

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



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# PUBLIC

# AFFAIRS

# MANUAL

COMDTINST M5728.2D  
JANUARY 2008



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COMDTNOTE 5728  
 27 JAN 2011

COMMANDANT NOTICE 5728

CANCELLED  
 26 JAN 2012

Subj: CH-1 PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANUAL, COMDTINST 5728.2 (series)

1. PURPOSE. This Notice publishes a change to the Public Affairs Manual.
2. 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 Notice. Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
4. DISCUSSION. No paper distribution will be made of this Notice. Official distribution will be via the Coast Guard Directives System and an electronic version will be located on the websites located at <http://www.uscg.mil/directives>.
5. PROCEDURE. Enclosure (1) summarizes the changes in the Manual. For personnel who keep a paper copy of the Manual remove/insert the following:

<u>Remove</u>	<u>Insert</u>
Table of Contents	Table of Contents CH-1
None	Chapter 11 Pages 11-1 to 11-10

6. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) were examined in the development of this instruction. This instruction includes preparation of guidance documents that implement, without substantive change, the applicable Commandant Instruction or other Federal agency regulations, procedures, manuals, and other guidance documents. It is categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis and documentation requirements under Categorical Exclusion (33) as published in COMDTINST M16475.1D, Figure 2-1. An Environmental Checklist and Categorical Exclusion Determination (CED) are not required.

DISTRIBUTION – SDL No. 157

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

7. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

K.L. SCHULTZ/s/  
Director of Governmental & Public Affairs

Encl: (1) Summary of Changes to the Public Affairs Manual

**CH-1 TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANUAL, COMDTINST 5728.2 (series)**

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

<b>Table of Contents</b>	
<b>Table of Contents</b>	Updates numbering sequence of Sections

<b>Chapter 11</b>	
<b>Chapter 11</b>	Insert chapter on social media

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## COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION M5728.2D

Subj: PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANUAL

- Ref: (a) The Coast Guard Freedom on Information and Privacy Acts Manual, COMDTINST M5260.3 (series)
- (b) Policy on Coast Guard Use of Internet/Worldwide Web, COMDTINST M5230.56 (series)
- (c) Coast Guard Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series)

1. PURPOSE. This Manual is published to provide instruction and primary policy guidance for the conduct of the public affairs programs for the Coast Guard.
2. ACTION. Area, district, and sector commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commander of deployable operations group, commanding officers of integrated support commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Judge Advocate General and special staff elements at Headquarters shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Manual. Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Public Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5728.2C is cancelled.
4. MAJOR CHANGES. The addition of sections on electronic news outlets, media violations of security zones, news releases in theater, and National Response Plan; and a change to the process for designating a "Coast Guard City." Expansion of sections on: political activities, the naming of cutters and shore facilities, the Coast Guard art program, participation in television shows, and the Fleet Hometown News Release program. Elimination of the section on photo labs. Citing the Marine Corps Drill and Ceremonies Manual as the official reference guide for conducting drills and ceremonies for Coast Guard activities.
5. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Manual and have been determined to be not applicable.

## DISTRIBUTION – SDL No.

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6. **FORMS/REPORTS.** The forms called for in this Manual are available in USCG Adobe Forms on the Standard Workstation or on the Internet: <http://ww.uscg.mil/forms/>, CG Central at <http://cgweb2.comdt.uscg.mil/CGFORMS/Welcome.htm>. The following forms are certificates that may be ordered through the Engineering Logistics Center, Baltimore, MD or the appropriate Office of Primary Responsibility, Commandant (CG-0922), (202) 372-4620: CG-4769: Distinguished Public Service Award Certificate; CG-4769A: Distinguished Public Service Citation; CG-4770: Meritorious Public Service Award Certificate; CG-4770A: Meritorious Public Service Citation; CG-4770: Public Service Commendation Citation; stock number 7530-00-F02-5030; CG-4771: Public Service Commendation; stock number 7530-00-F02-4970; CG-4771A: Public Service Commendation Citation Certificate; stock number 7530-00-F02-4980; CG-4772: Certificate of Merit; stock number 7530-00-F02-4990; CG-4772A: Certificate of Merit Citation (Stationery); stock number 7530-00-F02-5000; CG-4773: Certificate of Appreciation; stock number 7530-00-F02-5010; CG-4773A: Certificate of Appreciation Citation; stock number 7530-00-F02-5020; and CG-5450: Public Service Award Fillers; stock number 7530-01-GF3-2010. Request For Military Aerial Support, form DD-2535, is a Department of Defense form available on the Internet: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/>.

M. E. LANDRY/S/  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard  
Director of Governmental and Public Affairs



**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANUAL**

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**CHAPTER 1. PUBLIC AFFAIRS OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.****A. OBJECTIVES.**

1. Purpose. A strong and viable public affairs program is essential to the Coast Guard's overall success. Effective public education campaigns have reduced our search and rescue workload and reduced the number of unnecessary deaths in recreational boating and the commercial fishing industry. Public awareness has helped the Coast Guard combat drug smugglers, protect the homeland from terrorists, intercept alien migrants, identify poachers in America's fisheries, enhance and guard the nation's marine environment and ensure a safe and efficient maritime transportation system. Informing the public of the services the Coast Guard provides lets them know how their tax dollars are spent. Establishing relationships in communities encourages cooperation with our operations and even leads to joining our ranks – as active duty members, Reservists, Auxiliarists and civilian employees. Without the well-deserved support of the American public, the Coast Guard could not operate and might not even exist.
2. Six Primary Objectives. The six primary objectives of the Coast Guard's Public Affairs Program are:
  - a. Keeping the American public informed about the Coast Guard's ongoing operations and programs, thereby fostering understanding and support for all our missions.
  - b. Making our world a better place to serve and live by taking an active role in community activities and challenges.
  - c. Helping Coast Guard leadership attract, motivate and retain highly professional people to continue our tradition of dedicated quality service to the world.
  - d. Helping save lives by educating and informing the American public, thus reducing accidents and casualties.
  - e. Communicate with target audiences to deter and dissuade illegal activity before it begins.
  - f. Informing elected and public officials of the Coast Guard's role in their community and nation, and by informing members of Congress, ensure continued healthy fiscal support for our service.
3. Program Elements. To achieve these objectives, the Coast Guard's Public Affairs Program is built on three interdependent program elements: media relations, community relations and internal information. There is a need to achieve a successful balance between these vital elements. However, it is through our external communications efforts — press coverage, from media relations, and



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audience outreach, from community relations — that we achieve the most visibility for the Coast Guard.

- a. The primary objective of our Media Relations Program is to place information about Coast Guard operations and programs before the American public, using all available forms of news and public information media. Working with the news media enables us to communicate with the public what we do, why we do it, what we need to do it and how well we do it. (See Chapter 2 for program specifics regarding Media Relations.)
- b. The objective of the Community Relations Program is to reinforce our position as an integral and contributing part of the communities in which we live and serve. This is accomplished at the unit level through participation in civic activities and working with appropriate organizations. Individual Coast Guard members promote or detract from this objective, often without realizing it, every time they interact with another member of their community. (See Chapter 3 for program specifics regarding Community Relations.)
- c. The objective of the Internal Information Program is to keep every member of the Coast Guard family fully informed about ongoing as well as future service operations, policies, programs, accomplishments and challenges so that we may all fully realize and meet the challenges we face. (See Chapter 4 for program specifics regarding Internal Information.)

## B. PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY.

1. Public Information. It is the policy of the Coast Guard to make available to the public all information concerning the activities of the service except that information which is restricted by law. This is to be done in a forthright, expeditious manner. In a nutshell, the rule is “Maximum disclosure with minimum delay.”
2. Command Responsibility. Public affairs is a command responsibility. Commanding officers and officers-in-charge have the authority to release information pertaining to their commands and are responsible for ensuring that their unit’s public affairs program is conducted in accordance with the guidance contained in this Manual.
3. Proactive. The Coast Guard’s Public Affairs Program is active, not passive. We do not wait for the public or media to ask what we are doing. We provide accurate, timely information by the most efficient means possible. All Coast Guard personnel are encouraged to exercise initiative and creativity in the accomplishment of our public affairs missions.
4. Releasing Information. In the Coast Guard, participation in the public affairs program is a “condition of employment.” Each member of the Coast Guard is authorized and encouraged to publicly discuss non-restricted aspects of his or her area of responsibility, using the following guidelines.
  - a. If you do it or are responsible for it, you can talk about it.

- b. If you do not do it or are not responsible for it, don't talk about it. Refer the inquiry to the person or agency that "owns" it.
  - c. If you are uncertain, seek guidance from your command or the appropriate public affairs officer.
5. Withholding Information. Complete guidance on the types of information that must be withheld is contained in Chapter 2 of this Manual. Generally, information should be withheld only if it is:
- a. Classified.
  - b. Specifically required to be withheld by a federal statute, such as the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act.
  - c. A trade secret or commercial or financial information considered privileged or confidential.
  - d. Contained in inter- or intra-agency documents that would not be available by law to a party other than one in litigation with the agency.
  - e. A clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.
  - f. Information which could jeopardize or interfere with a judicial proceeding or law enforcement official or activity.
6. Releasing Bad News. It is in the best interests of the Coast Guard and the American public that information concerning the activities of the service be provided promptly. Embarrassing information or "bad news" should be released with the same care and speed as favorable news. Withholding negative information can compound a problem by creating the appearance of a cover-up. Remember, bad news does not improve with age.
7. Tell The Truth. It is a violation of Coast Guard policy to lie to or mislead any member of the media or public.

### C. PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Commandant. Commandant (CG-0922) is the Coast Guard Public Affairs Officer, responsible for the overall management of the public affairs program, policy and activities.
  - a. The principal responsibilities of Commandant (CG-0922) are described in the Coast Guard Organization Manual, COMDTINST M5400.7 (Series). These duties include advising the Commandant on public affairs aspects and implications of missions, programs and activities of the Coast Guard.

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- b. Helps Headquarters program managers and directorate or office chiefs incorporate the Coast Guard's public affairs objectives into plans and operations.
- c. Advises the Commandant on major media strategies.
- d. Coordinates public affairs plans and guidance when situations are sensitive or of national significance.
- e. Supports and assists District and Area Commanders in the conduct of their public affairs programs.
- f. Commandant (CG-0922) is responsible for administering the Coast Guard's Community Relations Program, including the Coast Guard Band, the Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard and the Coast Guard Art Program.
- g. Produces *Coast Guard* magazine, the service's primary internal information tool. The magazine's staff works with Headquarters program managers to announce and explain changes in policy or procedures, as well as career opportunities and benefits.
- h. Administers the Coast Guard's history program, including the Coast Guard Museum and the Coast Guard Exhibit Center.
- i. Manages Coast Guard participation in television and motion picture productions for the entertainment industry.
- j. Administers the public affairs training program.
- k. Collects, stores and disseminates original Coast Guard imagery – still, video and graphics.
- l. Manage, fund and coordinate activities of the Coast Guard Band and Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard.
- m. Serve as representative to the Department of Defense Public Affairs Working Group.
- n. Serve as representative to Interagency Committee on Public Affairs in Emergencies.
- o. Serve as the force manager for the Public Affairs rating. Manage the Public Affairs Specialist rating including planning, assignments, qualification, and advancement.
- p. Serve as the Public Affairs liaison with the Coast Guard Institute and the Defense Information School to coordinate training development.
- q. Coordinate the Public Affairs Program with field units, provide policy and guidance and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of public affairs

functions at field units.

- r. Serve as liaison to the Fleet Home Town News Center.
  - s. Maintain continuing liaison with all the news media; clear information for release; and answer inquiries from these media and the public.
  - t. Ensure that Public Affairs records are maintained per the provisions of the Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series).
  - u. Support the Commandant (CG-092) Strategic Engagement Plan to raise the visibility of the Coast Guard.
2. Area/District Public Affairs Officers. The Area or District Public Affairs Officers provide public affairs support to Area or District Commanders, serve as spokespersons for the Area or District, and conduct media, internal and community relations programs at the Area and District level. To the extent that resources permit, Area and District PAOs provide public affairs support to all Coast Guard commands located within the geographic boundaries of the Area or District. Office activities must be fluid enough to permit rapid response to unexpected events (oil spills, major SAR, etc.) It is the responsibility of the public affairs officer to manage the office in such a manner and to accomplish the following:
- a. Serve as the Area or District Commander's spokesperson. PAOs cannot be effective in this role if they are uninformed. They must be included in all aspects of Area or District plans and operations. Operational meetings and discussions provide background information the PAO needs to speak on behalf of the Area or District Commander. Collateral duties limit the time available for a PAO to participate in the many meetings and discussions that take place daily in an Area or District office. Therefore, an Area or District PAO's collateral duties should be kept to a minimum.
    - (1) Before releasing sensitive, non-routine information, PAOs should ensure they seek concurrence as needed with their operations and legal offices. However, the PAO's opinion on the release of information should carry equal weight with these other offices, except when the law precludes release. When PAOs believe information is being withheld or bottlenecked, they should seek assistance from their unit commander or the headquarters public affairs office.
    - (2) In order to be effective in their positions as Area or District Public Affairs Officers, all PAOs should consult with Commandant (CG-09225) to obtain the most current pipeline PAO training at the Defense Information School, Fort Meade, Maryland. Whenever possible, this training should be scheduled as pipeline training before reporting into the District public affairs office. Otherwise, PAOs must receive this training as soon as practical following their arrival.

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b. Conduct a media relations program. This is the primary public affairs mission and should account for a majority of a District public affairs office's workload.

- (1) The public affairs officer will conduct proactive media relations to inform the public of significant District operations, events, policies and issues. In addition to serving as spokesperson for the Area or District Commander, the public affairs officer will normally respond to inquiries from the media and the public. A trained public affairs representative will be available at all times to assist and respond in urgent and crisis situations.
- (2) Keep informed of the status of the public affairs program within the District and of public reaction to Coast Guard activities, and advise the District Commander and the Chief of Staff.
- (3) Provide media relations guidance and support to units within the Area or District as necessary.
  - (a) Public affairs staffs must maintain regular contact with the units within their area of responsibility. That contact will be the basis of good working relationships during any response to a crisis or critical incident in which the units are involved.
  - (b) Public affairs staffs shall visit and conduct annual public affairs training at the units within their area of responsibility.
  - (c) Keep copies of all news releases issued by the command. Releases about significant operations or issues should be provided to the Media Relations Branch of Commandant (CG-0922) on a timely basis and also shared with other District and unit PAOs as warranted. News releases shall be made readily available to the media and public as current news or background information.
  - (d) Compile a print and video news clip file of stories about the Coast Guard gathered from local media. The clips should be read or viewed by everyone assigned to the public affairs office, routed to key staff officers, and filed in the appropriate unit file or video library. Clips reflecting significant operations or issues should be sent to Commandant (CG-0922) on a timely basis. If the news story appears on the newspaper's homepage, simply e-mail the URL with a brief description of the story to the designated point of contact in the Media Relations Branch of Commandant (CG-0922). Similarly, video of significant cases should be consolidated and forwarded on a regular basis to Commandant (CG-0922).

c. Conduct a community relations program.

- (1) Maintain a contact list for use in maintaining liaison with regional and state leaders of national organizations including service-related

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organizations such as the Navy League, VFW, American Legion, etc. This should include the title of the point of contact, phone number, address and key notes such as the date of significant recurring events. Use this as a reference when compiling guest lists for official events.

- (2) Maintain a Speakers Bureau. This need not be an elaborate function. The District public affairs office shall maintain the capability to serve as a clearing house for speaker requests, forwarding such requests to the appropriate staff element or command.
  - (3) Respond to public inquiries. Good community relations require that the Coast Guard be responsive to all inquiries from the public about our missions and activities. This may involve generating correspondence to answer particular questions or providing Coast Guard literature. All correspondence with the public should be prepared in accordance with the Coast Guard Correspondence Manual COMDTINST 5216.4 (series).
- d. Assist unit commanders in creating successful internal information programs.
- (1) Areas and Districts are not required to publish a District information bulletin, whether a newspaper or magazine. The decision to produce an area or District information bulletin should be based on whether a publication will meet the goals of the internal information program. A second consideration is whether the publication is the best investment of our limited public affairs resources. District newsletters or magazines should not be published if they primarily provide a showcase for the work of public affairs specialists.
  - (2) A recommended and more effective alternative to the printed District information bulletin is using the District's website. The website can be updated as needed with career and policy information and feature articles.
  - (3) Public affairs specialists are encouraged to contribute timely, well-written articles and color photographs depicting major operations, events and efforts for publication in *Coast Guard* magazine. While this is not a requirement, and while submission is not a guarantee of publication, submission to the magazine is possibly the Area/District's best avenue for showcasing accomplishments within their area of responsibility to the entire Coast Guard family and beyond. Additionally these articles and images should also be posted on their District website.
- e. Provide photo/video support. Coast Guard imagery is a vital communications tool for informing the public and other audiences about Coast Guard missions and operations. Photos and video of significant events should be released to the widest market possible. All photography or video shot by public affairs specialists is considered official and therefore may not be sold under any circumstances for private gain. Likewise all imagery shot by Coast Guard members on Coast Guard cutters, aircraft and facilities is also considered official due to the exclusive nature of the location. Federal law and Coast

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Guard policy prohibit the use of official photographers for unofficial purposes; public affairs specialists may not shoot award ceremonies or other events that do not have intrinsic news or significant historic value. It is considered misappropriation of government funds to use film, film processing or video tapes for personal use.

