

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



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1800

MAR 19 2014

Rear Admiral John Acton, USCGR (ret), co-chair
Master Chief Charles "Skip" Bowen, USCG (ret), co-chair
Commandant of the Coast Guard's
National Retiree Council (CCGNRC)

Dear Admiral Acton and Master Chief Bowen,

I am enclosing written response to Commandant's National Retiree Council Meeting Report dated 31 August 2013 to facilitate alignment of the Council's activities with the Commandant's direction. I commend and thank you for your service to the Coast Guard and our retiree community.

Promulgation of COMDTINST 1800.5G, Coast Guard retiree Services Program, dated 7 March 2013, will continue to improve the Coast Guard retiree services program, communications, and collaboration. With the establishment of retiree services desk at a number of Bases and Training Center, Initial Operating Capability was completed in October of 2013. In cooperation with the CCGNRC, attainment of full operational capability remains on schedule for June 2014.

In conjunction with the April 2014 meeting of the CCGNRC, your annual meeting report will be submitted to the Commandant through the executive agent (CG-13). The 2014 annual report may include information regarding the effectiveness of the retiree services program and improvements to retirement transition, pay, benefits, privileges, legislative veterans' affairs, retiree quality of life, and other Coast Guard military retiree community matters. Thank you for your service to the Coast Guard retiree community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "S/B. NYE", written over a blue ink stamp of the same name.

S/B. NYE
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Acting Director, Reserve and Military Personnel

Enclosure

Copy: COMDT(CCG, VCG, DCMS, CG-11, CG-PSC)

Commandant's Executive Agent (CG-13)

Response to the

Commandant's National Retiree Council's (CCGNRCs)

31 August 2013 Annual Report

CCGNRC Issue 2013-1: CCGNRC Co-chair communication with CG-13 for implementation of 1800.5G Retiree Services Program

Issue summary: The CCGNRC council recommends that CG-13 ensure proactive and effective communications with the CCGNRC Co-chairs on a regular basis for the partnership needed for planning and implementing an effective Retiree Services Program. Additionally the CCGNRC recommends that RADM Day's relief meet with the CCGNRC Co-Chairs as part of the in-brief process to get up to speed on CG Retire Affairs issues and the CG retiree services program.

Response: CG-13 will continue to maintain active communications with the CCGNRC co-chairs throughout the evolution of the retiree services program. The Commandant's CCGNRC co-chairs will continue to meet on a regular basis with CG-13, either in person or telephonically. The next CG-13 has been named and will report in late-June 2014. Plans are already underway to brief the prospective CG-13 upon reporting and introduce him to the co-chairs as soon after reporting as possible so that the new relationship can be established.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-2: Effective two-way communications (methods, techniques, tools and content) between the retiree community and the CG retiree service providers

Issue summary: The CCGNRC recommends that a CG Retiree Communications Workgroup of key players, be chartered to ensure appropriate and effective communications and solutions to be developed implemented.

Response: The CCGNRC co-chairs, CG-13 and program stakeholders continue to actively promote multichannel communications with the retiree community. In addition, the establishment of our new Coast Guard retiree services website will increasingly serve the retiree community by providing key information needed by Coast Guard retirees. In regards to the establishment of a retiree communications work group, I believe the CCGNRC co-chairs and CG-13 are best suited to monitor communications, identify shortcomings and implement strategic communication best practices. If a workgroup is needed after achieving final operating capability (FOC) then the CCGNRC co-chairs and CG-13 will consider this option.

CCGNRC 2013-3: Need for a clear vision statement and concept of operations

Issue summary: To better articulate how the new CG retiree services program 1800.5G is intended to work the CCGNRC recommends development of a vision statement and concept of

operations type document to better articulate how the new retiree service programs is intended to work.

Response: We believe that COMDTINST 1800.5G, Retiree Services Program, provides sufficient program vision. The development of an in-depth training guide effectively serves as the concept of operations for the program. As the retiree services program continues to develop and implementation concepts tested, we will continue to articulate best practices and processes through on-going training and the retiree services website.

CCNRC Issue 2013-4: Development of a “Lifecycle of the CG Retiree”

Issue summary: The “Life Cycle” of the CG Retiree concept should be developed. By understanding the Life Cycle of CG Retirees and how the needs change over time, the new CG Retiree Services Program can be more targeted and effective especially to those with the greatest needs.

Response: The Office of Work-Life (CG-111) has established a workgroup that will support the development of the Military Lifecycle (MLC) plan that will include enhancement of pre-separation and retirement transition of Coast Guard service members. The Coast Guard MLC model plans to capitalize on opportunities during a military career to improve individual, career, and post-career development and transition processes. The Coast Guard MLC model intends to work cross-functionally with other program sponsors of existing training and Individual Development Plan (IDP) efforts to align with the new Transition Assistance Program (TAP) requirements.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-5 Launch of the new CG Retiree Services Program (RSP)?

