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COMDTINST 1650.8
20 JUN 2003

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1650.8

Subj: CAPTAIN NIELS P. THOMSEN INNOVATION AWARD

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Medals and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25 (series)

- PURPOSE. This Instruction establishes the policies, procedures, and standards for administration of the Captain Niels P. Thomsen Innovation Awards program.
- ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief Counsel, and special staff offices at Headquarters shall ensure that the provisions of this Instruction are followed. Internet release authorized.
- DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Coast Guard Medals and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25 (series) will incorporate portions of this Instruction as necessary.
- BACKGROUND. The Captain Niels P. Thomsen Awards for Innovation and Implementation are hereby established to recognize the exemplary efforts of individual Coast Guard members or teams that have created or implemented innovative solutions to Coast Guard challenges. The award's namesake, Captain Niels P. Thomsen was honored for inventing the chain-stopper, which is used by Coast Guard Buoy Tenders to secure and safely release the chain and sinker for buoys. This innovative device has prevented countless accidents that previously had resulted in serious injuries to personnel. The Commandant's Direction compels the Coast Guard to develop an environment that values innovation. One effective way to nurture this environment is to institutionalize an award process to recognize excellence in innovation and implementation. The Innovation Award Program recognizes an individual or team for their ability to develop and implement creative ideas that have resulted in the successful implementation of an innovative solution.
- ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA. All Coast Guard employees are eligible as nominees for the Innovation Award Program. Nominees must be Coast Guard active duty, reserve, auxiliary, civilian, retired or

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contract personnel. All eligible innovations must be linked to the Commandant's core objectives of people, stewardship, or readiness.

6. SELECTION CRITERIA. Each nomination will be reviewed and endorsed by the associated innovation council and forwarded to the Commandant's Innovation Council for final selection. Multiple Innovation and Implementation winners are possible within the following three categories: Science or Technology, Operations or Readiness, and Administration, Training, or Support. Each nomination package will be competing directly with other nominations and will be judged by the impact that the innovation has against the following criteria:
 - a. Provide a unique approach to solving a specific Coast Guard challenge.
 - b. Be successfully implemented at the local, district/area, or national level.
 - c. Prove to influence one or more of the following:
 - (1) Increase in efficiency; reduced cost in personnel hours or resources.
 - (2) Increase in productivity; increased capability or effectiveness.
 - (3) Increase the ability to share information or coordinate resources.
 - (4) Other tangible or intangible process improvements
7. NOMINATION PROCESS. Formal solicitation for nominations will occur each spring, but the ability to nominate innovations will be available year round at the following website: <http://cgweb.pacarea.uscg.mil/paic/>. The official cutoff date for accepting award nominations will be announced via ALCOAST.
 - a. All nominations will be submitted via the Coast Guard intranet and consist of a single page following the format provided at the following website: <http://cgweb.pacarea.uscg.mil/paic/>. All nominations shall include a command endorsement limited to a single page.
 - b. The appropriate innovation council shall review all nominations. Field units and Area/District staffs will have their nomination package evaluated and endorsed by their appropriate area innovation council.
 - c. Headquarters units and Headquarters staff will have their nominations evaluated and endorsed by the Commandant's Innovation Council.
8. SELECTION. Area Innovation Councils shall forward a prioritized list of all nominations with a favorable endorsement to the Commandant's Innovation Award Selection Committee for consideration. The Award Selection Committee will consist of five members of the Commandant's Innovation Council. The Innovation Award Selection Committee will review and make recommendations to the entire Commandant's Innovation Council. The Innovation Award Selection Committee will convene in the Spring of each year.
9. RECOGNITION. The Commandant will announce the Commandant's Innovation Award winners by ALCOAST during the Spring of each year.

- a. Presentation of the Innovation Awards will be made in conjunction with the Annual Innovation Exposition held each Spring.
- b. The Commandant's Innovation Council will fund travel, lodging and per diem for each award recipient to the Innovation Exposition. Commandant (G-CQM) will arrange funding for all travel.
- c. Each award recipient will be presented with a commemorative memento (trophy). The recipient's unit (of original innovation) will receive an additional \$10,000 in AFC-30 funding for supporting an environment conducive to innovation. The additional funding is to be used at the discretion of the Command.

10. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Commandant (G-CQM) shall administer this program under the direction of the Chief of Staff.
- b. Innovation Councils shall actively promote the program and solicit nominations throughout their respective AOR.
- c. Chief, Office of Public Affairs shall publicize this program to encourage recognition of, and interest in, the individuals or teams selected as recipients of the Innovation Award.

11. QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS. This policy will be incorporated into the next change of the Coast Guard Medals and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25(series), reference (a). Questions should be directed to Commandant (G-CQM) at (202) 267-2771 or innovation@comdt.uscg.mil.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.

13. FORMS. None.

T. W. ALLEN /s/
Chief of Staff