- (1) Maintain an image library of the Coast Guard ships, boats, aircraft and stations within the PAO's Area or District.
- (2) When possible, reflect diversity in the images you capture (women, minorities, civilians doing their jobs).
- (3) Forward to CG-09221 photos and other visual imagery identified and documented as outlined in Chapter 5 of this manual.

f. Administer the public affairs office.

- (1) Maintain a Unit File. The Unit File shall include a record (typically a file folder) for each unit in the District. The unit record will include copies of news releases made by or about the unit; copies of news clips concerning the unit and a unit fact sheet containing the name of the commanding officer, date the CO assumed command, date the unit was commissioned, number of persons assigned, address, phone number, primary missions, significant historical events involving the unit and an up-to-date photograph of the unit. The unit file shall be updated with each change of command and historical materials forwarded to Commandant (CG-09224).
- (2) Maintain liaison with public affairs officers at other commands, agencies and military services within your AOR.
- (3) Maintain unit public affairs plans and public affairs sections to operation plans and special operation orders.

3. Unit Commanders. Public affairs is a key function of each command. The most important people conducting the public affairs program are commanding officers and officers-in-charge. Their daily interaction with the community and media, and the guidance they provide to personnel assigned to their units, form the basic public perception of the Coast Guard.

- a. Commanding officers are responsible for conducting a unit-level public affairs program that includes media, internal and community relations activities. General requirements of unit PA programs are the same as those of Districts; however, unit commanding officers must determine the extent to which they are able to conduct their own program. The functions listed under Area/District PA programs should be used by unit COs as a guide, not as a requirement.
- b. Because individual commands have the closest association with the communities in which they work and live, a strong community relations

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program at the unit level is a critical element in maintaining the working relationships necessary to perform our missions. Commanding officers must set an example for all members and their families when it comes to community involvement. A full description of community relations activities is found in Chapter 3 and 8.

- c. One of the most important public affairs efforts a local unit can perform is a vital, on-going internal information program. The Coast Guard puts a great deal of responsibility for managing a career on the individual, but that requires the individual member be aware of changes to policies and procedures that affect career opportunities and benefits. Therefore, it is vital that every member of the chain of command PASS THE WORD. If not already in place, unit commanders are encouraged to undertake such internal information efforts as:
    - (1) Developing a plan of the week.
    - (2) Posting a list of recent message traffic, such as ALCOASTS, ALCGENL, ALCGOFF and ALPERSCOM with the subject line or a brief description of the contents.
    - (3) Holding regular all-hands meetings with the unit CMC, the District health benefits advisor, Work-Life staff and others who may be able to answer career and benefit questions.
    - (4) Arrange with the unit ombudsman for family members to have similar meetings with the unit CMC, the District health benefits advisor, Work-Life staff and others who may be able to answer career and benefit questions.
  - d. Commanding officers should avail themselves of the public affairs resources available from their District offices. For example, they should arrange annual public affairs training at their unit from the District public affairs office.
4. Command PAOs. The selection of command PAOs should be based on their knowledge of the Coast Guard, missions of the command, and ability to speak well in public. When assigning a command PAO, unit commanders should remember that the individual assigned would be the person who most often represents the unit, the CO and the Coast Guard to the media and the public.
- a. Because the unit PAO may have several other pressing collateral duties, the individual should be creative and imaginative in finding ways to achieve the media, community and internal information program objectives for the unit. Command PAOs should take every opportunity to identify individuals who may be able to help them with duties, including non-rates on the PA school list, Reservists and Auxiliarists.
  - b. The Defense Information School provides short-term training designed specifically for unit command PAOs, E-5 and above. A traveling Media Relations Workshop is also available. Commandant (CG-09225) can provide



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specific details and class quotas. The District public affairs office can also provide unit public affairs training for command PAOs and watchstanders.

- c. Training and encouraging designated members of boat and aircrews to shoot video of operations and having a pre-established plan for reviewing and distributing newsworthy video quickly to the media is the Unit PAOs best way of ensuring television coverage of unit operations. Additionally, the PAO should not expect to be the sole nor necessarily the primary spokesperson on a case; rather he or she should arrange for media to interview the operators (OpCen controller, coxswain, cutter CO, rescue swimmer, etc.) from the case.
5. Public Affairs Specialists. Public Affairs Specialists (PAs) typically assist Area, District or Headquarters Unit Public Affairs Officers in nearly all aspects of conducting the public affairs program within their areas of responsibility.
    - a. PAs assigned to public affairs detachments provide support to a region as opposed to a specific unit.
    - b. PAs receive entry-level training in public affairs, media relations, electronic news gathering, journalism and photography. Some PAs may receive intermediate or advanced-level training in desktop publishing, Web design, electronic imagery, digital photography, crisis media relations and mass communications.
    - c. Units maintaining PA billets for purposes other than public affairs (training support, etc.) should ensure that personnel assigned there receive the training required for such billets.
  6. Individuals. The cornerstone of the Coast Guard public affairs program is the individual. Active-duty members, Reservists, Auxiliarists and civilian employees interact with the public thousands of times each day. These interactions are opportunities to tell the Coast Guard story, to explain our missions and to support service goals. Because the Coast Guard has direct, daily involvement with the community, our public affairs program relies on the good will generated by every member.
    - a. Individual members also have a responsibility to educate themselves about the Coast Guard and to remain abreast of changes in the service, whether in operations, policy or programs. Well-informed members are more confident, more successful, more resourceful and make the best public representatives of our service.

## CHAPTER 2. MEDIA RELATIONS.

### A. THE COMMANDANT'S MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY.

1. General. Just by the very nature of their jobs, the Coast Guard and the news media need each other. The mass media provide us a valuable service by helping keep our citizens informed of our operations. The media thrive on the type of dramatic news the Coast Guard provides. They need Coast Guard news. The Coast Guard needs an informed public. An ideal combination!
2. What can you release? Just about everything! With few exceptions, the Coast Guard will answer all questions quickly and accurately. You will find more information on the exceptions later in this chapter. In general:
  - a. It is the policy of the Coast Guard to release the names of individuals rescued by the Coast Guard before a case is closed – after that point requests for the names of individuals rescued by the Coast Guard must be submitted under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts. All FOIA requests will be answered as quickly as possible and the Coast Guard will release as much personal information as the law permits under the circumstances.
  - b. Be cautious when dealing with classified information and law enforcement cases.
  - c. Remember that the media are in business to report facts — not to improve the Coast Guard's public image.
  - d. Answer questions accurately, or explain why you won't/can't answer.
  - e. Meet their needs with accurate, understandable and timely information.
3. What should you withhold? You should withhold information that violates a person's privacy, violates security, could hamper law enforcement or could interfere with a judicial proceeding. Further guidance is contained later in this chapter.
4. What you cannot withhold. Sometimes, you know information that might “make us look bad.” This is not justification for withholding it or covering it up — acts that will probably make a bad situation worse. If you are worried about how to handle a “bad news” situation, contact higher authority. Never lie. Never “stonewall.” (You may delay your response, however, while you contact higher authority for guidance.)

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B. RELEASE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

1. Secretary of Homeland Security. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Public Affairs who, through the Office of Public Affairs, is responsible for coordinating and releasing DHS public information, including:
  - a. Releases originating in Washington, D.C. that directly involve the Secretary of Homeland Security.
  - b. Releases on contract awards, grants and grants-in-aid of more than \$1 million or others of any amount that may have significant public or congressional interest or other public value, given the increasing oversight and scrutiny regarding Coast Guard acquisition programs and processes.
  - c. Releases with policy-making implications originated in the field.
2. Commandant (CG-0922). The Headquarters Public Affairs Staff is responsible for coordinating with the Department of Homeland Security releases having national and international interest; for determining whether information should be released at the seat of government or by local staffs; for servicing all national media; and for review and clearance of releases dealing with:
  - a. Subjects of potential controversy among the military services.
  - b. Policy of other federal agencies.
  - c. Public statements on foreign and military policy.
  - d. Statements or information on non-military incidents.
  - e. Information reflecting or implying the degree of success of intelligence efforts, including intelligence efforts in support of the enforcement of laws and treaties.
  - f. Subjects of national interest and those involving more than one district.
  - g. Releases of information on the commissioning, decommissioning, relocation or other significant changes to Coast Guard units will be coordinated by the Office of Congressional Affairs, Commandant (CG-0921) with the respective Congressional offices where the effected assets are located. Do not release any information of this nature to the media before Headquarters notifies the appropriate Congressional representatives.

3. Area, District and Unit Commanders.
  - a. Except for information described above, area, district and unit commanders can release news of activities of their commands without prior approval. When the information falls within the purview of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs or Commandant (CG-0922) as described above, districts and units should contact Commandant (CG-0922) for guidance or assistance.
    - (1) Unit commanders at each level of command must use release authority judiciously. Units should develop a written plan using the guidelines in this chapter for handling media inquiries within the command, covering both on- and off-duty hours. Guidance should cover how to release information, photos and video to the news media and how to arrange media interviews.
    - (2) Coast Guard commands must provide media awareness training to all hands. The training should cover how to notify the media and how to respond to media queries. More in-depth training is available through district public affairs offices.
    - (3) In most cases, unit commanders have the authority to embark media aboard their unit, vessels and aircraft without prior notification to, or approval from, district or Headquarters. Visits by foreign nationals, including journalists, must be cleared through CG-00I and CG-2.
    - (4) All engagement with national media must be coordinated with CG-0922 for DHS OPA clearance.
4. Individuals. Every Coast Guard member has a responsibility to “Represent the Coast Guard.”
  - a. While public affairs is a command responsibility, individuals actually carry out the program. Some are designated as the unit’s public affairs officers. Others meet the media and the public in the course of their duties. The demeanor and attitude of a boarding officer, for example, can have a strong impact on a boater’s or master’s impression of the Coast Guard.
  - b. Unit commanders have a responsibility to give their command members guidance on dealing with the media and representing the Coast Guard. Watchstanders, people who operate at a distance from the unit, team leaders, etc., should understand how the unit commander wants the unit’s public affairs program to run. Guidance should cover releasing information (including photos and video) to the news media, being interviewed by the media, accepting or arranging for public speaking engagements, writing for publication and responding to queries from the general public.

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- c. Your individual participation in public affairs is discussed in more detail in this and other chapters of this manual. See Chapter 3 (Community Relations) and Chapter 4 (Internal Information) for more information.
5. Requirements for everyone who speaks for the Coast Guard.
- a. Know your job. Be able to speak confidently and authoritatively on what your command does — both how and why. Get an understanding of what the news media want from you — Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. Try to look at your operations from a civilian perspective. Before an individual engages the media, answer each of these questions. It is acceptable to get back to the reporter after you've had an opportunity to obtain answers to these questions.
  - b. Personal credibility. Build your reputation as being open, frank and honest. The most successful outcomes result after you have earned the trust and respect of reporters.
  - c. Stick to the facts. Reporters do not expect you to know everything. If you don't know the answer to a question, say, "I don't know, but I can find out for you." Be sure to follow up.
  - d. Don't speculate. Avoid giving your opinion and be wary of hypothetical questions.
  - e. Never use the words "no comment" or similar expressions to the press. The public is so accustomed to hearing those words from people trying to hide the truth that the words themselves have come to denote wrongdoing. Answers such as "That's part of an ongoing investigation" or "I cannot answer that question now, but will provide an answer as soon as one is available" when they apply are much better.
  - f. Never lie to the media or to the public - period.
  - g. Do not promote. While the Coast Guard's public affairs policy is to be assertive in media relations, you must be careful not to advertise or promote the service. Government agencies cannot legally or ethically promote themselves. Whenever you are dealing with the media, you should provide factual information that the public needs to know, not simply "cheerleading" for the service's abilities and achievements. However, we can and must tell our story — aggressively. Citizens will promote us if we've earned their support.

- h. Work to develop ongoing relationships with reporters, editors and producers. Try to understand their jobs, their needs, and help meet those needs. Position yourself as a source of information - on your unit and on important issues. If you have additional subject matter expertise, make sure the local media know it. Have them call you as a resource.
- i. The media's deadline is your deadline. Be knowledgeable, accessible, and responsive.
- j. Tell your story or someone else will. Frame the issue and control the message. Hoping the news media does not learn about an issue or incident is not a viable tactic. Sometimes the news is bad but the story will be told by someone; you're better off if it comes from you. Do not get caught in a stern-chase where someone else's version gets reported first and the Coast Guard spends its time correcting the record.

### C. WHO ARE THE MEDIA AND WHAT DO THEY WANT?

#### 1. Types of media

- a. Wire Services. Wire services, such as Associated Press and Reuters, provide news reports to print and broadcast media 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In all but state capitals and larger U.S. cities, wire service newsgathering is done by local news media and passed "up the wire" to regional offices.
  - (1) Deadlines. Wire services release information to other media constantly, as the news becomes available. The news on the wire services goes quickly to all media at the same time. Also, the wires can pass editorial notes such as advance notice of news conference times, photo opportunities, whom to contact for more information, etc.
- b. Television. Television remains a popular source of information today. Its influence is based on fast-paced reporting and its dramatic use of visuals to depict stories. Requests for video "action footage" from both TV news and production companies are common. A Coast Guard story accompanied by 30 seconds of video footage, in any format, is almost guaranteed exposure if there is any news value. You don't have to be a professional to shoot video for television, and most television stations can use almost any video format.

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- (1) **Deadlines.** While cable news channels run on a continuous basis, local TV news concentrates on the scheduled news programs. Stations like to put a reporter on scene and perhaps get video from the event itself. Video must be edited and stories written prior to the newscast, except for the “live” coverage of big events. As a result, television reporters require early notice of a news event if they are going to get it “in the can” before news time. If you are flexible in scheduling an event for TV coverage, you can check with an assignment editor for a preferred time. You may find that you get better response from TV early in the day, before the midday rush of competing events.
  - (2) **Inexpensive, modern equipment** has given television more mobility, allowing live feeds from remote locations. Because it concentrates on visual communications, television is best suited to fast-breaking, action stories — perfect for Coast Guard activities. Operations permitting, television camera crews may be taken aboard Coast Guard vessels and aircraft to record operations. When government-owned equipment is available at your unit, take every opportunity to videotape the Coast Guard in action, making the tape available for duplication by television stations as quickly as possible (but don’t play favorites — give all stations a chance at the tape). Either make copies of the tape for all local stations, or allow them to copy the original or a first-generation copy. The district public affairs staff can help arrange to get tape to the media. When a case is particularly newsworthy, television stations will broadcast still photos. See Paragraph 2.F.9. on release rules for law enforcement cases.
  - (3) **File footage.** Tape of regular operations may also be used to illustrate stories when no actual video coverage of a case is available. Units should gather video footage of routine operations, as well as newsworthy events, and make it available to your local stations and district PAO.
- c. **Radio.** Radio covers events briefly but immediately and generally for larger audiences. Because so many people rely on the broadcast media for their news, it is a prime target for Coast Guard information.
- (1) **Deadlines.** Radio stations usually cover major breaking news live the moment they get the news — if only for a few seconds. You can usually call or email news to a radio station at any time. However, remember that many small stations have only one news reporter working at a time. If you call during the news program, the reporter will be on the air and unable to take your call. Plan ahead.

