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United States Coast Guard

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COMDTINST 1650.20
JUN 30, 2015

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1650.20

Subj: ANCIENT MARINER AWARD

- Ref: (a) Medals and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25 (series)
 (b) Cutter Training and Qualification Manual, COMDTINST M3502.4 (series)
 (c) Invitational Travel Orders, COMDTINST 12570.3 (series)
 (d) Financial Resource Management Manual (FRMM), COMDTINST M7100.3 (series)

- PURPOSE. This Instruction expands upon the Ancient Mariner Award criteria in Reference (a) and establishes policies, procedures, and standards for the administration of the program.
- ACTION. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commandants, and chiefs of headquarters staff elements shall comply with the provisions of this Manual. Internet release is authorized.
- DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. The Ancient Mariner Award, COMDTINST 3502.20 is cancelled.
- DISCUSSION. The Ancient Mariner Award was established in 1978 to honor those who have chosen to accept the responsibilities of a cutterman and follow the path of life at sea. This award not only recognizes seagoing longevity, but also extols the officer and enlisted cutterman whose personal character and performance standards honor the most venerable practitioners of seamanship and reflect our Core-Values. The Gold and Silver Ancient Mariner Award recipient will hold the distinction until retirement, release from active duty or upon display of unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

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*NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: N/A

a. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

- (1) Recipients are charged with keeping a close watch to ensure sea-service traditions are continued and that the time-honored reputation and professionalism of the Coast Guard as a seagoing organization steeped in ceremony, customs and courtesies is maintained. The Gold and Silver Ancient Mariners shall be in routine consultation with the Office of Cutter Forces, Commandant (CG-751) regarding the state of the cutter culture, afloat policy, seagoing rates and any other topics pertaining to the afloat community at large. They play an important role as a cultural advisor to the Commandant (CG-00) and to the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard (MCPO-CG).
- (2) Recipients shall be invited by area, district, sector, and unit commanders to attend and/or take part in any official ceremony that involves our seagoing community. This includes, but is not limited to cutter commissionings, decommissionings, dining-ins, dining-outs, changes of command and “oldest cutter” ceremonies.
- (3) Recipients shall be invited to participate in cutter naming boards and other panels convened by the Personnel Service Center (PSC).
- (4) Recipients shall be invited to participate in public affairs events that portray our rich seagoing heritage.
- (5) In all cases, attendance at each ceremony or event is dependent upon the availability of funds.
- (6) Recipients shall notify Commandant (CG-751) by message or letter, at least annually, listing the events attended in their capacity as Gold or Silver Ancient Mainer.

b. DESCRIPTION. The perpetual displays for each award are large wooden plaques that depict the “Massachusetts”; the first of the “ten boats” authorized by an act of Congress and signed by President George Washington on 4 August 1790. The Gold and Silver Ancient Mariner plaques shall have each recipients name and date engraved on them and both will be conspicuously displayed at Coast Guard HQ in the vicinity of the Commandant (CG-751) office spaces or other appropriate location. A miniature, personal version of these plaques is presented to the new award recipients at the Change-of-Watch (COW) ceremony.

- (1) The prospective officer Ancient Mariner will receive an authentic fore and aft Revenue Cutter Service hat, gold epaulets and WWII era looking glass (with case) preceding the presentation of the small personal plaque during the awards ceremony. Upon relief, these items shall be passed on to the next recipient.
- (2) The prospective enlisted Ancient Mariner will receive a replica of a traditional lighthouse keeper’s hat and WWII era looking glass preceding the presentation of the small personal plaque during the awards ceremony. Upon relief, the looking glass (with case) shall be passed on to the next recipient.

- (3) The recipients are authorized to wear or display these items during subsequent retirement ceremonies, commissioning, decommissioning, and other appropriate gatherings in his/her capacity as the Ancient Mariner.
 - (4) Award items (other than the Ancient Mariner nametags) shall not be worn as a replacement for authorized uniform parts during unit inspections, daily routine or as part of civilian clothing. They should be stored or displayed when not in use in a climate-controlled area out of the direct sun light.
 - (5) Commandant (CG-751) shall procure two nametags for each recipient that are authorized items prescribed for the uniform of the day. Each nametag is 5/8 inch by 3-3/16 inch in size and has black lettering on a gold background for the officer Ancient Mariner and on a silver background for the enlisted Ancient Mariner. The lettering size shall be ¼ inch for the individual's last name and 3/16 inch for the legend "USCG ANCIENT MARINER."
- c. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS. To be eligible for the Gold (officer) or Silver (enlisted) Ancient Mariner Award, candidates shall exemplify the finest leadership abilities and adherence to Coast Guard Core Values and must meet the following minimum requirements:
- (1) Gold Ancient Mariner:
 - (a) Be a Coast Guard officer (W2 – O10) who has served on continuous active duty with ten (10) or more years of accumulated sea duty. For officers with prior enlisted service, a minimum of five (5) years of the accumulated sea duty must have been served as a commissioned officer. Personnel with broken active duty service will not be considered.
 - (b) Be certified for permanent entitlement to the gold Cutterman Insignia in accordance with Reference (b).
 - (c) Have not received a derogatory report on any Officer Evaluation Report (OER). Specifically, there shall be no cases of documented sexual assault, harassment, hazing or discrimination incidents. For officers with enlisted service, members must have maintained Good Conduct eligibility and have not received a mark less than four (4) in the professional dimensions of Integrity, Loyalty, and Respecting Others on their enlisted evaluations since achieving permanent eligibility as a cutterman.
 - (d) Have a distinguished record of seamanship and leadership in the cutter community.
 - (e) Be eligible to hold the title of Gold Ancient Mariner for at least one calendar year from the official award date.

