a GCM of any offense punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year. In such cases, the AF Form 177 may be provided to the accused for completion as part of the post-trial paperwork. **Note:** If this is a dual basis notification, the paperwork need only be served once, though both applicable prohibitions should be noted on the AF Form 177.

29.31.2.2. Conviction at a GCM, SPCM, or SCM for use or possession of a controlled substance. In such cases, the AF Form 177 may be provided to the accused for completion as part of the post-trial paperwork. **Note:** If this is a dual basis notification, the paperwork need only be served once, though both applicable prohibitions should be noted on the AF Form 177.

29.31.2.3. Completion of NJP for any person found guilty of wrongful use or possession of a controlled substance. In such cases, the AF Form 177 should be provided to the accused for signature on or before completion of the supervisory SJA legal review.

29.31.2.4. After the accused is adjudicated as not guilty by reason of insanity or not competent to stand trial. In such cases, the AF Form 177 may be provided to the accused for completion as part of the post-trial paperwork.

29.31.2.5. Conviction resulting in a sentence including a dishonorable discharge. In such cases, the AF Form 177 may be provided to the accused for completion as part of the post-trial paperwork. **Note:** If this is a dual basis notification, the paperwork need only be served once, though both applicable prohibitions should be noted on the AF Form 177.

29.31.2.6. Conviction at a GCM or SPCM for a crime of domestic violence, when the maximum punishment which may be adjudged for the offense in that forum is one year or less. **Note:** If this is a dual basis notification, the paperwork need only be served once, though both applicable prohibitions should be noted on the AF Form 177.

29.31.2.7. Referral of charges to a GCM where any offense carries a possible sentence to confinement in excess of one year. In such cases, the AF Form 177 may be provided to the accused for completion as part of the referral paperwork.

29.31.3. Practitioners are encouraged to deconflict with the local investigating DAF law enforcement agency in cases where law enforcement is also responsible for ensuring notification (i.e., where multiple prohibitions attached and law enforcement may be providing notification of any prohibition).

29.31.4. In cases where the investigating law enforcement agency is a non-DAF agency, these requirements may not apply. Contact DAF-CJIC for further guidance. See AFMAN 71-102.

29.31.5. Any notification made to the accused may be made through the accused's counsel.

29.31.6. If the accused declines to sign, this should be annotated on the form.

29.31.7. After completion of the form, the SJA must provide a copy of the completed AF Form 177 to DAF-CJIC within 24 hours of completion via email: daf.cjic@us.af.mil. The SJA will also provide a digital copy to the member's commander and investigating DAF law enforcement. The legal office will forward the original and signed AF Form 177 via mail to DAF-CJIC, where it will be maintained as part of the official record. See AFMAN 71-102, Chapter 4.

29.32. STR and EoJ. In cases where specifications allege offenses which trigger a prohibition under 18 U.S.C. § 922 and the accused is found guilty of one or more such offenses, the appropriate box must be completed on the first indorsements to the STR and EoJ by the SJA. **Note:** If the accused is convicted of a crime of domestic violence as defined in paragraph [29.30.7.1](#) and 18 U.S.C. § 922, both the "Firearms Prohibition" and "Domestic Violence Conviction" blocks should be marked "yes."

29.33. Final Disposition Requirement. As the findings of a case may change after close of a court-martial, final disposition of court-martial charges must be forwarded to the local OSI detachment, Security Forces, and DAF-CJIC to ensure reporting pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 921-922 is appropriately handled. Because the EoJ may differ from the adjudged findings and sentence, both the STR and EoJ, with accompanying first indorsements, must be distributed to the local

responsible DAF investigative agency and DAF-CJIC within five duty days of completion of the EoJ. Templates for the STR, EoJ, and first indorsement are located on the VMJD. The SJA must ensure disposition data requested by the local OSI detachment and Security Forces unit is provided to ensure timely and accurate inclusion of final disposition data. See [Section 29E](#) for further distribution guidance.

29.34. SJA Coordination with Commanders. The SJA or designee must inform commanders of the impact of the conviction on the accused's ability to handle firearms or ammunition as part of their official duties; brief commanders on retrieving all Government-issued firearms and ammunition and suspending the member's authority to possess Government-issued firearms and ammunition in the event a member is convicted of an offense of misdemeanor domestic violence (violations of the Lautenberg Amendment); and brief commanders on their limitations and abilities to advise members of their commands to lawfully dispose of their privately owned firearms and ammunition.