- (2) Contact with radio reporters is often by telephone; however, reporters often ask for recorded interviews. At times, Coast Guard personnel are interviewed at the unit or on the telephone. One way to almost guarantee air-time with a dramatic interview is to set up a cutter-to-shore link via radio during a specified time. Your area or district public affairs office can arrange for the media to contact your ship through a marine operator or government facility.
  - (3) Most local radio news programs subscribe to one of the many networks, receiving and supplying hard news and feature “feeds.” Networks usually rely on feeds from affiliates, but may contact you for “actualities” (recorded interviews).
  - (4) Community-service programs aired on both radio and television offer a good outlet for Coast Guard information. These range from brief public service announcements to full-scale talk and call-in shows. Coast Guard missions — especially our public safety education and community service programs — are very attractive to producers of these shows.
- d. Newspapers. At daily papers, the city editor directs a staff of reporters and photographers to cover news. A few reporters cover “beats” — they regularly report on the activities of police, fire, maritime news, etc. General assignment reporters cover whatever the city editor assigns, such as finding a local angle to a national wire story. The general assignment reporter often has no background in Coast Guard or maritime news and requires some extra attention and help.
- (1) Deadlines. When working with a reporter on a daily paper, be mindful of the reporter’s deadlines. Much of an afternoon paper is actually written the previous day, but they will have several editions with deadlines in the morning or early afternoon. Most morning paper reporters work a later shift and their deadlines are in the evening. Remember, if a reporter doesn’t get your facts before his deadline, your facts don’t get into the paper. If you are scheduling an event for coverage by morning and afternoon paper, the best time is late morning to early afternoon.
  - (2) Because newspapers devote more print space to stories than broadcast media devote airtime, you can expect a newspaper reporter’s interview to take much longer than those of other media. In an area with several print outlets, you may start by e-mailing a press release and then making follow-up phone calls, starting with the wire services.



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- (3) Weekly newspapers generally concentrate on community news. Because they have small staffs, they like news releases they can publish without extensive revision. While a release to a small weekly paper may not reach as many people as one printed in a major daily, it has a better chance of publication. Many weeklies publish on Thursdays. This means their deadline is Wednesday, but they prefer getting your releases well in advance.
  - (4) All newspapers want photos of major news stories. Help them when possible by putting their photographers onto Coast Guard vessels or aircraft or by offering them official photos. High resolution digital photos are very desirable.
- e. Magazines. Magazines offer the Coast Guard PAO and writer several benefits, including access to specific readers — “vertical markets.” Since magazines cater to almost every subject and interest in America, writers (including Coast Guard members) can publish a well-written piece on almost any subject. Magazines cover subjects in far greater depth than newspapers or the broadcast media. They also stay “on the shelf” longer — readers browse or study them for a month or more and often pass them on to other readers.
- (1) Deadlines. Magazine deadlines are usually far in advance of the publication date, often as much as two months. If you have an item that you want to see published in a particular month’s edition, check with the publication to be sure you submit it in time.
- f. “Reality” Television and Motion Picture Production Companies. These are shows that feature real-life drama, using actual events such as rescues. Although they use actual events, they are not considered news outlets. As a result, the guidelines for releasing information to reality television programs, as well as documentary and motion picture production companies, are different than the policies covering regular news media. Guidance for dealing with television and movie producers is contained in chapter 9 of this manual.
- g. Foreign Media.
- (1) During normal operations, we give reporters from foreign media the same cooperation as domestic reporters with one exception – domestic media have priority if it truly comes down to accommodating one at the expense of another. You must gain advance approval from the Office of International Affairs (CG-00I) and the Assistant Commandant for Intelligence and Criminal Investigations Commandant (CG-2) before a reporter from a foreign outlet can board a Coast Guard aircraft, vessel or installation. Check first to see if the operational unit can support the request before moving forward with the vetting request.

- (2) If a foreign media outlet wants to cover your unit or operation in a feature story or asks for general information on the Coast Guard, contact Commandant (CG-0922) for guidance. Units are required to comply with vetting procedures for foreign national visits established by Commandant (CG-00I) and Commandant (CG-2).
- h. The Internet and the Intranet.
- (1) Podcasts. A podcast is a multimedia file distributed over the Internet using syndication feeds, for playback on mobile devices and personal computers. Coast Guard personnel may participate in podcasts if the requesting Web site pertains to news-gathering activities; if the Web site does not represent a special interest group, blog or other entity with an agenda-setting advocacy role; and if Coast Guard resources are available to support the request. Requests for podcasts should be treated in the same manner as other news media requests.
  - (2) Blogs. Much debate in media circles focuses on the role of bloggers and whether they should be considered journalists. What makes a journalist a journalist is whether he or she is gathering news for dissemination to the public, not the method or medium used to publish. If a blogger or web-only outlet approaches your unit with a request for an interview or information you should look at the site to determine if it is a “news dissemination” site. If in doubt, contact your district PAO or Commandant (CG-0922).
  - (3) Reporters that cover the Coast Guard will check your home page frequently for items of interest. District public affairs offices and many individual units maintain a web presence with current news releases.
  - (4) Information you post on the web must comply with all of the guidance on proper release outlined in this chapter, including security, accuracy, policy and propriety. An improper release of personal information on the Internet, for example, could have very serious consequences for the individual whose privacy was invaded because of the world-wide audience, as well as penalties or sanctions for the individual who released the information.
  - (5) If your unit supports a web page, remember that it must not represent or appear to represent an endorsement or advertisement for any commercial product or activity. You should be especially careful when establishing “links.” While a link to your city’s web site may help orient newly arriving crewmembers, a link to the Chamber of Commerce provides a list of commercial outlets. This might constitute an unfair endorsement of a product or business, because the Chamber of Commerce’ page lists only the names of member businesses and companies. The same may be

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true of a link to your local tourism board. Remember, the Coast Guard cannot appear to endorse a commercial enterprise.

2. What the media want. All reporters want clear, concise, factual, well-reasoned and presented answers — free of “hype” and bureaucratic “spin.” Provide your information that way and you’ll achieve your information goals. Generally news releases fall into one of the following three categories:
  - a. Hard News, also called breaking news — an event of urgent news interest, such as a SAR or pollution case. You should release all available, releasable facts quickly. Use the telephone or send a quick email. Do not wait until the case is over or until you have written a complete news release.
    - (1) Before contacting any media, make sure you can answer the most of the following: Who? What? When? Where? Why? or How? What you tell the media up front will help them plan how they will cover the news. You may not know the names of any of the individuals involved, but you could say how many. You may not know exactly what is wrong, but you know that someone has declared a mayday. You may not know an exact latitude and longitude, but you can tell the media the approximate area where your units are responding.
    - (2) Do not wait for the case to end before contacting the media. If you wait, you will miss the opportunity for the media to cover the story live. In many metropolitan areas for example, the media will use their traffic helicopters to cover breaking news events.
  - b. Feature Stories deal with a subject in more depth or with more human interest than hard news. For example, a newspaper may run a hard news story today on a SAR case, followed next week by a feature on how the Coast Guard plans searches, or how our people felt about rescuing the survivors. Generally reporters come up with their own story ideas, but don’t hesitate to offer ideas of your own, just be sure to offer the same ideas to all the media outlets in your area. There may be interesting people or unusual activities at your unit that the media would cover if they knew about them. Use your imagination. However, be careful not to share one reporter’s feature story idea with another.
  - c. Background Information is intended to give reporters knowledge they need to understand and report on a current story. Remember, many reporters do not know a great deal about the Coast Guard or our missions. Often simply a fact sheet, background information is issued along with other information or at an event. For example: you can enclose background information on Coast Guard helicopters or boats with your release on a future SAR demonstration; a handout explaining Marine Boards of Investigation will help reporters understand the proceedings.

- (1) Providing background information is different from something people in the news media call “speaking on background.” “Speaking on background” generally refers to the practice of giving information anonymously or without the information being attributed to you. Remember, however, that the reporter is under no obligation to keep your name out of the story and could very well be compelled by a court to disclose anonymous sources. Coast Guard policy is that everything said by our spokespeople will be on the record. We do not leak information, and anyone speaking on behalf of the Coast Guard should fully identify himself or herself to the media and the public.

#### D. HOW WE PROVIDE THE MEDIA OUR STORY

1. Official Spokesperson. Any member of the Coast Guard may be called upon to speak to the media. In the Coast Guard, participation in the public affairs program is a “condition of employment.”
2. Command responsibility. Public affairs is a command responsibility. Commanding officers and officers-in-charge have the authority to release information pertaining to their commands and are responsible for ensuring that their unit’s public affairs programs are conducted in accordance with the guidance contained in this manual.
3. Personal responsibility. Each member of the Coast Guard is authorized and encouraged to publicly discuss non-restricted aspects of his or her area of responsibility, using the following guidelines.
  - a. If you do it or are responsible for something, you can talk about it.
  - b. If you don’t do it or are not responsible for something, don’t talk about it.
  - c. If you are uncertain, seek guidance from your command or the appropriate public affairs officer.
4. Training. Because any member of the command may be called upon to talk to the media and deal with the public, all commands must provide regular public affairs training to their personnel. Your district public affairs office can assist you with this training.
5. Best Spokesperson. There will be times when the unit commander is the best spokesperson. While every member of the service should be trained to deal with the media, there will be situations, such as accidents involving Coast Guard units, when the best spokesman will be the most senior member. Remember, rank can carry added credibility. During such times, the unit commander will be extremely

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busy, but a few minutes spent with reporters will go a long way toward shaping how the media and the public interpret events.

### 6. Guidelines for talking to the press.

- a. Before contacting the media, get your facts in order. This is easily accomplished by writing a fact sheet of information from the watchstander or the case file. Be sure to update your fact sheet as new information becomes available. There will be times when the media hears about a case by monitoring Coast Guard frequencies on a scanner. If you need time to gather information, tell the journalist; he or she will wait.
- b. Remember that the news media are not your publicity agents. They have specific agendas and assignments and editorial requirements. You won't like everything they do. However, if you're dealing with responsible journalists, they will strive to be evenhanded.
- c. Give only the facts. Do not speculate, inject personal opinion or guess. Do not exaggerate.
- d. Always talk "on the record." There really is no such thing as "off the record." A journalist may use everything you say before, during and after an interview. Never say anything to a journalist that you wouldn't want your CO to see in the newspaper or hear on television.
- e. Do not discuss anything that does not pertain directly to the case. Do not discuss policy, regional or national issues. Refer journalists to the proper public affairs office for inquiries beyond your area of responsibility.
- f. Do not use the phrase "no comment." There are only three acceptable answers to any question:
  - (1) The answer. Straightforward, factual. Explanatory, if appropriate.
  - (2) "I don't know, but I'll find out the answer and get back to you promptly." Then do it.
  - (3) "I know, but I can't tell you because ..." Then explain with statements such as "The investigation is on going" or "That touches on classified issues that I will not discuss."
- g. Always speak in good taste; avoid profanity or slang.
- h. Don't allow the journalist to put words in your mouth. If the reporter describes something incorrectly, make sure you describe it properly. Do not accept terminology with which you don't agree. Explain the correct terminology and use it.
- i. Ask for clarification of vague questions.

- j. Use layman's terms, not jargon or acronyms.
  - k. Work with reporters to resolve errors in their stories.
  - l. Always be courteous, polite and professional. Don't let a rude journalist shake you. Answer the question posed; don't show anger or sarcasm.
  - m. Don't over- or under-estimate a reporter's knowledge. Simply give the facts.
  - n. Give credit to other units and agencies involved, but do not speak on their behalf. Stress teamwork where applicable.
  - o. Do not make promises. Never say something like, "If they're out there, we'll find them."
7. Allowing news media on board your unit. It can be hard for the media to tell the Coast Guard's story in depth, accurately and with compelling visual images without allowing them aboard your station, boat, cutter or aircraft. Inviting media aboard is usually a very good idea, as long as safety and security are not at risk.
- a. In most cases, unit commanders have the authority to embark local, national and international media aboard an asset, aviation or surface unit without notifying or clearing through district or Headquarters. The following exceptions apply:
    - (1) Embarking media aboard vessels and aircraft for counter-narcotics and AMIO patrols.
    - (2) Embarking foreign media.
    - (3) Where the Coast Guard Air Operations Manual, COMDTINST M3710.1 (series) states otherwise.
    - (4) Reality TV shows, documentaries and motion pictures are not news media. Refer these requests to your district public affairs office or directly to the Coast Guard Motion Picture and Television Liaison Office.
  - b. Unit commanders are neither prohibited from, nor required to, host any media representative and should always take into account their operational requirements and potential for raising the visibility of the Coast Guard when considering any request. Public affairs staff in the district, area and headquarters offices are always ready to assist with advice and will help verify media credentials for the commanding officer.

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- c. Be sure to check identification before allowing media aboard. In all cases, ask to see media credentials (usually a press ID issued by the city or county police) and driver's license.
  - (1) Breaking news/allowing media aboard your shore unit: When hoards of media representatives suddenly show up at your unit because boats or aircraft are returning from a SAR case, for instance, you will probably not have time to check credentials beyond press IDs and drivers' licenses. Have a media escort available and establish an area within which press must remain unless escorted. Designate a spokesperson for the media.
  - (2) Feature story requests: With these you will have time to verify credentials further, and should make the effort to do so. For TV news shows or newspapers/magazines, ask for a letter on letterhead from the producer or editor stating the request (story idea, dates, units they want access to) and providing the reporters' and photographers' names. Call the POC stated in the letter to ensure it is legitimate. If the news outlet is not local or is one that you are unfamiliar with, ask your district public affairs shop for help.
  - (3) Freelance writers and photographers must be able to show that an established publication plans to publish their work. They must also be able to show examples of previously published works. Book authors must provide a letter from a prospective publisher. Freelancers and writers won't necessarily have media IDs but you should check their driver's license to verify identity.
8. Photographs and Video. Media, especially television, thrive on good images to help tell the story. A few seconds of video or a strong action photo could move your news to the top of the program or onto page 1. Guidance on official Coast Guard photography and video is contained in Chapter 5 of this Manual.
9. Releasing hard news.
  - a. When you release information concerning a hard news event, do the best you can to make sure it reaches all of the local media. Do not play favorites. It will help to keep a log of what information you've released, and to what media. This way, you can quickly correct any incorrect information you may release. The media will not hold mistakes against you if you release incorrect information — unless you forget to call them back with corrections!

- (1) Telephone releases. Most of the time, you will release information by calling the media directly. If a story generates a great deal of interest, you should expect and plan for a large volume of return phone calls from the media. Try to identify a telephone that reporters can call without disturbing the watchstanders or the operations controllers. Give the media that number to call for updates.
  - (2) When you talk to a reporter on the telephone, always assume that your words are being recorded. Never say anything you wouldn't want to see in print or hear on the radio or television; there is no such thing as "off the record." The reporter does not have to ask your permission to record your words or even tell you that he is recording you. There probably won't be a "beep" on the line. He does, however, have to notify you in advance if he intends to broadcast your voice. Be careful of implied notification. For example, the reporter may say, "I'm Joe Blow, a reporter from radio station WQQQ. I understand there was an accident in the harbor." You imply consent to be recorded when you say, "Hi, Joe," and continue to talk rather than ending the conversation.
- b. Prepare an initial press release with basic information and post it online. You can then refer reporters to that release and provide amplifying information as needed.
10. Interviews. For many cases, the broadcast reporters will want to tape an interview with someone speaking for the Coast Guard. Radio reporters will often tape the interview over the telephone. Television reporters will normally come to your unit to tape the interview in person but will tape (or go live) over the phone if the person being interviewed is out of the local area – such as being underway on a cutter.
- a. Establish ground rules before the interview. Feel free to specify such things as time limits, subjects you'd like to address, subjects which are off limits, etc. It's also a good time to find out how much the reporter knows about the Coast Guard, so you can fill in the gaps. Remember, however, that from the moment you meet the reporter, anything you say may be quoted.
  - b. Present a sharp, professional appearance. Speak clearly but not too slowly. Stand or sit up straight. Wear your uniform well. Concentrate on the interviewer and not the camera or microphone; think of it as a conversation with the reporter.



