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COMDTINST 5720.3  
MAR 19 2003

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 5720.3

Subj: DOCUMENTING THE 2003 USCG OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction sets out policy, doctrine and procedure for units deploying overseas to preserve the record of their Operation Enduring Freedom operations and incorporate operational lessons learned.
2. ACTION. All Commanding Officers and Officers in Charge shall familiarize themselves with the requirements of the policies, doctrine and procedures contained in this Instruction. Internet release authorized
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None
4. BACKGROUND. A complete historical record of Coast Guard overseas operations in Operation Enduring Freedom is vital to the institutional memory of the Service. History is used to document important events and accomplishments in order to build esprit de corps and develop operational documentation in order to provide all levels of the service with lessons-learned and strategic insights from missions.
5. DISCUSSION. It is the combination of traditional historical sources (logbooks, situation reports, statements of commander intent, operations plans, operations and planning orders, and after action reports) with oral history interviews of key participants of Coast Guard operations that provides the historical data necessary to support strategic analysis required by senior service leadership and esprit de corps indoctrination to the operational forces.
6. POLICY. Commandant (G-I) policy is to gather Coast Guard operational documentation and oral histories in a logical and efficient manner to support the strategic analysis of operations. This facilitates the writing of Coast Guard history and preserves the record of our proud service for the American people.

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

7. DOCTRINE. U.S. Coast Guard doctrine for operational units is to preserve and prepare operational documentation for the collection and preservation by the Coast Guard Historians Office (G-IPA-4) in order to preserve operational experience for the current and future benefit of the Service.
8. PROCEDURE. All deploying units must designate a unit Historian. It is recommended that a Senior Petty Officer (preferably the Chief of the Boat or a highly motivated senior enlisted person) be assigned to this position to encourage compliance with this Instruction. The unit Historian will report directly to the CO or OIC and, for guidance in fulfilling the requirements of this Instruction, to the Coast Guard Historian (G-IPA-4).
9. PROCEDURE: The following methodology is provided: Operational Documentation: The unit history should be developed in month-long blocks that detail and summarize: movements, activities and missions of the cutter. Supporting documents should also be retained and may be attached as addenda. These may include: unit structure/organization (chain of command), written operational and planning orders, standing orders, and personnel rosters, situation reports, statements of commander intent, plans of the day, and training schedules. (Logbooks are already preserved as a permanent record.) This data shall be collected and preserved in electronic format on CD-ROM, where possible. At the end of the cruise the historical material should be sent by FedEx to the Coast Guard Historians Office (G-IPA-4). Historical material must not be sent by regular mail. U.S. mail sent to headquarters is irradiated by the U.S. Postal Service as a precaution in response to the anthrax mailing incidents in October 2001. The irradiation process subjects the mail to high levels of heat which effects documents, and can destroy films, tapes, and electronic files. Classified documents sent at the end of the cruise must be sent with the appropriate security precautions. They must be SECRET and below. Any questions concerning this Instruction should be directed to Commandant (G-IPA-4).
10. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
11. FORMS. None.

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