Section 29E—Distribution of Court-Martial Data for Indexing Purposes

29.35. General Provision. In order to ensure that indexing requirements pursuant to this chapter are met, SJAs must ensure the following documents are distributed to the applicable local DAF law enforcement agency and DAF-CJIC:

29.35.1. Charge sheets in cases referred to general courts-martial, where any charged offense has a possible sentence to confinement greater than one year;

29.35.2. STR, regardless of verdict or sentence, where any charged offense qualifies for any type of indexing discussed in this chapter;

29.35.3. EoJ and first indorsement, regardless of verdict or sentence, where any charged offense qualifies for any type of indexing discussed in this chapter;

29.35.4. In SCMs for drug use or possession that would trigger firearm prohibitions, the final completed DD Form 2329 and first indorsement;

29.35.5. Certification of Final Review in any case where any offense qualifies for any type of indexing discussed in this chapter;

29.35.6. Notification of outcome of any cases as to qualifying offenses litigated at or disposed of via magistrate court;

29.35.7. Order pursuant to Article 73, UCMJ, for a new trial, where any charged offense qualifies for any type of indexing discussed in this chapter;

29.35.8. Order for a rehearing on the findings or sentence of a case, pursuant to Article 63, UCMJ and

29.35.9. Other final disposition documentation in cases not referred to trial where the offense investigated is a qualifying offense under [Sections 29B-D](#) of this chapter (e.g., decision not to refer certain sexual assault offenses to trial in accordance with [paragraph 10.2](#); NJP records in accordance with DAFI 51-202; notification of administrative discharge where the basis is a qualifying offense; approval of a request for resignation or retirement in lieu of trial by court-martial, administrative paperwork for drug use or possession).

Appendix C

Pursuant to *United States v. Grostefon*, 12 M.J. 431 (C.M.A. 1982), MSgt Johnson, through appellate defense counsel, personally requests that this Court grant review of the following issue:

II.

Whether the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals abused its discretion by determining that Master Sergeant Johnson's sentence is not inappropriately severe.

Additional Facts

MSgt Johnson served in combat on four separate occasions from 2003 through 2010, once in Kyrgyzstan, twice in Iraq, and once in Afghanistan. Pros. Ex. 2. He spent his career in Security Forces. Pros. Ex. 3. The military judge sentenced MSgt Johnson to the maximum punishment allowed under the plea agreement, which included a mandatory bad-conduct discharge. App. Ex. V at 2; R. at 77.

The Government's evidence properly admitted in aggravation was limited, consisting of a single letter of reprimand (LOR) for failing to provide a urine sample in April 2022. Pros. Ex. 4. In an attempt to bolster the prosecution's case in aggravation, the Government offered multiple pieces of uncharged misconduct within the Stipulation of Fact, including a confession to civilian law enforcement about drug use and possession of drug paraphernalia in 2023, and evidence of MSgt Johnson being absent without leave the week of the court-martial. Pros. Ex. 1, ¶ 13 and 14. However, the military judge ruled the facts in paragraphs 13 and 14 of

Prosecution Exhibit 1 were not proper matters in aggravation and he did not consider them in crafting a sentence. R. at 77. Additionally, the military judge found testimony from two members of MSgt Johnson’s unit leadership— C.H. and C.S.— on the amount of time the unit spent dealing with MSgt Johnson’s misconduct similarly not proper matters in aggravation and did not consider that testimony in crafting a sentence. *Id.*

In his brief filed with the AFCCA, MSgt Johnson challenged his sentence as inappropriate severe. The AFCCA rejected that challenge, ruling that “the sentence is correct in law and fact.” Appendix A at 2.

Standard of Review

This Court’s review of decisions of the Courts of Criminal Appeals on issues of sentence appropriateness is limited to whether there has been an obvious miscarriage of justice or abuse of discretion. *United States v. Swisher*, 85 M.J. 1, 4(C.A.A.F. 2024).

Law and Analysis

A court of criminal appeals (CCA) “may affirm only such findings of guilty, and the sentence or such part or amount of the sentence, as [it] finds correct in law and fact and determines, on the basis of the entire record, should be approved.” Article 66(d)(1), UCMJ, 10 U.S.C. § 866(d)(1). Considerations include “the particular appellant, the nature and seriousness of the offenses, the appellant’s record

of service, and all matters contained in the record of trial.” *United States v. Fields*, 74 M.J. 619, 625 (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. 2015) (quoting *United States v. Bare*, 63 M.J. 707, 714 (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. 2006)). “The breadth of the power granted to the Courts of Criminal Appeals to review a case for sentence appropriateness is one of the unique and longstanding features of the [UCMJ].” *United States v. Hutchison*, 57 M.J. 231, 233 (C.A.A.F. 2002) (citations omitted). The CCA’s role in reviewing sentences under Article 66(d) is to “do justice,” as distinguished from the discretionary power of the convening authority to grant mercy. *See United States v. Boone*, 49 M.J. 187, 192 (C.A.A.F. 1998).