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- c. Broadcast reporters want short, to-the-point answers. Only brief, to-the-point statements get on the air. The reason is simple; stories are covered in only a few seconds of air time. Long sentences, or lengthy explanations taking several sentences, do not fit the format. The tape editor will have to delete part of your quote, possibly changing the meaning. You can make a complex subject easier to cover briefly by discussing in advance the questions and answers. Ask up front whether you can retape answers for clarity or brevity. Assemble your thoughts in advance: what points you want to cover, what subjects you should not discuss, what direction you'd like to lead the interview.
  - d. Use the pause. You don't have to start talking as soon as the reporter finishes asking the question. Take a second or two to formulate your answer before you start speaking. You'll avoid the "uhs" and "duhs" if you do.
  - e. Stop talking when you've finished your answer. A common broadcast trick is to hold the mike in front of you for a few seconds after you've stopped talking, hoping you'll feel obligated to expand on your last comments. If you're done with a question, wait for the next one or ask, "Is that all?"
11. Printed releases. News release format is not nearly as important as content, but you should try to give the editor/news director a write up that is easy to work with. A grossly improper format may convince them your release will take too much time to fix. Examples of well-formatted news releases can be found on the headquarters news site, [www.uscg.mil/news](http://www.uscg.mil/news). A few tips to avoid common problems:
- a. The release should clearly show the date, the name of the unit releasing it, a name of a person to contact for more information and the best telephone number to reach that person.
  - b. Space down the page about two or three inches before you begin typing the news. This will give the editor space for notes to reporters or typesetters.
  - c. Type information the way it will end up in print — in capital and lower-case letters. This includes the names of people and ships. (Does MACDONALD spell his name MacDonald or Macdonald? The editor can't tell from an all-caps press releases.)
  - d. Write in plain, American English, with short sentences and understandable words. Answer the questions, "Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How?," in the first sentence, only if they really belong there. The lead paragraph should tell the gist of the story, with the following paragraphs expanding on the lead. Translate technical jargon and officialese into English before you send out a release.

- e. Because you will probably be talking on the phone with the media throughout the case, you won't have to write a new release every time something happens in the case. However, you should write a news release at the end of your watch recapping what has happened so that the on-coming watchstander has something to give the media when they call for additional updates.
  - f. It is the policy of the Coast Guard that only named, attributed sources appear in news releases. The use of anonymous sources in Coast Guard news release is prohibited.
12. News briefings. News briefings are a special type of interview that places an especially knowledgeable Coast Guard spokesperson in front of a large group of reporters at the same time to talk about a specific purpose. The primary purpose of a news briefing is to release information that cannot be released by conventional means (in writing or in private interviews). For example, when the best spokesperson can devote only a brief period of time to the media (such as the On-Scene Coordinator during a spill); during a legal proceeding; or when the spokesperson will need aids such as charts and diagrams to explain the news.
- a. Briefings will require some preparation. You may wish to have a fact sheet available for reporters. Help the spokesperson prepare by developing a list of anticipated questions. The spokesperson should also practice handling questions with a mock briefing prior to the real event.
  - b. Select a suitable place to hold the briefing. While the dock may make a good place for an interview, there may be too much background noise for all reporters to hear the speaker. If the briefing will be held inside, select an area large enough to accommodate all the reporters as well as their equipment, but with few distractions from or to normal business of the unit. Make sure there are enough electrical outlets for the reporters cameras and recorders.
  - c. Be sure to invite all interested media to a news briefing. One way to do this is to ask the local wire service to post the briefing in their day book.
  - d. The public affairs officer will normally open the news briefing with a brief summary of past events, the most recent information available and perhaps some background information on the mission area. Common sense will dictate the subject matter. The PAO will then introduce the primary spokesperson. The PAO should also take note of any questions that the spokesperson promised would be researched more extensively, providing answers as soon as possible after the news briefing.
  - e. After the formal news briefing ends, many reporters will hang on, looking for private interviews or a slightly different slant on the story. Others will head directly to telephones and a few will head out on other assignments. The PAO should try to help where possible, despite the apparent confusion.

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- f. It's seldom appropriate to ask reporters to submit questions in advance. A possible exception is when the subject is highly technical and answers require considerable research. When you ask for questions in advance, you should make answers available — in writing — to all reporters before the formal newsbriefing begins.
13. While underway. Even at sea, you can release news via message traffic through your area or district public affairs office. Contact the district public affairs office for assistance on transmitting supporting imagery, or you can send imagery ashore if there is a helicopter or boat heading that way. The district public affairs office will help you coordinate clearance and dissemination of these materials.
14. Pooling the News. Unit commanders, in most cases have the authority to carry members of the media aboard vessels and aircraft to cover news stories. However, some events will generate so much interest that requests from the media will exceed the number of individuals you can accommodate. In those cases you may ask the media to pool their coverage. A pool consists of reporters, photographers and cameramen from each different type of media who agree to share their materials with all media present when they return from the scene. Pooling, although rarely welcome by the media, is preferable to a first-come, first-served method or to no system at all. A main concern is to ensure that the pooling arrangement is equitable and impartial.
- a. In those. In pooled coverage, it is understood that the “pool” representatives must share with all other media in their category. The categories include:
- (1) Wire service (or print media) reporter.
  - (2) National newspaper reporter.
  - (3) Still photographer.
  - (4) Film or videotape cameraperson.
  - (5) Radio voice reporter.
  - (6) TV reporter.
  - (7) Local newspaper reporter.
  - (8) News magazine correspondent.
  - (9) Internet News Organizations (INO).
- b. The preferred course of action in pooling is to inform media representatives of the available space allocation and let them decide who will fill those spaces.
- c. If they cannot agree, the public affairs officer can make the decision. Priorities among the media categories will vary with the circumstances of each news event. It may depend, for example, on whether the story is primarily visual, or whether it is basically an oral statement.

- d. If the news event is a continuing one, or has different aspects occurring at different times, it is customary to rotate the pool representatives, giving turns to as many as possible so that each may witness some part of it.
- e. Members of the media may not accompany boarding teams onto suspect vessels or any private property. The media may film or shoot images from a Coast Guard vessel or public area, but they should not be permitted to enter private vessels or property.

#### 15. Release of Feature or Other Types of News.

- a. Advance releases notify the media of up-coming events, such as changes of command or open houses. An advance release is usually also an invitation for the media to attend the event. Mark the release with the date you release it, not a date in history, or the date you'd like it published. Use suggested "Hold for release" dates only when a situation demands them.
  - (1) If you have a good reason, you can include on the advance release a note to the editor/news director to "Hold for release until (date)." The media are under no obligation to wait until that date before they publish the material. Remember that each editor is under pressure to be first on the street with a story, so it's a good bet that someone will run it prematurely. If you have a good reason why they should not publish the information, be sure to include the reason in your editor's note.
  - (2) You may "shotgun" news releases via email to all media in your area of responsibility as long as you are prudent and do not abuse the practice. Reporters can easily mark your emails as "spam" if they decide it has no news value.
- b. Media embarks. Another way to "sell" a feature story to the media is to invite them to a demonstration. For example, you might hold a morning session to demonstrate how the Coast Guard plans or coordinates a search and then take the reporters out on a vessel. You might arrange for a group of reporters to watch rescue swimmers training. Remember, in most cases, unit commanders have the authority to put reporters on Coast Guard vessels and aircraft. With a little imagination, you can show reporters the whole range of Coast Guard missions. Again, however, do not play favorites with one reporter or news outlet.

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- c. Editorial boards. This is an informal meeting, usually held at a newspaper or television station, between the unit commander and the senior editors and reporters. Although the media outlet acts as host, it is okay to suggest an editorial board to them. This is an opportunity for the unit commander to meet the media, educate them on the Coast Guard and discuss issues of mutual interest.
  - d. Exclusive releases. At times, reporters will ask for an “exclusive” on a story idea. An “exclusive” gives one reporter sole access to information while other reporters are denied access until the story is published or broadcast. Since withholding releasable information is strictly against policy, the Coast Guard does not grant “exclusives.”
    - (1) You can — and should — cooperate with reporters by not disclosing their original story ideas to other reporters. It is considered unethical to give a reporter’s story idea to a competitor — similar to disclosing an inventor’s trade secrets. Don’t do it.
    - (2) You cannot grant exclusive use of the information or remove it from the public domain. While you may agree not to disclose the original story idea, you must cooperate with any other reporters who by chance come up with the same or similar ideas.
    - (3) “Hard news” does not qualify for any such protection, only feature stories. For example, a reporter cannot claim an event such as a SAR case or pollution incident to be an original story idea, even when the reporter breaks the story. You must make a general release on a breaking case.
  - e. News conferences. While a news briefing is limited to a certain topic or case, reporters at a news conference can ask questions on any subject they want. Rarely will any Coast Guard spokesman, other than the Commandant or his flag officer or senior executive designee, hold a news conference.
16. Fleet Hometown News Program. The Fleet Hometown News Program generates public awareness of the accomplishments of Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard personnel by distributing news releases and photographs to the hometown news media of individual service members. Hometown news media include but are not limited to newspapers, radio and television stations, and college/university alumni publications throughout the United States and its territories and their respective websites. The FHTN program not only builds the morale of our sea service personnel, but also creates public support and understanding of the missions of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.
- a. Each year, the FHTN program distributes hundreds of thousands of news release to news media nationwide, profiling Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast

Guard men and women to their families, neighbors, and friends back home. Each news release form will generate an average of five news releases. Releases come in the form of short, roster stories that apply to all individuals in a unit (hold file stories), short stories that apply to individuals only (reenlistments, promotions, awards), and full-length photo-feature stories highlighting individuals within a command.

- b. Although FHTN releases emphasize the accomplishments and activities of the individual, use of the program is an exceptional way to educate the American public about a ship or unit deployment, operation, exercise and/or volunteerism.
- c. A hold file is a collection of FHTN program release forms on individuals in a unit; the file is held in an active status at the headquarters used to generate FHTN releases under the following circumstances.
- d. Any unit or detachment deployed for 45 days or more or deployed for a high-visibility event may establish a hold file. The file should be established in writing within 60 days prior to the scheduled deployment date and be verified in writing at least every 60 days throughout the deployment. The hold file maintained at FHTN will become inactive 60 days after a unit's return from deployment but will be kept on file indefinitely for quick activation for surging units.
- e. At a minimum, three news stories will be automatically distributed during a deployment: an initial deployment story, mid-deployment story, and an end-of-deployment story. With an active hold file maintained at FHTN, commands can submit master roster stories periodically via the chain of command that can be applied to every individual news release form in the hold file. Individual stories also can be written about personal accomplishments. An up-to-date and active hold file allows a command to take advantage of noteworthy events as they happen.
- f. It is imperative that FHTN hold files are verified periodically with service members prior to the submission of stories. Personal information on forms may change, and it is an embarrassment to the individual and the service if a release is sent where significant changes have occurred (i.e., parents have divorced, are deceased, member divorced from spouse, deceased spouse).
- g. Policy and Procedures. Timely submission of news release forms and the 60-day verification of hold files are required elements in ensuring accurate information is delivered to the news media. The number one element for a successful FHTN program is the active involvement of individual unit commanding officers and officers-in-charge.

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- h. All hometown news releases should be forwarded through FHTN with the following exceptions:
  - (1) Material prepared by recruit training commands concerning special recruit units may be forwarded for release directly to the recruiting activity that enlisted the unit.
  - (2) Information concerning a member whose hometown is in the immediate geographic area of the command (generally within 50 miles) may be marketed directly to local news by the local public affairs office.
  - (3) Information deemed appropriate may be approved for release to any news media making requests for information on specific individuals by that individual's chain of command, subject to the media relations guidance found elsewhere in this Manual.
- i. Fleet Hometown News Program release forms are considered For Official Use Only and may not be used for any other purpose. With the exception of hold files, all forms held by FHTN are destroyed 90 days after news releases are distributed.
- j. Commands may duplicate blank FHTN release forms as required. Forms may be downloaded from the Internet.
- k. Forms filled out by individuals who do not want to participate in the FHTN program should not be forwarded. The forms should be clearly marked Do Not Release and maintained in the command's duplicate FHTN file.
- l. Zip codes are critical in determining where FHTN sends news release. The number of news releases each form generates is dependent upon the correct zip codes in the addresses of family members, schools, etc. A wrong or missing zip code can result in news releases being mailed to the wrong news media or the wrong hometown.
- m. Commands should designate a responsible person to administer their FHTN program and establish a system of close liaison between the executive officer, command senior enlisted person, collateral duty public affairs officer, and personnel records section to promote awareness of activities and accomplishments of individuals within the command. FHTN program submissions should be a routine part of all command check-in and check-out procedures, award presentations, reenlistments, advancements, etc.
- n. In the event of a member's death, injury, transfer or discharge, inform FHTN by the fastest means possible to ensure a release is not sent on an individual who is no longer with the unit. Promptly notify FHTN of any other changes in

the status of an individual that may affect a release, such as arrest, divorce, change of address, death or divorce of parents, etc.

- o. Photographs. Individuals should be clearly identifiable and prominently featured, and must meet acceptable grooming standards.
  - (1) Digital imagery to accompany the biographical forms may be sent electronically to FHTN via e-mail at [thtn@navy.mil](mailto:thtn@navy.mil) or on a disk and mailed if there are a significant number of photos. Imagery should be 5 X 7, 300 DPI.
  - (2) Hard copy photographs must be a good quality black-and-white or color image. Prints should be labeled with the command UIC and the SNM's name on the back of the photograph.
17. Reserve personnel. FHTN releases on reservists are processed in the same manner as active duty members.
18. Point of Contact. FHTN forms and news release material should be mailed to Director, Fleet Hometown News Program, 9420 Third Ave., Ste. 100, Norfolk, VA 23511-2125; fax, (757) 445-7782. Message stories, updates and casualty reports may be faxed to (757) 445-0334 or (757) 444-7931. For answers to questions, call: (757) 444-4199 ext. 343.

#### E. RESTRICTIONS ON RELEASING INFORMATION.

1. General. As a spokesperson for the Coast Guard, you have very broad authority to release information about the service's missions and operations. However, you must be familiar with the following restrictions on information that shall not be released. If you still have questions after reading this section, contact your district public affairs office. Public affairs officers should consult with the Freedom of Information/Privacy Act officer when necessary.
2. S.A.P.P. S.A.P.P. is a helpful acronym that stands for Security, Accuracy, Policy and Propriety.
  - a. Obviously releasing information that violates Coast Guard SECURITY policies is prohibited.
  - b. All information released by Coast Guard personnel must be verified for ACCURACY prior to release. Stick to the facts and avoid speculation.
  - c. No information released by Coast Guard personnel should violate service or command POLICY. For example, certain personal information about members may not be released because it would violate the member's privacy.



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- d. All information released by Coast Guard personnel will meet acceptable standards of PROPRIETY.
3. Libel and Slander. All official news releases and correspondence from the Coast Guard should be free of libel and slander. Libel is untrue or defamatory information that is written, printed or broadcast, and slander is spoken defamation. Since libel and slander are state (not federal) laws, the definitions vary by state. In general, both are injurious to a person, company or organization's reputation. Consult a judge advocate or other Coast Guard counsel for more precise definitions.
    - a. There are several possible defenses for libel, but only one is complete and unconditional: that the stated facts are probably true. The absence of malice or ill intent is not always a consideration.
    - b. Individual Coast Guard members, their commanding officers, the Commandant and the Secretary of Homeland Security may be named personally as defendants in civil lawsuit for libel or slander. The Coast Guard will not furnish defendants with legal counsel in a suit, nor will it pay fines or damages. The responsibility rests with the individuals.
    - c. A great risk for injuring a reputation exists when making releases about vessel collisions, spills, boating accidents or other damage-causing incidents. Be careful not to imply fault. For example, if you say, "The motor vessel Punky collided with the tug" you've implied that Punky rammed the tug. If you say, "The motor vessel Punky and a tug collided" you have not laid the blame on either.
  4. Privacy and Privilege. The Privacy Act protects individuals from unwarranted invasions of privacy through release of certain types of information. The Freedom of Information Act provides the American public with access to government records which are not critical to national security or that should otherwise be withheld. Release of an individual's personally identifiable information without the individual's consent may violate the Privacy Act and/or Freedom of Information Act (or other law). When in doubt, ask your district public affairs office or FOIA/Privacy Act officer. The Coast Guard Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts Manual, COMDTINST M5260.3, gives detailed guidance.
    - a. You must not use service records or other personnel records as sources of information unless you first have permission from the individual concerned. The scope of Personally Identifiable Information is ever-expanding. Contact the district Privacy Act specialist for the latest details.

