

**R.C.M. 505(b)**

on the record. A member who has been temporarily excused need not be formally reappointed to the court-martial.

(c) *Changes of members.*

(1) *Before assembly.*

(A) *By convening authority.* Before the court-martial is assembled, the convening authority may change the members of the court-martial without showing cause.

(B) *By convening authority's delegate.*

(i) *Delegation.* The convening authority may delegate, under regulations of the Secretary concerned, authority to excuse individual members to the staff judge advocate or legal officer or other principal assistant to the convening authority.

(ii) *Limitations.* Before the court-martial is assembled, the convening authority's delegate may excuse members without cause shown; however, no more than one-third of the total number of members detailed by the convening authority may be excused by the convening authority's delegate in any one court-martial. After assembly the convening authority's delegate may not excuse members.

(2) *After assembly.*

(A) *Excusal.* After assembly no member may be excused, except:

(i) By the convening authority for good cause shown on the record;

(ii) By the military judge for good cause shown on the record; or

(iii) As a result of challenge under R.C.M. 912.

(B) *New members.* New members may be detailed after assembly only when, as a result of excusals under subsection (c)(2)(A) of this rule, the number of members of the court-martial is reduced below a quorum, or the number of enlisted members, when the accused has made a timely written request for enlisted members, is reduced below one-third of the total membership.

(d) *Changes of detailed counsel.*

(1) *Trial counsel.* An authority competent to detail trial counsel may change the trial counsel and any assistant trial counsel at any time without showing cause.

(2) *Defense counsel.*

(A) *Before formation of attorney-client relationship.* Before an attorney-client relationship has been formed between the accused and detailed defense counsel or associate or assistant defense counsel, an authority competent to detail defense counsel may excuse or change such counsel without showing cause.

(B) *After formation of attorney-client relationship.* After an attorney-client relationship has been formed between the accused and detailed defense counsel or associate or assistant defense counsel, an authority competent to detail such counsel may excuse or change such counsel only:

(i) Under R.C.M. 506(b)(3);

(ii) Upon request of the accused or application for withdrawal by such counsel under R.C.M. 506(c); or

(iii) For other good cause shown on the record.

(e) *Change of military judge.*

(1) *Before assembly.* Before the court-martial is assembled, the military judge may be changed by an authority competent to detail the military judge, without cause shown on the record.

(2) *After assembly.* After the court-martial is assembled, the military judge may be changed by an authority competent to detail the military judge only when, as a result of disqualification under R.C.M. 902 or for good cause shown, the previously detailed military judge is unable to proceed.

(f) *Good cause.* For purposes of this rule, "good cause" includes physical disability, military exigency, and other extraordinary circumstances which render the member, counsel, or military judge unable to proceed with the court-martial within a reasonable time. "Good cause" does not include temporary inconveniences which are incident to normal conditions of military life.

**Rule 506. Accused's rights to counsel**

(a) *In general.* The accused has the right to be represented before a general or special court-martial by civilian counsel if provided at no expense to the Government, and either by the military counsel detailed under Article 27 or military counsel of the accused's own selection, if reasonably available. The accused is not entitled to be represented by more than one military counsel.

## Discussion

See R.C.M. 502(d)(3) as to qualifications of civilian counsel or individual military counsel.

### (b) *Individual military counsel.*

(1) *Reasonably available.* Subject to this subsection, the Secretary concerned shall define “reasonably available.” While so assigned, the following persons are not reasonably available to serve as individual military counsel because of the nature of their duties or positions:

- (A) A general or flag officer;
- (B) A trial or appellate military judge;
- (C) A trial counsel;
- (D) An appellate defense or government counsel;
- (E) A principal legal advisor to a command, organization, or agency and, when such command, organization, or agency has general court-martial jurisdiction, the principal assistant of such an advisor;
- (F) An instructor or student at a service school or academy;
- (G) A student at a college or university;
- (H) A member of the staff of the Judge Advocate General of the Army, Navy, or Air Force, the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard, or the Director, Judge Advocate Division, Headquarters, Marine Corps.

The Secretary concerned may determine other persons to be not reasonably available because of the nature or responsibilities of their assignments, geographic considerations, exigent circumstances, or military necessity. A person who is a member of an armed force different from that of which the accused is a member shall be reasonably available to serve as individual military counsel for such accused to the same extent as that person is available to serve as individual military counsel for an accused in the same armed force as the person requested. The Secretary concerned may prescribe circumstances under which exceptions may be made to the prohibitions in this subsection when merited by the existence of an attorney-client relationship regarding matters relating to a charge in question. However, if the attorney-client relationship arose solely because the counsel represented the accused on review under Article 70, this exception shall not apply.

(2) *Procedure.* Subject to this subsection, the Secretary concerned shall prescribe procedures for determining whether a requested person is “reasonably available” to act as individual military counsel. Requests for an individual military counsel shall be made by the accused or the detailed defense counsel through the trial counsel to the convening authority. If the requested person is among those not reasonably available under subsection (b)(1) of this rule or under regulations of the Secretary concerned, the convening authority shall deny the request and notify the accused, unless the accused asserts that there is an existing attorney-client relationship regarding a charge in question or that the person requested will not, at the time of the trial or investigation for which requested, be among those so listed as not reasonably available. If the accused’s request makes such a claim, or if the person is not among those so listed as not reasonably available, the convening authority shall forward the request to the commander or head of the organization, activity, or agency to which the requested person is assigned. That authority shall make an administrative determination whether the requested person is reasonably available in accordance with the procedure prescribed by the Secretary concerned. This determination is a matter within the sole discretion of that authority. An adverse determination may be reviewed upon request of the accused through that authority to the next higher commander or level of supervision, but no administrative review may be made which requires action at the departmental or higher level.

(3) *Excusal of detailed counsel.* If the accused is represented by individual military counsel, detailed defense counsel shall normally be excused. The authority who detailed the defense counsel, as a matter of discretion, may approve a request from the accused that detailed defense counsel shall act as associate counsel. The action of the authority who detailed the counsel is subject to review only for abuse of discretion.

## Discussion

A request under subsection (b)(3) should be considered in light of the general statutory policy that the accused is not entitled to be represented by more than one military counsel. Among the factors that may be considered in the exercise of discretion are the seriousness of the case, retention of civilian defense counsel, complexity of legal or factual issues, and the detail of additional trial counsel.

See R.C.M. 905(b)(6) and 960(b)(2) as to motions concern-

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ing denial of a request for individual military counsel or retention of detailed counsel as associate counsel.

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(c) *Excusal or withdrawal.* Except as otherwise provided in R.C.M. 505(d)(2) and subsection (b)(3) of this rule, defense counsel may be excused only with the express consent of the accused, or by the military judge upon application for withdrawal by the defense counsel for good cause shown.

(d) *Waiver.* The accused may expressly waive the right to be represented by counsel and may thereafter conduct the defense personally. Such waiver shall be accepted by the military judge only if the military judge finds that the accused is competent to understand the disadvantages of self-representation and that the waiver is voluntary and understanding.

The military judge may require that a defense counsel remain present even if the accused waives counsel and conducts the defense personally. The right of the accused to conduct the defense personally may be revoked if the accused is disruptive or fails to follow basic rules of decorum and procedure.

(e) *Nonlawyer present.* Subject to the discretion of the military judge, the accused may have present and seated at the counsel table for purpose of consultation persons not qualified to serve as counsel under R.C.M. 502.

**Discussion**

*See* also Mil. R. Evid. 615 if the person is a potential witness in the case.

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