(2) Silver Ancient Mariner:

- (a) Be a Coast Guard enlisted member (E6 – E10) who has served on continuous active duty with ten (10) or more years of accumulated sea duty. Personnel with broken active duty service will not be considered.
- (b) Be certified for permanent entitlement to the silver Cutterman Insignia in accordance with Reference (b).
- (c) Have maintained Good Conduct eligibility and have not received a mark less than four (4) in the professional dimensions of Integrity, Loyalty, and Respecting Others on their enlisted evaluations since achieving permanent eligibility as a cutterman.
- (d) Have a distinguished record of seamanship and leadership in the cutter community.
- (e) Be eligible to hold the title of Silver Ancient Mariner for at least one (1) calendar year from the official award date.

d. SELECTION CRITERIA. The Gold or Silver Ancient Mariner selectee will be chosen from among a group of candidates meeting the above eligibility requirements and have the earliest date of designation as a permanent cutterman.

- (1) For the Gold Ancient Mariner Award, members with prior enlisted service who satisfy the requirements of paragraph 4.c. (1) may use their enlisted permanent Cutterman Insignia entitlement date.
- (2) If two (2) or more candidates have identical dates of designation, the candidate with the most sea duty while a member of the Coast Guard will be chosen as the Gold or Silver Ancient Mariner selectee.
- (3) The award may only be earned once.

e. SELECTION PROCESS. The steps in the selection process are outlined below:

- (1) Once Commandant (CG-751) becomes aware that a new Gold or Silver Ancient Mariner needs to be selected, Commandant (CG-751) will request a list of members who meet the minimal sea duty criteria from the Pay and Personnel Center (PPC) in Topeka, KS.
- (2) Commandant (CG-7) will send an ALCOAST announcing the beginning of the selection process and will include the earliest known date that an eligible member became a permanent cutterman. Any member with an earlier date of Cutterman designation is requested to contact Commandant (CG-751) and provide a copy of their Cutterman Insignia certificate and proof of the minimum sea time requirement.
- (3) Commandant (CG-751) will then establish a list of tentative candidates that meet the minimum eligibility requirements. Each candidate's date of permanent cutterman

eligibility, expected loss date (retirement) and creditable accumulative sea time will also be confirmed by contacting each tentative candidate on the list.

- (4) Commandant (CG-751) will request that PSC OPM or EPM convene a panel to review the military records of the tentative candidates to ensure that their performance of duty reflects the eligibility criteria. Each panel shall include:
 - (a) Chief, Office of Cutter Forces, Commandant (CG-751), or his/her designated representative as President.
 - (b) Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard or his/her designated representative.
 - (c) Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO) Command Master Chief (CMC) or his/her designated representative.
 - (d) Other representatives that PSC selects.
 - (5) PSC will forward a report with the name of the recommended Gold and/or Silver award recipient, and first alternate for each to Commandant (CG-00) for final approval along with a draft ALCOAST that announces the next recipient for each award. The report shall be routed through the following offices:
 - (a) Assistant Commandant for Human Resources (CG-1)
 - (b) Chief, Office of Cutter Forces, Commandant (CG-751)
 - (c) Assistant Commandant for Capability (CG-7)
 - (d) Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO)
 - (e) Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard (CG-09)
 - (6) After approval, Commandant (CG-00) will personally notify and congratulate each recipient and send the ALCOAST announcing the next Gold or Silver Ancient Mariner.
- f. **PRESENTATION.** The incumbent's command shall host the official ceremony that recognizes the transfer of the Ancient Mariner title. The COW ceremony shall be conducted on or immediately prior to the incumbent's official date of retirement or release from active duty. The incumbent's command shall assign a project officer. Commandant (CG-751) will assist the incumbent's command with the planning, as necessary. Samples of previous invitations, programs and scripts can be found on the Commandant (CG-751) website at <http://cgweb.comdt.uscg.mil/CG-751/programs/ancientmariner.htm>.
- g. **FUNDING.**
- (1) Commandant (CG-751) shall fund the travel and per diem for the prospective Ancient Mariner selectee to proceed to the location of the relief ceremony on the designated date.

- (2) Commandant (CG-751) shall fund the travel and per diem for the spouse of the prospective Ancient Mariner selectee to proceed to the location of the COW ceremony on the designated date in accordance with Reference (c). Commandant (CG-7) shall serve as the Travel Approving Official for Invitational Orders for each Ancient Mariner ceremony.
 - (3) Commandant (CG-751) shall fund the procurement of all personal plaques, nameplates and accoutrements and ensure these items are available prior to the commencement of each ceremony.
 - (4) The incumbent's command is responsible for all planning and costs associated with the Ancient Mariner COW ceremony. The procurement of invitations and postage, programs, seating, tents, reception items, etc. shall be governed by Reference (d).
5. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
6. MAJOR CHANGES. None.
7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT. The requirements of this Instruction apply to officer and enlisted personnel that have at least ten (10) years of cumulative sea time and have the earliest receipt date of the permanent Cutterman Insignia. There are no training requirements associated with this award. Unit funding requirements are detailed in paragraph 4.g, above.
8. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATION. This action is not expected to result in any significant adverse environmental impacts as described in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The proposed action has been reviewed by the USCG and has determined this action to be categorically excluded from further environmental documentation under current USCG Categorical Exclusion # 33, in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures and Policy for Considering Environmental Impacts, COMDTINST M16475.1 (series).
9. DISTRIBUTION. Paper distribution will not be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) web sites:
Internet: <http://www.uscg.mil/directives/>, and CG Portal:
<https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
10. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the directives clearance process, and it has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements, in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., NARA requirements, and Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.
11. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

12. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Change recommendations to this Instruction should be routed via memo through the chain of command to Commandant (CG-751).

John P. Nadeau /s/
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Assistant Commandant for Capability (CG-7)