- b. Photographs and biographies prepared for official purposes are releasable unless public disclosure would clearly be an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Official biographical sketches for officers 0-6 and below are not maintained by Coast Guard public affairs staffs, but may be kept and updated by the individual involved.
  - c. It is the policy of the Coast Guard to release the names of individuals rescued by the Coast Guard before a case is closed – after that point requests for the names of individuals rescued by the Coast Guard must be submitted under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts.
5. Freedom of Information. The Privacy and Freedom of Information Acts Manual, COMDTINST M5720.3, gives guidance for responding to requests for records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Remember that the intent of the FOIA is to improve public access to material, not to act as a barrier to access, or a method of delaying access. Generally, FOIA officers assigned to district offices and major units handle FOIA requests. FOIA requests must be submitted in writing. There is no required format. Requests may be submitted to U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, ATTN: Commandant (CG-611/FOIA Officer), 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593-0001.
6. Security.
- a. Do not release classified information.
  - b. Do not use military security or national defense as an excuse to withhold releasable information.
  - c. Security and the release of sensitive information is covered in detail in the Coast Guard Information Security Manual, COMDTINST M5510.21.
7. Lobbying. Don't use government funds — even inadvertently — to influence the legislative process. This includes news releases.
- a. Public law requires that no part of the money appropriated by Congress shall, unless expressly authorized by Congress, be made available, directly or indirectly, to pay for any personal service, advertisement, telegram, letter, printed or written matter, or other device intended to influence in any manner a member of the Congress to favor or oppose, by vote or otherwise, any legislation or appropriation by Congress. This includes such things as the printing and mailing of internal newsletters targeted to the active duty, Reserve, Auxiliary or civilian personnel members of the Coast Guard.

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8. Contracts, Grants and Grants-in-Aid.
  - a. Not every Coast Guard contract is newsworthy. Some, however, have enough local impact to make them newsworthy.
  - b. The Department of Homeland Security requires that news releases on contracts or grants of more than \$1 million be made in Washington, D.C. Contracting officers should send copies of the contract award notification to Commandant (CG-0922) and Commandant (CG-0921). Commandant (CG-0922) will forward the announcement to DHS Public Affairs and Commandant (CG-0921) will make appropriate congressional notifications.
9. Nuclear Weapons Capability. Personnel shall not reveal or cause to be revealed any information, rumor or speculation with respect to the presence or absence of nuclear weapons or components on board any ship, station or aircraft. The standard government-wide response to any such requests for this type of information is: "It is the policy of the United States Government to neither confirm nor deny the presence or absence of nuclear weapons or components on board any ship, station or aircraft."
10. Reductions in Force and Unit Decommissionings.
  - a. Major changes in the Coast Guard's presence are a matter of concern to communities. It's important that the first announcement of major personnel reductions or a unit decommissioning be accurate and official.
  - b. Before the Coast Guard issues a general news release to the media, Headquarters will notify the appropriate members and committees in Congress.
  - c. Commandant (CG-0922) is responsible for making the first release, although that authority may be delegated to district or local unit commanders. The release will include the reasons for the action, the number of military and civilian personnel involved and economic considerations. The initial announcement commonly will be made by the local congressional representative.
  - d. Local commands should consider holding a meeting with business and civic leaders, with the news media present, to discuss the Coast Guard's position in the matter, including: possible use for deactivated facilities, civilian employment opportunities, the anticipated community impact.

11. Information that may be released upon request.

- a. The Coast Guard is committed to keeping the public informed of its policies and actions, to the maximum extent permitted by law. The Coast Guard will generally release all information (time, location, assets involved, etc.) regarding routine operations (unless restricted by law) and SAR operations while the case is open, via press release or upon request. The Coast Guard will release the names of individuals being sought or having been rescued as long as a SAR case is open and active. The Coast Guard may also release the names of persons medevaced. However, releases may not reveal detailed medical information about a patient's condition. Once a SAR case has been closed, anyone seeking the names of persons rescued and/or medevaced by the Coast Guard must submit a request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. FOIA requests will be answered as quickly as possible and the Coast Guard will release as much personal information as the law permits under the circumstances.

F. RIGHTS OF FAMILIES OF VICTIMS. The Coast Guard must deal with the families of victims with sensitivity and concern. Their information needs should be met first before releasing public information about a case.

1. Release of Information. Special consideration must be given when releasing information about retrieval of human remains, injuries and deaths.
  - a. In addition to long-standing "notification of next of kin" procedures relating to the release of names of victims, the emergence of instantaneous and 24-hour news coverage has created a need to be sensitive about release of information related to serious injuries, deaths, or the retrieval of human remains during search and rescue cases, disaster response, or any operation. The rights of the victims of accidents and disasters and their families must be considered first.
  - b. There is rarely any public interest served by the "immediate" release of details such as the severity of physical injuries, the condition of human remains, or the exact location or plans for transportation of bodies. When such details are an important part of an ongoing operation, anyone releasing information through news releases or interviews should make sure the families of the injured or deceased have been notified.
  - c. This sensitivity does not restrict our ability to respond quickly and accurately about Coast Guard operations during such events, but gruesome or inappropriate details need not be part of the story and should never be seen or heard by the families of victims on television or radio before they have been notified by the appropriate authorities.

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- d. The Department of Defense and the cognizant combatant commander will govern the release of information concerning Coast Guard personnel casualties in a theater-of-war.

### G. RELEASING INFORMATION DURING A CRITICAL INCIDENT.

1. General guidelines. For the Coast Guard, crisis is routine. Every day, the Coast Guard handles dozens of crises: sinking speedboats, overdue fishing boats, lost surfboarders, disabled freighters, reports of marine pollution, illegal migrants, missing aircraft and drug smugglers. Because of all this activity, Coast Guard operations draw a lot of media attention. The public affairs objectives in a crisis or critical incident are:
  - a. Release information concerning the crisis to satisfy the public's need to know. Coast Guard operations are a matter of record, and only certain information can be withheld. As government employees, we work for the public. As members of the military, we have a duty to the public. We want to avoid any appearance that the Coast Guard is not answerable to the American taxpayer.
  - b. Demonstrate to the public that the Coast Guard and other agencies are responding to the crisis. The public expects the government to handle certain crises. As an agency of the government, the Coast Guard must demonstrate its ability to serve the needs and protect the interests of the country.
  - c. Direct the public if action is necessary. For example, airborne agents from a hazardous chemical may force the evacuation of a nearby populated area. The Coast Guard would use the media to help make certain that the evacuation is complete and orderly.
  - d. Involve the public as necessary. In some cases, it may be necessary to solicit information or assistance from the public. For example, someone at sea may have spotted a vessel that was reported overdue. Using the media to spread the word reaches more people than any other method.
  - e. Allay the public's fears and concerns. People quickly become confused, frustrated and angry if they cannot get information affecting their lives or if they believe no one is in control of a situation. The media can easily provide our information to a broad segment of the public.
  - f. Express sympathy to those impacted by the incident. As you speak to the media and affected families in your role as spokesperson, be sure to include a sincere expression of sympathy, such as "our hearts are with the families of those missing, and we're doing all we can to find their loved ones." However, such expressions of sympathy are inappropriate in news releases; a rare exception would be a direct quote from an official.

- g. If survivors or their loved ones begin assailing the conduct or motives of the Coast Guard during a critical incident, the Coast Guard should decisively focus on the facts to accurately characterize the incident to the extent that is legally authorized.
2. National Response Plan/National Response Framework. For critical incidents defined as Incidents of National Significance, the National Response Plan is implemented across the federal government. DHS Emergency Support Function 15 describes the interagency policies and procedures used to rapidly mobilize federal assets to prepare and deliver coordinated and sustained messages to the public in response to Incidents of National Significance and other major domestic emergencies.
3. Plan Ahead. We deal with crises daily. Some we can plan or drill for; others we play by ear, doing the best we can with common sense and the tools at hand. Dealing with the media during a crisis can be difficult because there will be an added sense of urgency. There are a few things you can do NOW to be always ready:
  - a. Learn the media in your area. Know how to contact them quickly. Invite them out for tours or embarks. The better relationship you establish with your local media before the crisis, the easier your job will be during a crisis.
  - b. Complete unit public affairs training regularly. Remind every member of the unit of their responsibility in dealing with the media; what they can say and what they cannot say.
  - c. Identify a space where media can set up shop during a major incident. Otherwise, they may be underfoot, rooting out news anywhere they can, often talking to people who are not well-informed. Reporters will need access to a phone or two and electrical outlets. Modular phones are preferred, since many reporters submit articles from portable computers via phone modem. Plan to use the same space for media briefings.
  - d. Make a list of people you can count on for help or advice. Be sure to include PAOs up the chain of command, the Public Information Assist Team, Reserve PAOs, Auxiliarists, etc.
4. Search and Rescue. Reporters love a hot SAR case! This “bread and butter” Coast Guard mission makes ideal news copy because it involves action, human interest, drama, adventure, urgency, people doing good things for other people.
  - a. Despite the flood of facts and wildly fluctuating situations, you must make sure the media get accurate, timely information. Objective, fast reporting of facts is critical to slow the spread of rumors and misinformation; at the same time, make sure the case has developed enough so that you are sending out

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accurate information. If your information flow is good, reporters will not have to bother the people directing the case, or resort to newsgathering from people who do not have current, complete or correct information.

- b. Although “maximum disclosure with minimum delay” is usually the rule, there will be times in a hectic SAR case when you will have to use your judgment about what to release and what not to release. Following are a few general guidelines to follow during a SAR case.
  - (1) Release only confirmed, factual information. In a crisis, a lot of apparently factual information turns out to be incorrect. If you release incorrect information to the media, correct it as soon as possible. This involves publishing a corrected news release and directly contacting media outlets to advise them of the error.
  - (2) Generally, most information is releasable.
  - (3) Stick to the facts; avoid speculation or opinions.
  - (4) Attribute information whenever possible.
  - (5) Do not speculate on the cause of an accident or incident.
- c. Names of missing civilians in overdue cases. During searches for overdue vessels, try to release names as soon as possible. Names are released in overdue cases because the people may not in fact be overdue and will contact us to let us know they are safe. Coordinate the release of names with the appropriate SAR Mission Coordinator. Notification of NOK is generally not a problem because they are often the reporting source for overdue cases or they have been contacted by the SMC for information.
- d. Names of civilians in distress cases. During searches for people known to be in distress, release names only when you are reasonably certain the NOK have been notified of the situation. If a reasonable time has passed and you have not received verification, you should release names. Releasing names in this case may prompt the NOK to contact us, possibly with float plans or other information about the case. (Each case may call for a different “reasonable time” — use 6 to 12 hours as a guide for routine cases.)
- e. Names of survivors and deceased. If you have already released names during a search and then bodies are found, you can release the fact that victims have been sighted or recovered, but have not yet been positively identified. Local officials (coroner, police, etc.) normally make the positive ID and next of kin notification. Do not release names of survivors until positive identification has been made and names of dead and injured have been released by local authorities.

- f. Withholding names upon request. It is the policy of the Coast Guard to release the names of individuals rescued by the Coast Guard before a case is closed – after that point requests for the names of individuals rescued by the Coast Guard must be submitted under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts. Notwithstanding Coast Guard policy, some individuals will request that their names not be released. Absent a compelling public interest in publishing the name, do not release the name. Media and other persons may submit a FOIA request and a determination will be made as to whether the Coast Guard may lawfully release the person’s name.
- g. Survivors and the media. The Coast Guard will not require survivors or people we rescue to face the news media — especially immediately after the accident. Inform the survivors that the media would like to interview them and allow them to make their own decision. Do not encourage them one way or the other. If survivors agree to answer questions from the media, you should caution them to speak only about what they actually saw and not to speculate.
- h. Video and photography. Video and still photography of SAR cases should be made available to the media as soon as possible. However, the Coast Guard will not normally release video or photography that depicts dead or mutilated bodies. Each unit commander has authority to make the determination of whether the material should be released.
- i. Describe SAR in common terms. Remember that search and rescue is something in which very few members of the public get involved, so they won’t know very many terms or acronyms (POB, PIW, POD, PRECOMS, EXCOMS, NEGRES) that we commonly use. Whenever you speak to the media, use plain English. You might also try to translate events into terms people will better understand. For example, you might say, “Today we searched an area of 1,200 square miles, roughly the size of Rhode Island.” But use terms relevant to your audience; searching “an area the size of Tierra del Fuego” means little to the average American.
- j. Public education during a SAR case. If a case extends over several days, you can use your daily releases to inform the public on different aspects of Coast Guard search and rescue capabilities. You may try to interest reporters in EPIRBs, FLIR, SLAR, search patterns, etc. SAR cases are an excellent opportunity to send a safety message to the public via the media’s coverage of hard news. A well-crafted safety message may help prevent future loss of life at sea, but be careful not to moralize or point fingers during a tragedy. For example, do not say, “These three young children would be alive if only their parents had enough common sense to put life jackets on them.”



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- k. Just say “I don’t know.” If you are asked a question you can’t answer, simply say, “I don’t know, but I will find out.” But never say:
- (1) “No comment.”
  - (2) “Missing and presumed dead.” A court, not the Coast Guard, makes the determination of presumed death.
  - (3) “A 90 percent probability of detection...” This suggests the Coast Guard puts a numerical value on life. Just avoid the topic.
  - (4) “It appears that ...” Chances are whatever follows will be speculation. Just state the facts as you know them and use the popular refrain, “The cause of the accident is under investigation.”
  - (5) “If they’re out there, we’ll find them.” Don’t make promises.
  - (6) “The captain abandoned ship.” Do not describe the circumstances unless you have witness verification. “Abandoning ship” can have an extremely negative connotation if it implies the captain left his crew behind.
- l. Suspension of a search. Suspending a search is difficult for the media to accept because they want an end to the story they have been covering, perhaps for several days. They will want to conclude the story, and a reporter may attempt to put words in your mouth in order to do that. Avoid the problem by sticking with the tried and true stock answers: “We have conducted an exhaustive search of the area based on the best information we have. We are suspending our active search pending the development of new information. The cause of the accident will be investigated by (the Coast Guard, the state troopers, whoever has jurisdiction.)” Do not be pressured or bullied into saying anything that you don’t want to say beyond that.
- (1) A reporter may ask if the missing people are now presumed dead. Explain that the Coast Guard does not make that determination, only a court can do that.
  - (2) You may also be asked what new information may restart a suspended search. You should discuss the possibilities with your unit commander and SMC in advance. Generally the answer will be straightforward: new sightings, a newly discovered float plan, etc. But there are cases when the Coast Guard is forced to resume searches due to political pressure. In such cases, you should coordinate an appropriate answer with the unit commander or even the district public affairs officer.

- m. Automated Mutual Assistance Vessel Rescue (AMVER) system. AMVER tracks participating merchant vessels on their voyages throughout the world's oceans in order to divert those merchant vessels nearby to the location of a distress. It is an invaluable resource for high seas SAR.
  - (1) If you are releasing information on a case that involves AMVER ships, mention that and explain the program to reporters. If you receive information that one or more merchant vessels is involved in a case, ask the SAR coordinator if the ships were identified through AMVER.
  - (2) In-depth information and assistance with media are available from the AMVER Maritime Relations office in New York City. Be sure to send copies of your news releases, SITREPs and any photo or video of the case to them.

5. Accidents Involving the Coast Guard.

- a. Local contingency plans for accidents involving Coast Guardsmen or Coast Guard equipment should include quickly notifying the district public affairs staff. Notification can be through the district command center. Major accidents may also call for notifying Commandant (CG-0922).
- b. The first release should be made by the local command, as circumstances allow. In most accidents, this will be at the unit level. Major accidents may call for release at the district level and a few maybe more suitably released first in Washington, D.C. When you notify the district public affairs officer, ask for advice.
- c. Handle the release of Coast Guard accident information in the same manner as if the Coast Guard had not been involved, except that we have far greater responsibility about releasing the names of people involved.
- d. Release of names of Coast Guard victims. Do not release names of Coast Guard personnel killed or injured until you are certain the next of kin have been notified. Because many service members live a distance from their family, this may take a day or more. Do not let the media bully you into releasing the names until you have received verification that the next of kin have been notified.
- e. Do not release the names of survivors until you can also release the names of the dead. This will prevent reporters from using a process of elimination to speculate on the names of the dead.

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- f. If the accident occurs in the public domain (such as a traffic accident), the media will be able to obtain names from other sources. Notify the media if next of kin have not been notified and that you would appreciate their not making the names public until we have completed such notification. They are under no obligation to withhold the names but may be inclined to do so if you have a good working relationship with them.
  - g. Avoid the term “casualty,” which is ambiguous and can be misunderstood. Instead, use: dead or deceased, wounded or injured (seriously, slightly), missing. If known, indicate the type of injuries.
  - h. The Coast Guard will not require survivors to face the news media — especially immediately after the accident. If survivors agree to answer questions, you should caution them to speak only about what they actually saw, and not to speculate. For example, engineers should not comment on what they thought was happening on the bridge or what probably happened in the Bosun Locker.
6. Accidents Involving Other Services.
- a. Coast Guard units participating in joint exercises, under the operational control of another service fall under the public affairs regulations of that service. If they become involved in an accident, the joint commander will issue at least the first release of information. Home districts should contact the joint commander before making follow-up releases. (For information on Joint Service Agreements see Search and Rescue Manual, COMDTINST M16120.5 (series), Chapter 13, Section 1324.)
    - (1) When the Coast Guard responds to an accident involving another service, we may release information on our part in any rescue or recovery attempt after the parent service has made an initial release, unless Coast Guard rescue units shift to the operational control of the other service. An example is telling the media, “The Coast Guard is responding to a report that a Navy (or Air Force, etc.) plane (or vessel, etc.) is in distress off the coast of ....” Generally, our information will concentrate on Coast Guard operations. Do not elaborate on the type of distress.
    - (2) Information about the other service’s equipment or personnel will be limited to basic facts including: confirming that an accident has taken place, the general location, the time we received the report, the number of people rescued, and general information about Coast Guard units involved.

