

Note to reader: The attached letter discusses the Principles of Coast Guard Operations identified in U.S. Coast Guard Pub 1. Between the time of the letter (2000) and the time of publication (2002) two of the principles were re-titled. Specifically, "Objective" became "Clear Objective" and "Safety" became "Managed Risk".



June 14, 2000

Admiral James M. Loy
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Headquarters
2100 Second Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20593-0001

Dear Admiral Loy:

I am pleased to forward to you proposed U.S. Coast Guard Publication 1:
America's Maritime Guardians.

As you may recall from the February briefing to the Senior Leadership Council,
Pub 1 has three purposes:

- (1) To provide terms of common reference for our service regarding what we do, who we are, whence we came, and how we do things;
- (2) To provide a common meeting ground of beliefs about our service -- especially its nature; and,
- (3) To provide context for other major documents critical to our service, e.g., the Strategic Plan and our various business plans.

While this document represents hard work by a variety of personnel during the last three years, it may also be said that it has been in preparation for all 210 years of our existence. We have attempted to base much of this work upon our heritage beginning with Alexander Hamilton's earliest writings leading to the formation of our organization, and upon the unique culture that has been developed by our men and women during 21 decades of operations.

Admiral James M. Loy
June 14, 2000
Page Two

The document has been reviewed by a number of sources, most recently by the Senior Management Team. I offer the following observations in regard to that most recent review. This review focused entirely on Chapter Four (Principles of Coast Guard Operations).

Chapter Four discusses how we do things. An initial question posed to the SMT (and to other readers to whom previous drafts had been provided) was whether or not such a chapter should be included at all. Based upon affirmative comments and few, if any, directly negative comments on the issue, I believe the only logical answer that can be derived is that it is appropriate to include this chapter in the document. In this regard, our main thinking has been that while Chapters One through Three provide critical background information in a readable format, once the reader has completed those chapters, there is no clear reason for the reader to refer back to the document from time to time as he or she performs daily duties. Thus, a key reason for including Chapter Four has been to make the document more utilitarian. By referencing a commonly accepted set of operating principles, we are hopeful that the Coast Guard community will read, pause, reflect, and actually refer to all of Pub 1 from time to time.

The above so noted, the question then posed to the SMT (and to all other readers to whom prior drafts had been provided) was whether the seven principles stated can truly be said to be principles of Coast Guard operations.

Our criteria for selecting the principles was as follows:

1. They must be concepts ingrained in our operations and considered part of our unwritten culture.
2. The concepts must be applicable across all Coast Guard roles and missions.
3. The concepts must be capable of succinct title and description.

Admiral James M. Loy
June 14, 2000
Page Three

We deliberately sought to limit the number of principles to between 6 and 8. A number greater than that would fairly open the door to a much more lengthy – and thus unwieldy – list.

We received valuable feedback from the SMT and have significantly changed Chapter Four as a result. The following paragraphs are intended to highlight the major points of the SMT meeting. In the interest of brevity, I do not attempt to enumerate all of the suggestions that we have subsequently incorporated into Chapter Four.

The Principle of Objective is based not only on Principles of War and Principles of Military Operations Other Than War, but it is directly traceable to the tone and intent of Hamilton's 4th of June 1791 Letter of Instructions. This objective has stirred little discussion; we believe the clear consensus is that it meets the criteria we set.

The Principle of Effective Presence is also directly traceable to Hamilton's Letter of Instructions. Likewise to the Principle of Objective, it has occasioned little comment or question. We believe the consensus is that it should be included. However, we do note that significant conversation was caused by the final paragraph of the section. This states our view that Effective Presence also requires careful attention to our ability to sustain assets during normal operations. No clear consensus was achieved either to keep or to delete this paragraph.

Unity of Effort is based upon Principles of Military Operations Other Than War. From the comments we have received, it would appear that this is strongly endorsed by those who have reviewed the publication. It is considered one of our oldest principles of operations. The Coast Guard is known and admired for its ability to work with diverse resources to perform its missions successfully.

The Principle of On Scene Initiative was originally presented to the SMT as the Principle of Delegated Authority. But based upon the comments from the SMT, we changed its title and main thrust. We came to the conclusion that the focus of this operating principle should be on the person in the field, and the Coast Guard's

Admiral James M. Loy
June 14, 2000
Page Four

expectation that this person seize the initiative on scene, as opposed to focusing the principle on the need for an individual, perhaps far from the scene, to delegate the necessary authority to do so. We believe this particular principle will be perceived as a strong revalidation of our time-honored tradition that the person on scene is the one most likely to correctly assess what needs to be done to successfully perform the mission assigned.

We believe the Principle of Flexibility is a natural tie-in to *Semper Paratus*. Originally titled Adaptability, this particular principle has occasioned little comment; we believe the consensus is that this principle is correctly stated as now titled.

The Principle of Safety has caused much comment and discussion. We do not believe that the principle itself was necessarily recognized as such from our very beginning. Indeed, one could argue that our service had a rather casual attitude about safety 200 years ago, or so. Nevertheless, over the years – informally at first, and more recently formally – we certainly have developed a safety mindset. We believe this particular principle is in keeping with the recognition that – as you have stated – we do dangerous work in hostile environments, and we are more likely to succeed when we attempt to do this work safely.

The SMT did engage in a lengthy discussion as to whether the Principle of Safety would be more correctly titled and discussed as Risk Assessment. However, the concluding general view appeared to be that Safety continues to be the more resonant term in the field, and risk management is adequately covered by the overall discussion within this section.

Finally, the Principle of Restraint has been an absolute keystone principle from our very beginning, especially when one reads Hamilton's original Letter of Instructions. Hamilton's blunt exhortation sets us apart from all other federal agencies insofar as original sailing orders are concerned. Because of our day-to-day involvement

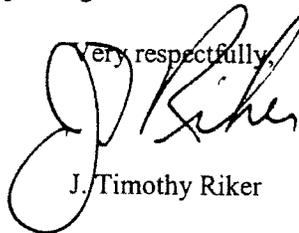
Admiral James M. Loy
June 14, 2000
Page Five

with the American people, we believe this principle remains as important today as when Hamilton penned his original instructions.

Naturally, we hope that if this document is acceptable and published, it will become an enduring piece of Coast Guard writing. Obviously, only time will tell. But we do believe that at the very least, if Coast Guard personnel read the document – *and if they are taught the document* – they will have a clearer understanding of what our roles and missions are, how these roles and missions developed, a clearer sense of our culture as a military service with civil responsibilities, and a workable understanding of our basic operational principles which – if followed – are more likely to assure the successful performance of assigned missions.

May I close with the following observation: Even though this document represents the collective work of many personnel, two individuals have played especially pivotal roles in bringing this piece of work forward to its current state. CAPT Robin Kutz USCG, and CDR Robert Farmer USCG, both assigned to G-CCX, have been exceptionally diligent in taking the various drafts presented to them in March, merging these drafts into a workable form, soliciting opinions and reactions from a variety of sources, listening carefully to these opinions, and incorporating the letter and spirit of these opinions – diverse though they may have been – into a unified statement of service purpose. They did not simply act as editors; they have been authors, as well. It has been a genuine privilege to work with them on this project.

Very respectfully,



J. Timothy Riker