

## Additional Q & A for 2010 CRSP Authorization

Question #1: What authority does the Coast Guard have to conduct the CRSP?

Answer #1: On September 21, 2010, the Secretary of Homeland Security authorized the Coast Guard to conduct an active duty enlisted Career Retention Screening Panel (CRSP) in the fall of 2010.

Section 1169 of Title 10, U. S. Code and Section 357 (j) of Title 14, U.S. Code authorize the Secretary to approve the CRSP. 10 U.S.C. §1169 simply authorizes the Secretary to prescribe how an enlisted member may be “discharged before his term of service expires.” 14 U.S.C. §357(j) authorizes the Commandant to involuntarily separate enlisted personnel from the Coast Guard without action by an Enlisted Personnel Board when the Secretary orders a reduction in force. The organic authority to convene an Enlisted Personnel Board to recommend involuntary retirement of a single member is vested in the Commandant. *See*, 14 U.S.C. §§357(a) – (i). But only the Secretary can approve convening a panel to consider many members for involuntary separation at the same time. *See*, 14 USC §357(j). The Commandant has the organic authority to approve retirement or separation recommendations in both cases.

The approval to conduct the CRSP can be viewed at  
<http://www.uscg.mil/psc/epm/CRSP/Signed%20Action%20Memo.pdf>

Question #2: Why didn't the Commandant's memo use the term “reduction in force”?

Answer #2: The CRSP was not intended to reduce the overall size of the force. The CRSP was convened to efficiently and fairly, based on uniform performance and conduct criteria, identify retirement eligible enlisted personnel for involuntary retirement; accelerate advancement of junior enlisted members; and reinvigorate accession of recruits into the Coast Guard.

Question #3: Why was the CRSP even necessary?

Answer #3: The Coast Guard has been experiencing historically high retention rates at the most senior enlisted ranks. Retirement eligible enlisted personnel have elected to remain on active duty well beyond predicted workforce forecasts/statistics. This has led to rank stagnation in the junior enlisted workforce (e.g., advancements and technical training) and significantly lower opportunities to access qualified recruits into the Coast Guard. As the Commandant stated in his letter to the Secretary:

We have reduced our accessions to the lowest level in our records. We temporarily waived obligated service requirements to allow voluntary separations. However, the majority (91%) of over 700<sup>1</sup> recent voluntary separation requests were from junior enlisted ranks, and not our more senior workforce. If allowed to continue, this trend, along with our reduced accessions, will result in an imbalance in the enlisted workforce's experience level for many years to come.

<sup>1</sup> The letter to the Secretary was developed before all voluntary separations had been processed. At the time the letter was created, over 700 voluntary separations had been approved. By the time the CRSP was held, over 900 voluntary separations were approved.

The CRSP was necessary to safeguard the vital continuum of professional development particularly within the upper levels of the enlisted workforce. The CRSP was determined to be a better option than less targeted tools such as High Year Tenure (HYT) that employs a time in grade criterion only. A HYT process also would result in discharge of a fixed number of members, not all of whom would be retirement eligible. The CRSP applies only to members eligible to retire; provides members an officer and senior enlisted panel review of their performance and conduct record against established standards; an opportunity for members to supplement their personnel file and comment on adverse information; and an administrative appeal process to CG-1.

Question #4: Why didn't the Coast Guard conduct Enlisted Personnel Boards in accordance with Article 12.C.10 of the Coast Guard Personnel Manual for the member's identified for involuntary retirement?

Answer #4: Article 12.C.10 of the Coast Guard Personnel Manual is based on the Commandant's authority to convene involuntary retirement boards in accordance with 14 U.S.C. §§ 357 (a) - (i). Convening individual boards of different composition would not have guaranteed consistent application of the same set of performance and conduct standards to all eligible members as the CRSP, convened under Secretarial authority, was specifically designed to do. Additionally, convening involuntary retirement boards for the over 1,100 eligible members would have been a time and resource prohibitive process that would have led to unacceptable delay and aggravated the problem of an increasingly imbalanced enlisted force.