- (3) Try to help reporters make contact with the parent service or joint commander for specific information. You should withhold information that may violate security, such as the type of aircraft or vessel, the mission, home port or point of origin, the exact location of the accident (unless obvious), the number or identities of people involved or other specifics about the incident.
7. Joint Mission Releases. A joint Service agreement on news releases provides that, when only one Service is involved in a SAR mission, release of information to news media follows that Service's directives. When two or more Services are involved, the policies of the joint agreement apply and should include the following:
  - a. Inquiries made to one Service concerning the activities of another Service should be referred to the joint commander.
  - b. In missions involving a military mishap, the first announcement of the incident should be made by the parent Service if a representative is available. If representatives of the parent Service are not immediately available and certain facts are obvious, any other Service directly involved in the incident may provide assistance to the news media. This assistance may include a statement that an accident or incident has occurred, the location and time, and information concerning the queried Service's own SAPP, operations and accomplishments after the incident. A statement that a board of officers may be appointed to investigate and determine the exact cause of the incident should also be made.
  - c. Release of names of members of other services. Release of names of victims in an accident involving another service will be made by the member's service.
8. Releases in theater. When a Coast Guard PAO is operating in theater during a military operation, all news releases, articles and photos are cleared through the designated military command, not the PAO's chain of command.
  - a. Deployed Coast Guard units may embed media as authorized under DoD guidelines. Embed requests must be originated through the embed coordinator at U.S. Central Command. Coordinating media transportation in and out of the AOR is the responsibility of the embedding unit and will be accomplished on a space-available, no-additional-cost-to-government basis. Embedding benefits all levels of the military, and units are encouraged to work the USCENCOM to maximize these opportunities.
  - b. Releasable information while deployed. Units may provide, in general terms, deployment numbers, mobilization and deployment timeframe, and a description of the unit's generic equipment, mission and capabilities.

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- (1) However, units may not discuss specific operational details (e.g., specific numbers or types of equipment, dates of departure/arrival, destination, personnel or missions).
  - (2) Units will not discuss information outside the purview of their individual unit.
  - (3) Unit personnel are permitted to grant media interviews, limiting their comments to information within the purview of their own personal experience and responsibilities.
  - (4) Photos released for external publication may include Coast Guardsmen provided that personnel give consent for the release and that operational or personal security is not compromised.
  - (5) Local PA offices are encouraged to cover local unit deployments.
9. Pollution Incidents. The National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (40 CFR Part 300) contains the general guidance for public information in response to spills. It specifies that all federal news releases or statements by participating agencies should be cleared through the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (FOSC).
- a. The Federal OSC is the sole release authority for official statements concerning federal cleanup actions. All official statements shall be approved by the OSC in accordance with local contingency plans.
  - b. The goals of all public information efforts in pollution response are to keep the community informed of potential threats to people or the environment; informed of the status of cleanup operations; and to replace rumor with facts. These goals must be met by avoiding speculation, release of inaccurate information, or other actions which could jeopardize the rights of any party involved in the spill (the suspected polluter, persons affected by the spill, the government, etc.).
  - c. Joint Information Center. The Coast Guard uses the JIC model outlined in the National Response Plan.
  - d. The key to successful public affairs in pollution response is advance planning and rapid implementation. District public affairs officers should ensure that specific public affairs policies and procedures are developed in coordination with district(p) and FOSCs and that such guidance is contained in regional and local response plans. Such plans should address:

- (1) Release procedures to be followed by the public affairs personnel assigned to an FOSC:
  - (a) Prepare periodic comprehensive news release updates for FOSC approval.
  - (b) Respond factually to all media inquiries as they are received.
  - (c) Conduct media and community relations programs.
- (2) Guidelines for unit personnel when dealing with reporters on scene.
  - (a) All hands should understand that they will be perceived as official spokespersons.
  - (b) Individuals may explain to reporters what their own jobs are.
  - (c) Media questions which do not pertain to an individual's job should be referred to the FOSC or authorized spokesperson.
- (3) Release procedures/relationships between district PAO and FOSC.
  - (a) Procedures must be established to insure that all information released pertaining to the cleanup is approved by the FOSC regardless of the geographic location of the person making the release.
- (4) Coordination with other agencies.
  - (a) Official Coast Guard spokespersons are generally authorized to speak on behalf of the Coast Guard command to which they are assigned, and on behalf of the FOSC to which they are assigned.
  - (b) Coast Guard spokespersons are not usually authorized to speak on behalf of other agencies.
- (5) The availability of the Public Information Assist Team.
  - (a) PIAT is a specialized, self-contained, rapid response, public affairs resource available to assist OSCs at the scene of an incident.
  - (b) FOSCs may obtain PIAT assistance by contacting the National National Strike Force Coordination Center at (252) 331-6000, or via the National Response Center at 800-424-8802.

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10. Non-military incidents. A non-military incident is a situation which could adversely affect U.S. foreign relations or the safety of U.S. citizens abroad.
  - a. Non-military incidents include: Hijackings or terrorism; requests for asylum; seizures or interference with navigation of U.S. vessels; detainment or harassment of U.S. citizens; conflicts between U.S. and foreign fishing vessels; and most law enforcement actions against foreign flag vessels.
  - b. Normally, field units should contact their district public affairs offices before making releases. There may be instances, however, when initiating a release will help protect life and limb by warning the population of danger — for example, a terrorist threat to a populated area.
  - c. District and unit PAOs should contact Commandant (CG-0922) either directly or through Flag Plot, but may respond to queries with basic facts. If a district or unit PAO staff responds without specific guidance to a first wave of media queries, they should limit their information to the fact that an incident has or is occurring, the time and location, a statement that the Coast Guard is coordinating action with other federal agencies and further information will be available as soon as the impact of the incident is assessed.
11. Law Enforcement. The Coast Guard's involvement in law enforcement is wide ranging and includes many activities in addition to counter-narcotics and AMIO. The legal aspects of law enforcement naturally put limits on the timing and content of information released to the media. We must guard against releasing information which will help people break the law or avoid prosecution and punishment. We must protect the innocent and safeguard our sources of intelligence information. We must also remember that law enforcement includes not only ongoing law enforcement actions but also post-incident evaluation by U.S. Attorneys and others whether and to what extent prosecution is appropriate, and make no statement that presupposes an outcome.
  - a. In all cases, local considerations may require modification to the guidance below. While a law enforcement action is in progress, we will not normally release any information — even confirmation that an operation is underway. If an operation is significant in scope (such as a port blockade) you can confirm, in general terms, that an operation is in progress, since the news media will gather such information from private sources. In general, however, your best response to the media about law enforcement operations is “As a matter of Coast Guard policy, I am not at liberty to discuss ongoing law enforcement operations or judicial proceedings.”
  - b. The applicable Coast Guard district commander will coordinate appropriate releases of information in cases where the Coast Guard is lead agency. The lead agency will assure that coordination/approval has been achieved with all concerned agencies.

- c. Commanding officers should coordinate with the district and Headquarters public affairs offices any requests to put news reporters on Coast Guard counter-narcotics and/or AMIO air and sea patrols. COs are authorized direct approval of reporters on other LE patrols, i.e., fisheries enforcement, subject to operational, security and safety considerations. Do not make special demonstration patrols unless doing so is clearly in the public interest. In no case should reporters be placed in danger, such as on actual boardings.
- d. Counternarcotics. The following public affairs guidance is provided to assist units in conducting public affairs activities related to operations that support the National Drug Control Strategy.
  - (1) Counternarcotics operations are inherently sensitive and involve risks that may be heightened by the release of information to the public. These risks can be minimized through comprehensive coordination with all participating agencies before any information is released to the public. These risks include:
    - (a) Risks to the personal safety of law enforcement personnel involved in drug investigations, seizures, arrests and other related activities.
    - (b) The risk of jeopardizing follow-on activities related to a drug seizure or arrest.
    - (c) The risk of jeopardizing the prosecution of people arrested for drug-related offenses.
    - (d) Risks to the operational security (OPSEC) of on-going operations.
    - (e) Risks to intelligence systems and sources.
    - (f) The risk to relations with other governments whose citizens, vessels, territory, etc. may be involved in drug-related activities.
  - (2) Most drug seizures, arrests, etc. will be the result of cooperation between the Coast Guard and other law enforcement or DOD agencies. Rarely will a single agency be able to take full credit for an arrest or seizure. Operations involving law enforcement or military agencies of foreign nations require notification of Commandant (CG-0922).
  - (3) Coast Guard personnel will not attempt to publicly discuss or interpret overall policy regarding Coast Guard or DOD support of the President's National Drug Control Strategy. Public affairs officers may provide copies of speeches and other printed material originated by the commandant, but will refer any news media questions on matters beyond their purview to the Commandant's Press Assistant.



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- (4) Previously approved statements and Q's and A's pertaining to unified/specified command missions in the DOD effort may be used by the commands concerned for public affairs purposes as they deem appropriate.
- (5) The announcement of a drug-related investigation, seizure or arrest normally will be made by the agency that actually conducted the investigation and/or actually made the seizure or arrest. The Coast Guard CAN discuss its efforts in counter-narcotics operations but should indicate that the operation was a "coordinated federal effort" and list all the participating agencies (but only after coordinating the release with each of them). Such announcements normally will include the following:
  - (a) That a seizure/arrest has been made.
  - (b) Name and homeport of seizing vessel.
  - (c) Name, flag and description of seized vessel or aircraft.
  - (d) Date, time and general location of the boarding and seizure.
  - (e) List of all agencies and organizations participating in the seizure (unless precluded by OPSEC or the request of a participating agency) including combined operations with other nations or state and local law enforcement agencies.
  - (f) Whether resistance or pursuit was involved.
  - (g) Number and nationality of prisoners.
  - (h) Type and estimated amount of seized narcotics.
  - (i) Destination and ETA for seized vessel and escort.
  - (j) Future plans (Who will take custody of prisoners, narcotics and vessel/aircraft).
  - (k) Action taken to stop a fleeing vessel (e.g., 30 rounds of .50 cal. warning fire and 25 rounds of disabling fire) and the process of approval for the action: (e.g., notification of the State Department, declaration of the vessel as stateless, etc.).
  - (l) Video should be forwarded to district PAOs for a determination of releasability and clearance with the U. S. Attorney handling the case.

- (6) The following types of information may not be released.
- (a) Any statements made by the accused or the fact the accused made or refused to make a statement.
  - (b) Any indication of the prospective witnesses in the case.
  - (c) Any comment on the credibility or testimony of anyone involved in the case.
  - (d) Any information involving the possibility of a guilty plea, the accused's guilt or innocence or the merits of the charges or defense in the case.
  - (e) Whether or not intelligence led to this seizure (the only exception is if the agency that provided the intelligence decides the information may be released).
- (7) Commandant (CG-0922) encourages commands to embark news media personnel to cover counter-narcotics missions. Requests are subject to approval of the applicable district commander (and Commandant (CG-0922) in the case of aircraft use-of-force helicopters) on a case-by-case basis. Requests should be submitted to the district PAO at least two weeks prior to departure to allow time for necessary inter-agency coordination. In the event of fast-breaking operations that warrant media coverage, the district commander may consider an exception to this policy. Requests will include the following information:
- (a) Name and affiliation of news media representatives.
  - (b) Proposed date of travel (or time frame if exact date is not known or cannot be disclosed because of OPSEC considerations).
  - (c) Justification: Is travel an integral part of the story? What will be the resulting benefit to the service for the effort expended?
  - (d) Measures taken to protect operational security, identities, etc.
  - (e) Coordination accomplished with any other law enforcement agencies involved.
  - (f) Organization point of contact for travel request.
  - (g) Justification for exception to policy on two-week notification (if applicable).

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- (8) Once approval for media embarkation is granted the following guidelines apply:
- (a) Embarked media have exclusive rights to whatever material they gather unless a prior pool agreement has been made.
  - (b) Media may not be given access to classified or sensitive law enforcement information, but otherwise should be allowed to cover all activities.
  - (c) Media may, at the discretion of the commanding officer, embark in a small boat to cover a boarding.
  - (d) Media may not go aboard a suspect vessel or other private property. They may film or shoot images of Coast Guard operations from Coast Guard vessels or public areas, but they may not enter private property.
  - (e) Media may not interview prisoners.
  - (f) Media may be afforded reasonable access to document activities, such as unloading narcotics.
  - (g) Media may photograph or videotape prisoners only as they are moved in the normal course of business ,e.g., from a vessel to a dock, from a building to a vehicle, etc. Prisoners will not be lined up or paraded around for the media's benefit.
  - (h) Embarked news media may not take any imagery that shows a recognizable face of other identifying feature of any migrant interdicted by the Coast Guard.
  - (i) Media must agree that they will not publish, broadcast or release photographs or video that show law enforcement, military, police or security personnel in such away that they can be readily identified, e.g., nametags, etc. This requirement is intended to prevent reprisal against law enforcement, military, police or security personnel or their families by criminals or criminal organizations.
  - (j) All on-scene agencies will be notified of media presence and which areas media will be in.
  - (k) Escort officers must remain with the media at all times. Escorts are not intended to hinder reporting, but are given only to facilitate movement of media and ensure safety.
- (9) Media will be cautioned that they cannot report on:

- (a) Course, speed, location and other similar information about vessels and aircraft on patrol.
  - (b) Sensitive equipment and/or capabilities that they might observe or come in contact with.
  - (c) Future operations of forces assigned.
  - (d) Tactics (in use or planned) to avoid various threats of narco-traffickers.
  - (e) Specific locations of ships, aircraft or ground forces. Instead, media should use "On board the CGC (Name) in the (general name of location).
- (10) While underway, media may send stories, with passing instructions, via Coast Guard routine message traffic subject to OPSEC and the commanding officer's approval.
  - (11) Ground rules may be modified by the operational commander to adapt to changing media requirements and operational considerations.
  - (12) Media representatives who do not abide by the ground rules are subject to expulsion, and jeopardize future media embarks.
  - (13) Media representatives may suggest other arrangements for consideration and adoption as the situations change.
  - (14) Media participation on a counter-narcotics mission indicates their understanding of these guidelines and their willingness to abide by them.
- e. Reporters often seek interviews with Coast Guard members of units particularly those involved in counter-narcotics operations. Interviews may be granted, at the discretion of the commanding officer and keeping with local policy, if the following guidelines are met:
- (1) The individuals agree to be interviewed and identified, and all interviews will be on the record.
  - (2) You should discuss only information within your personal purview and experience. No classified information will be discussed.
  - (3) You should not discuss or interpret overall policy regarding the President's National Drug Strategy.

