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COMDTINST 12251.1
APR 7 2005

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 12251.1

Subj: FRAMEWORK FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CIVILIAN ADVISORY BOARDS

Ref: (a) HQINST 12251.5 (series)
(b) 5 USC 71

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this Instruction is to provide a framework for establishing Civilian Advisory Boards (CABs) throughout the Coast Guard.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of integrated support commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Judge Advocate General and special staff elements at Headquarters shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None
4. COVERAGE. This Instruction applies to the civilian workforce and supervisors of civilians (civilian or military).
5. BACKGROUND. Reference (a), established a CAB for Coast Guard Headquarters, which has been very successful in addressing the significant concerns of all civilians and supervisors of civilians working at Headquarters and Headquarters units in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. This Instruction provides a general framework for establishing CABs throughout the Coast Guard, to meet the needs of the civilian community to have a mechanism for communicating significant issues with their Commanding Officers.

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6. GENERAL GUIDELINES.

- a. Role. The CAB, will provide a forum for bi-directional communication between the civilian workforce and the Commanding Officer. The role of the CAB is to address civilian issues, initiatives and programs in order to promote greater job satisfaction and corporate identity among the civilian workforce while fostering morale and excellence in the workplace. The CAB will not advocate or represent personal agendas, individual complaints or grievances. Individual complaints and grievances brought to the attention of the CAB will be directed to their appropriate forum. CAB responsibilities shall not overlap with the responsibilities of the Human Relations Council (HRC). The mission of the HRC is to advise the Commanding Officer, serve as liaison for the Command Civil Rights Program, in addressing human relations issues surrounding affirmative action and diversity, and to prevent discrimination and harassment. The CAB will transmit issues brought to the attention of the CAB that are properly addressed by the HRC, to the HRC.
- b. Report. The CAB will report to the Commanding Officer. This Instruction provides a general framework for the CAB. Charters, bylaws or standard operating procedures within the guidelines established by this Instruction will be developed by each CAB and approved by the Commanding Officer.

7. PROCEDURES.

- a. Membership. Each CAB will be composed of voting members and a voting team leader, all appointed by the Commanding Officer. Each CAB will define a quorum. The team leader shall be selected by the Commanding Officer from the civilian workforce and serve a one-year term. Membership for the remaining members, will be determined on an annual basis, subject to managements' and the individuals' desires. Each CAB may have standing members based on position. Each CAB will develop participatory standards and a process for the removal of members, if necessary. Servicing Command Staff Advisors/Human Resources Specialists will serve as advisors to the CAB.
- b. CAB Subcommittees. Each CAB may establish standing or special subcommittees. Civilian or military members may volunteer, with approval of their immediate supervisor, for appointment by the CAB to serve on subcommittees.
- c. Meetings. It is recommended that CAB meetings be held at least once a month.
- d. Communication. Effective bi-directional communication is a vital component to the effective functioning of the CAB. Each CAB shall communicate its mission, the events it sponsors and the successful initiatives it has accomplished or is focusing on. CAB marketing strategies should employ the use of the following media:
 - (1) CAB Websites.
 - (2) Town Hall/Directorate/Command All-Hands Meetings.
 - (3) CAB Fliers or Newsletters.

(4) Email that allows employees to post their concerns, questions or issues.

e. Labor-Management Obligations.

- (1) Notification and Opportunity to Bargain. Prior to the establishment of a CAB that will include employees represented by a Union (bargaining unit employees), management must ensure that Labor-Management obligations are met. The initial step in this process is to notify the Union of the intent to establish a CAB and provide the Union an opportunity to bargain. Union notices and bargaining should be coordinated with the servicing Command Staff Advisor/Human Resources Specialist.
- (2) Formal Meeting Requirements. If a CAB meeting is going to involve one or more bargaining unit employees and one or more representatives of the Coast Guard to discuss personnel policies, practices, or other general conditions of employment, the meeting is considered a “formal meeting” under reference (b). Therefore, to avoid an unfair labor practice (ULP) charge, the representing union must receive advance notice of the CAB meeting and be provided with an opportunity to attend. This “formal meeting” obligation may be met by a written agreement with the Union, which provides the Union standing membership on the CAB and acknowledges that standing membership satisfies Management’s obligation to notify the Union of each CAB meeting.
- (3) Workplace Changes. Supervisors are reminded that before implementing changes which impact bargaining unit employees’ conditions of employment, they must notify the Union and provide an opportunity for appropriate bargaining. This obligation applies even if the changes are a result of suggestions from the CAB.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Commanding Officers (the Chief of Staff at Headquarters) are responsible for:

- (1) Overseeing all CAB activities.
- (2) Approving implementation of initiatives put forward by the CAB; and
- (3) Providing administrative coordination and support.

b. CAB Team Leaders are responsible for:

- (1) Scheduling CAB meetings, planning meeting agendas, finalizing and promulgating meeting minutes.
- (2) Serving as a focal point between the CAB and outside organizations, funneling to the CAB agenda issues for discussion and action;
- (3) Serving as facilitator during CAB meetings; and
- (4) Preparing letters for Commanding Officer signature, appointing new members to the CAB.

- c. Individual CAB members are responsible for:
 - (1) Attending CAB meetings, reviewing draft minutes, distributing minutes to their constituents; and
 - (2) Serving as a focal point between their constituents and the CAB and carrying out other activities as requested by the CAB.
 - d. Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that members of each CAB and their subcommittees are afforded adequate time and resources to fulfill their CAB duties.
9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATION. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
10. FORMS AVAILABILITY. None.

Thomas F. Fisher /s/
Director of Personnel Management
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