

Policy Development 6-9.01-K

KNOW the steps involved in developing Coast Guard policy from inception to implementation, as presented in the E-PME Study Guide.

Policy Development

Policies and directives provide standards and guidelines that ensure the Coast Guard's missions are achieved. The Coast Guard Directives System Manual, COMDTINST M5215.6D defines *directive* as:

...written communication that initiates or governs action, conduct, or procedure. Directives are often issued as circulars, notices, regulations, orders, and handbooks, and include materials usually issued to multiple addressees in multiple copies for insertion in policy, administrative, or operations manuals.

Directives promote consistency, continuity, planning, understanding, and teamwork, and ensure that delegation of authority is followed.

Note that the words *directive* and *policy* are used interchangeably in this chapter.

Additional (**untestable**) information can be found in COMDTINST M5215.6D.

A directive must be issued when an official document either:

- Establishes policy
- Prescribes a method or procedure
- Establishes standards of operation
- Establishes or changes organizational structure
- Delegates authority
- Assigns responsibility
- Establishes a form or report
- Revises, supplements, or cancels a directive

***Policy
Development
(continued)***

One format for a policy-establishing directive is a manual. Manuals must:

- Contain 25 or more pages
 - Have a table of contents
 - Be organized by chapters and sections
 - Contain any reporting requirements in the transmittal instruction prescribing it
 - Be reviewed annually for content
 - Be canceled by the originator or a higher authority when the contents are no longer applicable
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Catalysts for Change

A directive can be required due to any of five major catalysts:

- **Commandant's Direction.** When a new Commandant takes command of the Coast Guard (normally every four years), the new Commandant, like any change of command, reassesses the current Coast Guard position in relation to its plans, strategies, and goals.

This reassessment leads to changes—often policy changes—to current plans, strategies, and goals so that the Coast Guard stays on track in remaining the successful service it is.

- **Congressional/Executive Action.** Each new Presidential administration and Congress makes a reassessment of the country's plans, strategies, and goals. Often, this reassessment leads to the changing of laws, policies, or budgets that result in a change to Coast Guard policy.
- **Pro-Active Program Management.** At all command levels, personnel are managing programs in accordance with current policy. Often, these program managers study the effects of current policy and the changes necessary to ensure continued success of missions. The more pro-active the program management is, the more likely change to current policy will occur.
- **Field to Policy Makers Communication.** The area where everyone in the Coast Guard can have a positive effect on policy is in communicating the most accurate and timely information up the chain to the policy makers themselves. This communication can be via:
 - ▶ Chain of command
 - ▶ Command Master Chief (CMC) network
 - ▶ Corresponding directly with program managers

Coast Guard members should be ready to give the most accurate information, any supporting data, and comprehensive recommendations as soon as possible.

Catalysts for Change
(continued)

- **Needs Assessments and Other Studies.** Many program managers—especially senior management—make use of official studies such as a needs assessment. These often come in various forms using:
 - ▶ Questionnaires
 - ▶ Focus groups
 - ▶ Interviews

The data collected during these studies can inform program and senior management of the current state of our workforce, equipment, operational readiness, and many other important facets of our service.

All members should make it a habit to give complete and accurate feedback, even giving feedback on the study methods themselves.

Chain of Authority

Managers at all command levels are responsible for the health and success of the particular program they are tasked with managing. Regardless of their assignment, managers at all levels are in the position to proactively make the most effective changes to the policies that affect their field of work.

Knowing who is in the position of responsibility for the policy to be positively changed is key. This is why every CG enlisted member should be knowledgeable about not only their chain of command, but also their particular rating and unit missions' chain of authority.

Effecting Change

The process of effecting change involves six steps:

- Step 1: Gather and Analyze Data
 - Step 2: Develop Problem Statement
 - Step 3: Market the Need to Change
 - Step 4: Make Recommendations
 - Step 5: Follow Approval Process
 - Step 6: Ensure Implementation
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Step 1: Gather and Analyze Data

When communicating with program managers to effect change, it is important to give complete and accurate data and information. While our instinct often tells us changes need to be made in order to make things better, program managers need data and other information to *sell* the positive changes.

Step 1: Gather and Analyze Data (continued)

In order to make an effective argument for change, managers must collaborate with others. They need to:

- Study the issues and obtain as much data as possible
- Develop and assess possible solutions
- Address concerns necessary to effect positive change
- Network with other subject matter experts
- Look at what other successful organizations (e.g., other military services) have done

Example: A policy change should be proposed if data shows:

- Excessive costs are incurred in performing present duties under existing policy. (*Gather excessive cost data.*)
 - Reassessment is necessary to reduce extra workload and person-hours incurred by the implementation of a policy. (*Calculate unforeseen person-hours and compare to prior person-hours.*)
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***Step 2: Develop
Problem Statement***

The basis for creating a new policy is a problem statement. The problem statement should clearly declare any issues needing attention.

A problem statement concisely and accurately identifies an issue needing to be studied, understood, or brought to the attention of the next higher authority in your chain of command. The statement should focus on one issue without necessarily addressing side issues that may deflect the intended audience from the main point.

All Coast Guard members can affect program management's focus on the issue by communicating the specific problem(s) that needs to be addressed.