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- (4) Keep in mind the requirements of operational security when responding to questions. The public affairs officer must be included in the planning and conduct of all interviews.
  - (5) You should not answer hypothetical questions or comment on matters pertaining to other federal, state or local agencies, and/or the military, police or security forces of other nations.
- f. After-action reports or transcripts of interviews will be provided through appropriate command channels to Commandant (CG-0922).
  - g. Coast Guard spokespersons may be invited to participate in joint press briefings or conferences organized by other agencies following a narcotics seizure or arrest, or other law enforcement activities. The criteria outlined in para. 2.G.6.i.(1) through 2.G.6.i.(6) above, also applies to spokespersons at press briefings and conferences.
  - h. District public affairs officers should make advance contact with local and regional public affairs counterparts in other agencies. This will enable you to establish a working relationship with them and identify you as their point of contact with the Coast Guard. This is important when lead agencies release information or hold news briefings or conferences regarding operations with Coast Guard involvement.
  - i. Identify other agency counterparts by contacting your command's operations division. The operators are already dealing with these other agencies when planning counter-narcotics and other law enforcement operations.
  - j. PAOs assigned to joint task forces are an excellent source for determining points of contact with other agencies. District PAO's should establish a point of contact in the U.S. Attorney's office in your area. The U.S. Attorney is a primary part of all counter-narcotics operations and most other law enforcement activities.
  - k. If you are dealing with a foreign country, the State Department or the U.S. Embassy can put you in touch with appropriate spokespersons for counter-narcotics operations. The U.S. Ambassador must approve any release of information regarding U.S. support of counter-narcotics operations in the host country.
  - l. Coordinating agencies at the federal level include:
    - (1) The Department of State
    - (2) The Department of Justice

- (3) Department of the Treasury
  - (4) Bureau of Prisons
  - (5) Drug Enforcement Administration
  - (6) Federal Bureau of Investigation
  - (7) Immigration & Customs Enforcement
  - (8) U.S. Marshals Service
  - (9) Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms
  - (10) Customs & Border Protection
  - (11) Internal Revenue Service
  - (12) U.S. Secret Service
  - (13) United States Information Agency
  - (14) Office of National Drug Control Policy
- m. Each agency listed above has its own method of granting approval for release of information. All of these agencies require that policy issues be forwarded to the national level. Remember that the potential to attract national and international media attention to what normally would be routine operations has increased with the public's concern over illegal narcotics. Keep the chain of command informed anytime it appears that Coast Guard involvement in a counter-narcotics or other law enforcement operation may get national media interest.
- n. Speaking with one voice is critical for all agencies, and particularly with respect to implementation of the president's National Drug Control Strategy. Spokespersons talking or writing about this issue must not only be consistent within the Coast Guard, but must also be consistent with the stated goals and objectives of other agencies supporting the nation's counter-narcotics effort. If various agencies appear to be at odds or making conflicting statements, the public will perceive confusion and misunderstanding among them. This subjects all participants to criticism of what is supposed to be a "coordinated federal effort."

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- o. The term “War on Drugs” tends to militarize the nation’s counter-narcotics effort when that is not the case. Avoid the use of this term in public statements. DOD plays a support role and will never be solely responsible for winning or losing in the national effort. The success or failure of the president’s National Drug Control Strategy will ultimately be determined by the people and not by the military “winning the war.” In addition, many friendly nations have been opposed to U.S. militarization of its counter-narcotics efforts and others have a distinct distrust of military intentions because of their history.
  - p. Coast Guard efforts in counter-narcotics operations will be of great interest to our internal audiences as well as the general public. However, the internal use of descriptions, photographs, and videotape of these operations has the potential of gaining public attention. Therefore, this material must be subjected to the same strict guidelines as material being considered for use in the public domain. In addition, video that is initially shot for internal use must be cleared by the U.S. Attorney handling the case if it is later decided to publicly release the tape. Video may be considered evidence by the U.S. Attorney.
  - q. Because the local U.S. Attorney will actually prosecute most cases arising from our law enforcement activities, refer requests for any information concerning current or future prosecutions to the U.S. Attorney’s office. In counter-narcotics cases refer requests for the following information to the U.S. Attorney’s office:
    - (1) Names or other personal information on prisoners.
    - (2) Statements (or lack of statements) made by prisoners.
    - (3) Witnesses to the violation.
    - (4) The guilt or innocence of any person involved.
12. Media violations of security zones. No one can be in a security zone without Coast Guard authorization. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the Coast Guard has encountered several instances of journalists who have intentionally violated security zones in an effort to expose and chronicle weaknesses in the maritime security system. Such incidents result in broadcast or print coverage, and if Coast Guard personnel on scene perform their duties professionally, that professionalism will be reflected in any resulting story. The following guidance outlines how these situations should be handled.

- a. Journalists who violate a security zone should be treated in the same manner as anyone else who violates a security zone—with courtesy and respect even if they are placed in custody. The mere presence of a video camera does not mean an escalation or reduction along the continuum of force.
  - b. A Coast Guard boarding officer enforcing a security zone should calmly tell someone to turn off or put down a video camera and ask those claiming to be journalists to present their journalistic credentials for review. Transcribe the information from their credentials and pass it to the district public affairs officer per paragraph 12.e.
  - c. Under no circumstances should a Coast Guard official confiscate any tape or recording device belonging to a media representative. If the tape is needed for legal proceedings, it is subject to subpoena just as any other piece of evidence.
  - d. Members enforcing the security zone should politely decline to participate in a media interview or answer questions beyond the scope of the boarding. The journalists should be given the name of a local public affairs officer to contact for any questions on Coast Guard policy.
  - e. Any encounters between Coast Guard personnel and members of the media should be reported immediately to the operational commander and district public affairs officer, and an accurate account of the interaction between the media and the boarding team should be captured as soon as possible so that the public affairs officer may properly respond to any media questions. The district public affairs officer should promptly confirm the journalistic credentials or bona fides of those claiming to be journalists and that these journalists were assigned to cover the asset being protected by the security zone. If this confirmation yields anything suspicious, notify the operational commander immediately.
13. Fisheries catch and net seizures. The Coast Guard and National Marine Fisheries Service will actively publicize our fisheries enforcement efforts. The Coast Guard will issue news releases for every catch or net seizure made.
- a. After drafting a fisheries seizure news release, FAX it to your district public affairs office for review. The district public affairs office needs to see all fisheries releases BEFORE they are made public.
  - b. You SHOULD mention the name and homeport of the vessel from which the catch/nets were seized. Do not mention the names of the master or crew in your release (you MAY answer press questions as to whom they were; just don't put it in your release). You can mention the total number and nationalities (if not American) of POB the vessel in your release.



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- c. Be sure to include NMFS in your release. If a NMFS Agent was part of the boarding party, give them credit for a joint seizure.
  - d. Since a F/V is not technically issued a violation until NMFS lawyers have written up the Notice of Violation (NOVA), please ensure your release includes a statement such as “The evidence package for this seizure has been forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service, who will determine if a formal Notice of Violation (NOVA) will be issued.”
14. Legal Proceedings. Courts, hearings and marine boards are generally open to the public, including the news media. The person presiding at the court — judge, law officer, investigating officer, president, etc. — may exclude spectators or classes of spectators from certain sessions when their presence would tend to interfere with the proceedings.
- a. Spectators may not record the proceedings in a court or hearing room without permission of the presiding officer. Recordings include still photos, motion pictures, videotape and audiotape.
  - b. For current regulations on the release of information about accused persons during or after a trial by court-martial, refer to section 15 of this chapter, the Military Justice Manual, COMDTINST M5810.1 (series) and Coast Guard Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts Manual, COMDTINST M5260.3 (series).
  - c. Courts of Inquiry are, by law, open or closed, as the authority ordering the court may determine. If open, the same provisions apply as apply generally to courts-martial. If closed, only the information approved for release by the convening authority will be released.
  - d. Marine boards and other marine casualty investigations are mandated by statute (46 U.S.C. 6301) to be open to the public, including the news media, except when evidence affecting national security is to be received. Details regarding media coverage of marine boards and casualty investigations can be found in the Marine Safety Manual, Volume V (Investigations), COMDTINST M16000.10. The investigating officer or chairman of the marine board of investigation may exclude spectators if they are creating a disturbance or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of the investigation.

- e. Suspension and revocation proceedings conducted under 46 U.S.C., Chapter 77, are presided over and conducted under the exclusive control of an Administrative Law Judge. Administrative Law Judges Internal Practices and Procedures PROHIBITS broadcasting, televising, unofficial voice recording, or taking photographs in the hearing room and areas immediately adjacent to it during sessions of hearings or recesses between sessions. The presence of news media personnel in the hearing room is permitted subject to constraints imposed in connection with national security.
15. Claims Against the Government. When it appears that the government may be sued, consult your legal officer and district public affairs officer for guidance before releasing or withholding information.
  16. Record of Marine Casualty Investigations.
    - a. By law, we must make available to the public, for inspection or copying, investigative reports, vessel casualty reports, personal injury reports, casualty report transmittal letters and records of investigations that are required to be preserved by the Coast Guard.
    - b. The record of an investigation of vessel casualty made by a Marine Board or an investigating officer must be made available at any stage of the investigation, upon written application to the chairman of the Marine Board or, in other investigations, to the party having jurisdiction. Availability is contingent on:
      - (1) That the record is in a form suitable for release. For example: report forms, messages, written statements, etc., are readily available. Untranscribed stenographer notes or tapes, undeveloped film, etc., are not readily available.
      - (2) Making the materials available must not interfere with the fact-gathering process.
      - (3) The material is not exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.
    - c. Reports by Marine Boards and narrative reports by investigating officers will be considered complete and may be released when Commandant has taken action, except to the extent they contain information related to national security.
    - d. Reports by investigating officers on vessel casualties not submitted in narrative form will be considered complete and may be released when action has been taken by the final reviewing authority in accordance with other directives.

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- e. Information on investigations is not regarded as strictly confidential and is open to the public.

17. Release of Information Pertaining to Persons Accused of UCMJ Offenses.

- a. General. There are valid reasons for making available to the public information about the administration of military justice. The most important job of a public affairs officer during a Uniform Code of Military Justice action is striking a fair balance between protecting the rights of the individuals accused of offenses against improper or unwarranted publicity pertaining to their cases, while providing the public an understanding of the problems of the working of military justice system. No statements or other information shall be furnished to news media for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an accused's trial, or which could reasonably have such an effect. Under no circumstances should statements be made by a Coast Guard spokesperson that express an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of an accused or regarding the strength or merits of any case.
  - (1) An initial criminal accusation involving a service member may be resolved under the UCMJ whether by mast or by court-martial, handled by federal or local prosecutors, or disposed of administratively. No information concerning a criminal matter involving a service member at any stage should be released except in coordination with the servicing staff judge advocate.
  - (2) An excellent reference for any public affairs office handling a UCMJ case is the publication *Media Relations in High Visibility Court Martial Cases, A Practical Guide*, released by Commandant (CG-0922). The book is available from district legal and public affairs offices.
- b. Release of information.
  - (1) As a general matter, release of information pertaining to accused persons should not be initiated by persons in the Coast Guard. Information of this nature should be released only upon specific request and where permitted by law. The public affairs posture may be active in some high-visibility prosecutions but that decision should be taken only in consultation with the staff judge advocate. In rare cases, a press release may be warranted.

- (2) Except in unusual circumstances, information should be released by the cognizant public affairs officer; and requests for information received by others from representatives of news media should be referred to the public affairs officer. When an individual is suspected or accused of an offense, care should be taken to indicate that the individual is alleged to have committed or is suspected or accused of having committed an offense, as distinguished from stating or implying that the accused has committed the offense or offenses.
- (3) Information subject to release. On inquiry the following information concerning a person accused or suspected of an offense or offenses may generally be released:
  - (a) General information regarding the military justice process and applicability of the UCMJ.
  - (b) The accused's name, grade, age, unit and regular assigned duties.
  - (c) The identity of the convening and reviewing authorities.
  - (d) The nature of the offense of which the individual is accused or suspected, and the charges and specifications where court-martial charges have been preferred.
  - (e) The identity of the victim of any alleged or suspected offense, where the release of that information is not otherwise prohibited by law, such as a victim in a witness-protection status. Generally, however, do not release the names of victims of sex offenses, the names of children or the identity of any victim when the release would be contrary to the desire of the victim or harmful to the victim.
  - (f) The identity of the apprehending and investigating agency, including the time and place of apprehension.
  - (g) The type and place of custody, if any.
  - (h) Identity of counsel for the accused, if any.
  - (i) Information which is a part of a public record such as a prior conviction or acquittal, or information from the record of proceedings, a court-martial in open session, without comment.
  - (j) The scheduling or result of any stage in the judicial process.

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- (k) Denial of the commission of any offense or offenses of which the service member is accused or suspected (when release of such information is approved by the accused's counsel).
- (4) Prohibited information. The following information concerning a person accused or suspected of an offense or offenses generally may not be released:
  - (a) Subjective opinions, observations or comments concerning the accused's character, demeanor at any time or guilt of the offense or offenses involved.
  - (b) The existence or contents of any confession, admission, statement of alibi given by the accused, or the refusal or failure of the accused to make any statement.
  - (c) The performance of any examination or test, such as polygraph examinations, chemical tests, ballistics tests, etc., or the refusal or the failure of the accused to submit to an examination or test.
  - (d) The identity, testimony or credibility of possible witnesses, except as authorized in subparagraph b.(3)(e) above.
  - (e) The possibility of a plea of guilty to any offense charged or to a lesser offense and any negotiation or any offer to negotiate respecting a plea of guilty.
  - (f) References to confidential sources or investigative techniques or procedures.
  - (g) Before sentencing, any information regarding the accused's prior disciplinary or criminal record, including nonjudicial punishment, arrests, indictments, or charges. This does not preclude a statement that an accused has no prior criminal or disciplinary record.
  - (h) Any other matter when there is reasonable likelihood that its dissemination will affect the deliberations of an investigative body or the findings or sentence of a court-martial or otherwise prejudice the due administration of military justice either before, during, or after trial.

18. Coast Guard Footage. These rules apply to the release of footage for reproduction or broadcast, not to the release of footage for live audience viewing.
  - a. Coast Guard stock footage is releasable to a production which otherwise qualifies for Coast Guard cooperation.
  - b. Release footage only if you produced the footage.
    - (1) If the footage was provided by another Coast Guard command or someone outside the Coast Guard, contact Commandant (CG-0922) for help in determining if there are copyright or other limits placed on the footage.
    - (2) Some official Coast Guard productions contain copyrighted material (provided by TV news stations, for example). Do not release these productions without first contacting Commandant (CG-0922).
19. Credit Titles. Commandant (CG-0922) may suggest appropriate wording, or approve wording submitted by the producer, to be used in credit titles.
20. Use of Coast Guard Operations Equipment, Markings and Personnel.
  - a. The Coast Guard will divert equipment and personnel from normal locations or operations only when filming cannot be completed without them. Diversions will be held to a minimum and will not interfere with Coast Guard operations.
  - b. Coast Guard equipment and people will not compete with commercial and private enterprises.
  - c. The producer may hire individual Coast Guard personnel as extras or as technical advisors. To receive compensation, they must work off duty and must not act in roles which identify them as Coast Guard personnel.
  - d. To reduce the diversion of resources, the Coast Guard can authorize producers to temporarily use service markings on private vehicles and vessels.

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## CHAPTER 3. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- A. OUR GOAL. Just by the very nature of what we do, the Coast Guard and the local community need each other. The local community is the place where we grab a bite of lunch, talk to prospective recruits, watch the Independence Day parade, send our children to school – the place where we live and work.
1. Our society assigns certain responsibilities to its citizens and organizations. Everyone must contribute – individuals, corporations, the Coast Guard. Coast Guard contributions must reach beyond simply carrying out missions.
  2. Your goal is to make sure the community sees us not as “The Coast Guard” but rather as “Their Coast Guard.” That’s exactly what we are.
  3. Specifically, the Coast Guard’s community relations goals are:
    - a. To develop, improve and maintain full public understanding and support of its missions.
    - b. To develop an awareness that Coast Guard personnel are dedicated, highly-trained professionals, vital to national security.
    - c. To present Coast Guard positions on subjects of mutual interest and concern to appropriate individuals and groups.
- B. RESPONSIBILITY.
1. Commandant (CG-09223). The Community Relations Branch (CG-09223) of Public Affairs, Commandant (CG-0922), is responsible for developing and administering programs at a national level. A complete description of those responsibilities can be found in this chapter at Section D.
  2. Commands. Coast Guard commands must develop and maintain sound relations with communities in their operating areas. Every level of command has a community relations responsibility. The unit commander must sense public attitudes and interests, and execute a plan of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.
    - a. Programs include, but are not limited to, liaison and cooperation with various associations and organizations; participation in special events; unit open houses and tours; humanitarian actions; cooperation with government officials



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and civic leaders; and encouragement of Coast Guard personnel and their dependents to participate in all appropriate aspects of local community life.

3. Individuals. Throughout this section, “Coast Guard” refers to Coast Guard active duty, civilian, reserve and auxiliary members. All should adhere to these guidelines unless they conflict with guidance found within their respective manuals. As a member of the Coast Guard, you have a responsibility to “Represent the Coast Guard.” To your neighbors, to the teachers and staff at your child’s school, to the businesses you deal with – to anyone who sees you in uniform – you are the Coast Guard. The best way you can make a good impression on behalf of the service is simply by being a good neighbor.
  - a. Answering questions from the public. Because you are in the Coast Guard, people will ask you about the service and our missions. The questions may come in writing, over the telephone or face-to-face while you are doing your job – even off duty. Speak or write clearly and distinctly. Avoid jargon, acronyms, etc., which may confuse the public. Be sincere and honest. If you don’t have the answers, say so. Take the person’s name, address and phone number, and try to get them the information. Always follow up!
  - b. Get involved. If you are on active duty, you will probably spend only a few years in each community where you are stationed. But you will find those years are enriched, and your job much easier, if you get involved with the communities in which you live. You may get to like the place so much you’ll want to return for a second tour or even when you retire.