In determining whether a sentence should be approved, the CCA’s authority is “not legality alone, but legality limited by appropriateness.” *United States v. Atkins*, 23 C.M.R. 301, 303 (C.M.A. 1957). During the AFCCA’s review of whether the adjudged punishment here is appropriate, there are three reasons it should have lessened MSgt Johnson’s sentence. First, MSgt Johnson’s drug use and the circumstances surrounding it were not particularly aggravating. Second, the matters in extenuation warranted relief from the sentence. Third, there was minimal support for the punitive separation adjudged in accordance with the plea agreement.

The AFCCA abused its discretion by failing to conclude that MSgt Johnson’s sentence is inappropriately severe in light of the nature of the offense of which he was convicted and the limited matters in aggravation. In terms of the offense itself,

MSgt Johnson used methamphetamine at home on only two occasions during the charged timeframe. R. at 22. In terms of matters in aggravation, the stipulation of fact offers no admissible evidence in aggravation, other than the drug testing levels themselves. Pros. Ex. 1. That is because several pieces of evidence that were offered and admitted were not ultimately considered by the military judge because they constituted improper matters in aggravation. R. at 77. The Government had little to offer in terms of admissible aggravation evidence or derogatory data from his service record. MSgt Johnson had one LOR from April 2022, which related to failure to provide a urine sample. Pros. Ex. 4. That LOR, as a matter from the service record, goes to rebut any opinion about MSgt Johnson's rehabilitative potential, and cannot support the punitive separation. A punitive separation is a tool designed to appropriately characterize an accused's service, which is not appropriate for MSgt Johnson and this conviction given the nature of his use, the limited impact of his drug use, and his otherwise years of largely untarnished service.

Given the lack of matters in aggravation, granting relief from this sentence was also consistent with the AFCCA's duty to approve only so much of the sentence that is correct in law and fact. While the AFCCA has declined to find a sentence too severe when the circumstances of the crime are aggravating, conversely, the AFCCA has granted relief when the circumstances of the crime are not "particularly aggravating." *Compare United States v. Flores*, No. ACM 40294, 2023 CCA

LEXIS 165, at *18 (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. Apr. 13, 2023), *aff'd*, 84 M.J. 277 (C.A.A.F. 2024), with *United States v. Douglas*, No. ACM 40324 (f rev), 2024 CCA LEXIS 254, at *10, (A.F. Ct. Crim. App. Jun. 27, 2024). As in *Douglas*, given the lack of any matters that are particularly aggravating, relief was warranted here. Although the AFCCA did not explain its rationale in this case, its outcome suggests that it departed from the approach of the panel that decided *Douglas*. This Court should grant review to address these conflicting panel decisions. C.A.A.F. R. 21(b)(5)(B).

Second, matters in mitigation and extenuation supported relief. This offense occurred in the context of unaddressed mental health issues stemming from trauma. R. at 63. MSgt Johnson served fifteen years on active duty, and in that time as a security forces troop, was deployed four times in combat—twice in Iraq and once in Afghanistan. Pros. Ex. 2, Pros. Ex. 3. Moreover, MSgt Johnson accepted responsibility for his conduct and pleaded guilty. Looking at MSgt Johnson’s record of service, and the matters in mitigation and extenuation, relief was warranted to ensure the sentence is correct in law and fact. *See* 10 U.S.C. § 866(d)(1); *Fields*, 74 M.J. at 625.

Third, there was minimal evidence within the record to support the punitive separation. The military judge did not hear argument from either party as to why a bad-conduct discharge would be appropriate based on the facts admitted at trial. R. at 71, 73-74. That is because the bad-conduct discharge was mandatory as a

condition of the plea agreement. App. Ex. V. However, despite being a term of the plea agreement, in reviewing the sentence, the CCA must still determine if the punitive separation was warranted based on the nature and circumstances of the offense, and in considering who MSgt Johnson is and his service. R.C.M. 1002(c); Article 66(d)(1), UCMJ. Given the record in this case, and despite this mandatory provision within the plea agreement, the AFCCA had little evidence to support its conclusion that the adjudged punitive separation was correct in law and fact.

WHEREFORE, MSgt Johnson respectfully requests this Honorable Court grant the petition for review.