Issue summary: The council recommends that as part of the new Coast Guard Retiree Services Program launch, that retiree appreciation days be held in conjunction with Coast Guard Day Picnics where retiree services functions are located (generally Coast Guard Bases). The Council also recommends that the Commandant and other Coast Guard Senior leaders be visible and supportive of the launch of the new Coast Guard Retiree Services Program.

Response: There is no specific program requirement that sponsoring commands have a retiree appreciation day (RAD). However, the retiree services program *does* recommend promoting any DoD sponsored retiree event or combine any scheduled Coast Guard retiree event with recognized ceremonies and anniversaries, such as annual Coast Guard Day picnics. Coast Guard leadership remains committed to the continued development of the retiree services program. The Commandant is briefed on progress of the retiree services program in his quarterly family campaign updates. Further discussion on the topic of an outreach awareness campaign is on the agenda for the 2014 CCGNRC annual meeting.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-6: Development of Caregivers guide

Issue summary: The CCGNRC council recommends that CG-13 expedite implementing and publishing the Coast Guard Caregivers Guide with the means to update and maintain the Caregivers guide in the future.

Response: Ownership of a Coast Guard's caregivers or equivalent guide will remain within Pay and Personnel Center (PPC) as prescribed in CI 1800.5G, Article 6.c(1). CG PPC has developed a 2013 Information Guide for Survivors of USCG, USCGR, and NOAA Retirees. I have instructed the retiree services program manager to collaborate with CG PPC and develop a revision plan to ensure the guide reflects current practices and benefits employed by DoD services. Post FOC, collaboration between CG PPC and the retiree services program will ensure development of a newly enhanced caregivers guide specifically written to meet the Coast Guard retiree community's needs, primarily in the area of readability (i.e., the ease of which guide content can be read and understood).

CCGNRC Issue 2013-7 Develop Standard Briefing Sheet

Issue summary: The CCGNRC council recommends that a standard briefing and fact sheet be presented to effectively connect the soon to be new retiree with CG RSP info, services, POC's, etc. with the explanation as to why it's important.

Response: As described in the response to 2013-4, the Office of Work-Life (CG-111) has established a workgroup that will support the development of the Military Lifecycle (MLC) plan that will include enhancement of pre-separation and retirement transition of Coast Guard service members. The retiree services program manager is a member of the workgroup and will advocate for ensuring that the appropriate level of information is included in the transition plans that promotes the retiree services program and its resources. Regular updates on the progress of this workgroup will be provided to the CCGNRC co-chairs and regional councils.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-8: List of CG retiree benefits, entitlements, privileges, rights

Summary: The CCGNRC recommend that CG-13 develop a list of Coast Guard retiree benefits, entitlements, privileges, rights, and responsibilities.

Response: I have instructed retiree services program to coordinate this effort with CG-111 and after achieving FOC, to include the posting and advertising of member transition information on the Coast Guard retiree services website.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-9: Decedent affairs

Issue summary: The CCGNRC recommended a retiree/annuitant decedent affairs program should be developed by CG-13 and promulgated to Coast Guard Base retiree services desks and should be integrated with existing decedent affairs programs.

Response: The CG-13 retiree services program manager has begun coordinating with the CG PSC-PSD's Chief of Casualty Matters to address possible improvements to the decedent affairs program at it relates to retirees and annuitants. Our initial objective is to establish a more effective condolence outreach process and provide awareness training for Coast Guard units who often support a retiree's decedent affairs.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-10: Public health services

Issue summary: Pay and Personnel Center will soon be performing the retired pay function for retired Public Health Officers. The council noted that many of them served with the Coast Guard as (Doctors, Dentist, Pharmacist, etc.) and recommends that future consideration be given to more formally include them in the Coast Guard Retiree Services Program.

Response: Except for the distribution of the Coast Guard/NOAA Retiree’s Newsletter made available to NOAA and PHS retirees, the retiree services program is resourced and trained to serve Coast Guard military retirees and eligible surviving family members. We acknowledge there may be a need, but any expansion of support to NOAA and PHS retirees beyond the newsletter would require analysis to determine if additional resources would be required to support them, particularly at the retiree services desk level of the program.

CCGNRC Issue 2013-11: Future updates COMDTINST 1800.5G

Issue summary: A couple of recommendations for improved clarity were identified for future update in the retiree services program COMDTINST 1800.5G, recommend changes be made during next update of COMDTINST 1800.5G.

Response: All recommendations captured at the 2013 CCGRNC meeting will be reviewed in collaboration with the CCGNRC co-chairs and considered in future updates of the retiree services program policy.