Example of a clearly written problem statement:

- *Problem Statement:* The Coast Guard is increasing the size of the workforce by 5000 over the next 3–5 years through a massive recruitment effort. Since these personnel changes could negatively impact our mission performance level, training is required to increase performance level of the workforce.
- *Explanation:* This problem statement brings to program managers the issue of mission accomplishment with a large less-experienced workforce.

Training in the areas of leadership and occupational specialty should be looked at, as well as issues concerning command and unit infrastructure. Other issues could also be affected such as supporting unit and training center workload, and even morale.

Example of a vague problem statement:

- *Vague Problem Statement:* Boot Camp and/or "A" schools give units untrained and undisciplined enlisted members.
 - *Explanation:* This problem statement doesn't fully address issues for program managers, because it does not express what exactly the new enlisted members are not able to perform.
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Step 3: Market the Need to Change

Program managers must *sell* new policy and changes to current policy. To market a need for a policy change, the program manager can:

- Network with others
 - Make presentations to interested groups (CMCs, chain of command, Flag conference presentations, etc.)
 - Write memos
 - Gain as much support as possible from all who may be affected by this change
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Step 4: Make Recommendations

No decision maker wants to hear only about the problems—they want those who bring problems to offer possible solutions.

If the person bringing the problem is prepared, he or she can offer several recommendations (including doing nothing) with all the positive and negative aspects of each. However, the recommendation the member wishes to be approved should be forefront.

The person presenting the problem and solutions should be ready to answer many questions.

Some suggestions on how to get recommendations enacted are given here.

- **Determine Resource Needs.** Nothing can be accomplished without the necessary resources. With any new or changed policy, the issue of resources necessary to accomplish the mission (people, equipment, infrastructure, training, administrative work, etc.) becomes paramount.

The resources available within the Coast Guard are finite. They never seem to be enough to accomplish all we need or want, so any recommendations for new or changed policy must address this issue squarely.

The person presenting the argument should also point out the resources expended if new or changed policy does NOT occur.

Step 4: Make Recommendations (continued)

- **Market to the Right Audience.** Pressing for changes to Maritime Security policy to human resource managers probably wouldn't work too well. The person presenting the change should first identify all key stakeholders when recommending new or changed policy.

As an example, for a change in a Maritime Security policy, the person should market the District, Area, and HQ *Marine Safety, Security, and Environmental Protection Program*.

- **Build Support.** Provide information to the stakeholders on the positive impact of the new or changed policy. These positive impacts should be linked to:
 - ▶ Mission effectiveness and efficiency
 - ▶ Human and financial resources
 - ▶ Answering the WIIFM (What's in it for me?) question, understanding that the "me" are all the stakeholders

Step 5: Follow Approval Process

Each new policy has an *Originating Authority*...the official by whose authority and under whose title a directive (policy) is issued. Coast Guard officials authorized to issue directives are:

1. The Commandant
2. Area, district, and group commanders
3. Commanders, maintenance and logistics commands
4. Commanding officers and officers-in-charge

The policy must be distributed for review. The best process for this review is to use concurrent clearance...the "simultaneous review of material by concerned organizational elements. This process reduces the review cycle by compressing many reviews into the same period."

Concurrent clearance gives all stakeholders involvement in creating, modifying, and supporting new and changed policy. Concurrent clearance procedures are contained in the Coast Guard Directives System Manual, COMDTINST M5215.6D. **For these untestable procedures, refer to this manual.**

Step 6: Ensure Implementation

Once policy has been created or changed, it will have to be implemented. Procedures are in place for different aspects of the implementation process.

- **Changed Instructions.** Commandant (CG-61) is the program manager for all new Coast Guard-wide Directives and Policy. COMDTINST M5215.6D governs the promulgation and implementation of policy. In order to effect the policy, a new Instruction and/or Directive must be issued informing all concerned of the changes made. For commands lower than the Headquarters level, follow that command's instructions on policy implementation.
- **Changes to Training.** Whenever new or changed policy is implemented, impacted Coast Guard members should be informed of the changes.

As an example, changes to training procedures could impact training center curricula or unit-level training. These training revisions need to be made by Training Officers and Training Managers.

- **Changed SOPs.** An SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) is each command's tool to establish procedures and processes to be followed to carry out command and Coast Guard policy. Whenever a new or change in policy occurs, commands need to update their SOP.
- **Resource Proposal Process.** Requests for resources in future fiscal years should reflect the impact of the new or changed policy, whether these costs are on a recurring or non-recurring basis. If the impact is on a recurring basis, a change to the budget base model needs to be approved.

This budget base model update ensures adequate resources are reserved in the future in order to effect the change. Resource managers need to work with program managers to ensure these resource needs are met.

***Step 6: Ensure
Implementation
(continued)***

- **Marketing.** In order to fully implement the new or changed policy, the change needs to be marketed to all concerned. All possible marketing avenues should be used to “get the word out.” Employ such vehicles as:
 - ▶ ALCOASTs
 - ▶ Coast Guard magazines and newsletters
 - ▶ Rating Force Managers’ newsletters
 - ▶ CMC network
 - ▶ Class “A” schools
 - ▶ Flag Voices
 - ▶ Coast Guard Intranet and Internet

Filter out the unnecessary and disseminate the important information to the troops. Avoid the tendency to accept information overload as an excuse. It is important to forward all pertinent information that can affect the unit, people, and mission.