### C. COMMAND PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS.

1. Activities generally approved for participation. The Marine Corps Drill and Ceremonies Manual is the official reference and guide for planning and conducting drills and ceremonies for Coast Guard activities; the manual may be viewed in its entirety at <http://cgweb2.comdt.uscg.mil/cgdirectives/welcome.htm>.
  - a. Federal Holiday Observances. All units are encouraged to participate in local events in recognition of federal holidays, including Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, POW-MIA Day and Veterans Day.
    - (1) Coast Guard Day, August 4th, is primarily an internal activity for active-duty Coast Guard personnel, civilian members, Reservists, Auxiliarists, retirees and dependents. However, it is a good opportunity to alert the media about a feature story on the service’s rich history and contributions to the community.
      - (a) The procedures for observing Coast Guard Day are described in Coast Guard Regulations, COMDTINST 5000.7, 14-9-9.

- (b) If external organizations express interest in celebrating the anniversary, cooperate in appropriate programs, such as providing speakers, etc.
  - (c) The Congress formally recognized Grand Haven, Mich., as “Coast Guard City, U.S.A.” Other cities have since earned the designation as “A Coast Guard City.” (Chapter 7, Section 10 describes the designation process.) Many of these communities sponsor Coast Guard festivities to recognize and commemorate the contributions of the service to the United States.
- (2) Armed Forces Day/Week. This observance falls annually on the third Saturday in May and the week prior to that weekend.
- (a) Commandant (CG-09223), working with the Department of Defense Director of Community Relations, has overall responsibility, including designating regional Armed Forces Day sites. Local events are scheduled for maximum flexibility.
  - (b) District commanders and commanding officers of headquarters units coordinate Armed Forces Day programs in their areas of responsibility. They shall designate a local project officer in cities designated as regional Armed Forces Day sites.
  - (c) Maximum participation in the local community by Coast Guard active duty and Reserve units is strongly recommended. Involvement in programs that call attention to the Coast Guard’s role as one of the Armed Forces is especially desired. Participate and show your local community that the Coast Guard is proud to serve. Activities that may be considered for this period include, but are not limited to:
    - 1. Open House Programs, including activities such as aerial and static displays, exhibits, parades, special demonstrations, and military band concerts.
    - 2. Encourage active duty personnel to wear uniforms with authorized ribbons, medals, etc., wherever appropriate on and off duty throughout the week.
    - 3. Provide speakers for various civic, service, youth, veteran and business organizations.
    - 4. Participation in or sponsorship of patriotic ceremonies in the civilian community.

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5. Obtain local media (radio, television and newspaper) coverage of Coast Guard activities.
  - (3) Veterans Day. The observance falls on November 11 each year. The DOD Director of Community Relations, working with Commandant (CG-09223), designates regional observance sites. District commanders will designate a local project officer in cities designated as regional Veterans Day sites.
  - (4) Other Federal Holidays. Although other federal holidays are not designated as military observances by DOD, participation in local celebrations of Memorial Day, Independence Day, etc., are strongly encouraged and should be vigorously pursued.
- b. Civil Ceremonies. The Coast Guard participates in official civil ceremonies, including inaugurals, dedications of public buildings and projects, ceremonies for official visitors, and the convening of legislative bodies. Use of uniformed Coast Guard personnel as ushers, escorts, doormen, drivers, etc., for non-military guests or local dignitaries is generally inappropriate.
- c. Free Public Events. The Coast Guard may – and should – participate in patriotic programs, national holiday celebrations and events open to the public with no charge for admission. The Coast Guard can be a major attraction or a lesser participant in such events.
- d. Commercial Events Under Certain Conditions. The Coast Guard may participate in events that charge for admission; however, the public must not be specifically charged to observe the Coast Guard’s participation. Participation must be incidental to the main event. For example:
  - (1) A color guard appearance at a professional football game is incidental to the event, is not designed as a drawing factor for the game and does not add to the spectators’ cost.
  - (2) A parade which is more commercial than civic in emphasis is not appropriate for Coast Guard participation.
- e. Ethnic Observances. Participation in ethnic observances that have acquired the character of a broad-based public cultural observance, such as Saint Patrick’s Day, Black History Month, Mardi Gras, etc., is authorized if the occasion is formally declared a civic celebration by a mayor or governor, or a well-recognized civic non-denominational group. Participation is permissible if the public event is sponsored by an ethnic, religious or fraternal group, provided participation would not appear to endorse the group or the views or beliefs espoused by the group. The observances must not take on political overtones.

- (1) This prohibition is not intended to discourage participation in an event considered otherwise appropriate that happens to involve members of minority groups. For example, an invitation to give the graduation address at a historically black college or to play a Chinese-American baseball team would normally be welcomed as an opportunity to establish good relationships with all segments of the community.
- f. Color Guards. When a Joint Armed Forces Color Detail appears at a public event, it will be made up of: two Army bearers with National and Army colors; one each Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard personnel bearing individual service standards; and two riflemen (one Army and one Marine Corps) as escorts.
- (1) When a Joint Armed Forces Color Detail as defined above cannot be formed, the senior member of the senior service in the color guard will carry the National Colors.
  - (2) Coast Guardsmen may carry flags of foreign nations in official civil ceremonies when an official of the nation concerned is present in an official capacity and is one for whom the Coast Guard would normally render honors. In all other public events or ceremonies, Coast Guard personnel in uniform and in an official capacity are not authorized to carry flags of foreign nations, veterans' organizations or other non-military organizations.
  - (3) The following precedence, established by federal law in 1949, should be followed in parades:
    - (a) U.S. Military Academy Cadets
    - (b) U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen
    - (c) U.S. Air Force Academy Cadets
    - (d) U.S. Coast Guard Academy Cadets
    - (e) U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Midshipmen
    - (f) U.S. Army
    - (g) U.S. Marine Corps
    - (h) U.S. Navy
    - (i) U.S. Air Force

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- (j) U.S. Coast Guard
  - (k) Army National Guard
  - (l) Army Reserve
  - (m) Marine Corps Reserve
  - (n) Naval Reserve
  - (o) Air National Guard
  - (p) Air Force Reserve
  - (q) Coast Guard Reserve
  - (r) Other training organizations of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, in that order, respectively.
- (4) When the Coast Guard operates as a part of the Navy, Coast Guard Academy Cadets and Officer Candidates take precedence after Naval Academy Midshipmen; the U.S. Coast Guard takes precedence after U.S. Navy; and Coast Guard Reserve takes precedence after Naval Reserve.
- g. Speakers Bureaus. Local units who are unable to accommodate requests are encouraged to seek support from local Auxiliary units, who may have Auxiliarists available and prepared to conduct such briefings.
- (1) The speeches of Coast Guard officers, especially those who are in positions of substantial authority and access to classified and sensitive materials, are viewed by the public as not only the views of the individual but also as truthful and complete representations of United States government and Coast Guard policy. Matters involving foreign governments or other highly sensitive matters are subject to classification. Therefore, information or opinions expressed in the popular press commenting on such matters should not be repeated by official spokespersons even with the use of an identifying disclaimer.
- h. Exhibits.
- (1) General. Exhibits, including static equipment displays and artwork exhibitions, are effective ways to inform the public of Coast Guard missions and objectives. The static displays may also be used to support recruiting and safety programs.

- (2) Locally designed displays should be neat and professional. When you plan a display, consider the costs of keeping the display in good condition and up-to-date. Contact your district public affairs office or Commandant (CG-09223) for advice.
- (3) Headquarters Exhibits. Commandant (CG-09223) maintains an inventory of original artwork and portable backdrops. The backdrops may be borrowed by units for command events, recruiting efforts and special events. Original art may be borrowed by units for displays in secure areas with high traffic. Ideally, displays should be in areas visited by community leaders along with the general public. All requests for exhibits are managed by Commandant (CG-09223) and should be made six months prior to the event. Coast Guard units are responsible for the security and continued good condition of the borrowed materials.
  - (a) The portable backdrop maintained by Commandant (CG-09223) is a great way to separate the Coast Guard from the crowd at special events such as a convention, school career day or civic event. The backdrop is an 8-foot-wide-by-10-foot-tall concave stand. The bright blue fabric panels create a suitable platform to post the following, using Velcro: unit photos, informational posters or graphics. Units may request up to two backdrops for a maximum of one month. Units with a frequent need for backdrops should purchase their own. Contact Commandant (CG-09223) for information on purchasing a backdrop.
  - (b) Commandant (CG-09223) is also custodian of the collection of original Coast Guard artwork. Comprised of paintings and drawings. Artwork is available for exhibit by public entities such as museums, libraries, schools and civic and patriotic organizations as well as Coast Guard units, other military services, the government and other groups that assist in raising Coast Guard Visibility. Requesting units or organizations are completely responsible for the safety and continued good condition of the artwork as well as other displays while they are in their custody.
  - (c) Original artwork provides a unique way to depict the Coast Guard's rich heritage. Art and easels for displaying the art are available by placing a request through Commandant (CG-09223) at least six months prior to the exhibit or event. Long-term displays of several weeks to months are preferred, especially when these are viewed by large audiences. However, in certain cases, art can be made available for short-term display.

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- (d) Units should direct requests from public venues to Commandant (CG-09223) three months in advance. Coast Guard units may request original artwork from the Semper Paratus Collection which can be seen on-line at <http://www.uscg.mil/art/>. The site includes a downloadable loan request form. Original art may not be provided for private offices, decoration or change of command below the Flag level. Units are advised that they can download prints from the Visual Imagery website at <http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php>.
  - (e) Exhibits are shipped by commercial carrier. Headquarters pays for shipping from the Exhibit Center. The requesting unit pays return shipping, or shipping to the next exhibit location.
  - (f) Generally, two or three people are required to set up and take down the exhibit, carefully following the instructions inside the packing crate. You must also provide two or more people who can effectively engage the public for maximum effect and to provide security.
  - (g) The Coast Guard cannot pay exhibitor or space fees. The requesting unit is responsible for all local expenses: electricity, set up, staffing, security, etc.
  - (h) Handouts are not supplied with exhibits. Order them through normal channels. However, the art program and visual imagery websites cited above provide information such as titles, artists, and captions that can be copied to create brochures and images that can be downloaded.
  - (i) If you discover any damage to an exhibit, immediately notify the Exhibit Center at (301) 763-2865 and the Art Program Coordinator at (202) 372-4642. See also: Section 5 of this chapter.
  - (j) For more information on the Art Program, please see Section 5 of this chapter.
- (4) Aircraft Exhibitions.
- (a) Participation in static and aerial displays is covered by the guidelines found in Section C.1 and C.3 of this chapter. Additional requirements for participation can be found in Chapter 4, Section P of the Air Operations Manual (COMDTINST M3710.1 (series)). Requests must be submitted in writing to the appropriate area commander, in accordance with Chapter 4, Section P.3. of the Air Operations Manual, on Request for Military Aerial Support, form DD-2535, available on the internet:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/ddforms2500-2999.htm>.

- (b) Coast Guard aircraft may participate in appropriate public events that help contribute to recruiting or public knowledge of the Coast Guard. Participation may be a flyover, demonstration, or static display. Appropriate events include airport dedications, air shows, expositions, and fairs.
  - (c) Static displays must be held at airfields or heliports. The district commander may authorize exceptions when an alternative display area meets operations and safety requirements. While the aircraft is on display, crew members will be available to brief visitors and prevent damage to government property. Civilian sponsors will bear per diem costs and the cost of transporting and handling aircraft fuel, if fuel is not available at military contract prices.
  - (d) Aerial demonstrations must be over open water or suitable open areas of land, where spectators will be safe.
  - (e) Flyovers are appropriate for civic-sponsored, public ceremonies such as: Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day and for similar local holidays overseas; memorial services for dignitaries of the armed forces or federal government; national conventions of veterans' organizations; and occasions of more than local interest designed primarily to encourage the advancement of aviation.
- i. National Youth Organizations. The Coast Guard has a long-standing record of working with various national youth programs, as operations permit and at no cost beyond the expense of normal operations.
- (1) General guidelines for participation.
    - (a) Commands at all levels may cooperate with the Naval Sea Cadet Corps (NSCC) and the Sea Scouts, and provide de minimis logistical support to them to the extent permitted by law and regulations and on a non-interference basis.
    - (b) A collateral-duty Youth Liaison Officer is advisable on each district staff. Forward the name, title and contact information for the Youth Liaison Officer to Commandant (CG-09223).
    - (c) Meals may be sold to members of any organized, non-profit, youth group, including their adult leaders, sponsored at either the national or local level using the current enlisted commuted ration



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- rate. Emergency medical care on a humanitarian basis shall be provided.
- (d) The Coast Guard Personnel Manual COMDTINST M1000.6 (series), Chapter 7.A.10 allows unit commanders place a member participating in certain youth programs on administrative absence instead of regular leave.
  - (e) Support for youth programs does not extend to fundraising of any type.
  - (f) Scouts may hold meetings in areas of Coast Guard facilities where civilian organizations are allowed to hold events.
  - (g) Although Coast Guard units may support Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops as outlined above, the Coast Guard may not directly sponsor such troops. Support that the Coast Guard provides to Scouts is also available to civilian organizations who meet the criteria as outlined in sections 3.C.1 and 3.C.2.
  - (h) Coast Guard personnel may lead Scout troops unofficially on their own time.
- (2) Naval Sea Cadet Corps. The Naval Sea Cadet program, headquartered in Arlington, Va., is the primary youth program the Coast Guard supports. Because of its stringent membership criteria, training requirements, etc., it most closely resembles the Navy and Coast Guard.
- (a) NSCC is a Congressionally-chartered volunteer youth group for both males and females, 14 through 17 years of age. NSCC fosters good citizenship and an interest and appreciation of our nation's maritime services. Cadets wear naval uniforms modified with official NSCC insignia. Cadets are insured under a group accident program. They use the same texts, classrooms, training aids and examinations given Navy personnel. The Navy League's Vice President for Youth Programs is Chairman of NSCC's Board of Directors. Individual NSCC divisions/squadrons are sponsored, administered and supported by local Navy League councils, active duty and Reserve units, etc.
  - (b) Each year, NSCC seeks billets for two-week, on-the-job-training opportunities afloat and ashore. An annual Commandant Notice announces the program and it should be supported.
  - (c) Commands, active and reserve, can and are encouraged to sponsor NSCC units and provide adult leaders and instructors in military or

non-military subjects for NSCC programs. The NSCC has a regulation forbidding a cadet from being alone with an adult.

- (d) At the discretion of the commanding officer and with approval of the district commander, properly registered Sea Cadets may participate in Coast Guard cruises. Cadets who have not completed the two-week recruit training program at a Navy or Coast Guard recruit training center are limited to routine daylight or overnight local cruises, when there is reasonable expectation that the vessel will not have to be diverted to a hazardous mission. Cadets who have completed recruit training may take part in more extensive cruises. A properly executed NSCC Standard Release Form and orders for cruises of more than 72 hours duration will be required for each participating cadet and adult leader.
- (e) Air unit commanders and commanding officers of cutters with helicopters deployed may authorize NSCC members to fly in:
  - (1) Local orientation flights in multi-engine fixed-wing aircraft.
  - (2) Local orientation and patrol flights in helicopters in daylight, VFR conditions only.
  - (3) For more information, see Chapter 4, Section O.5 of the Coast Guard Air Operations Manual, COMDTINST M3710.1 (series).
- (f) Cadets must wear the proper uniform, carry an NSCC ID card and present a properly executed Standard Release Form. Generally, one adult leader will accompany each eight cadets. The senior leader is responsible for the cadets' proper guidance, conduct and compliance with instructions issued by the unit commander.
- (g) When cadets are on board, they may use NAFA facilities as permitted by the Non-Appropriated Fund Activities Manual, COMDTINST M7010.5.
- (h) Each year, NSCC sponsors an annual exchange program with the Canadian Sea Cadet Organization. The Canadian program, including its insurance program, is similar to NSCC. The national NSCC office has asked the Coast Guard to provide training for the Canadian exchange cadets. Training for properly registered Canadian sea cadets should follow the policies established for NSCC.

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- (3) Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America. The Coast Guard also has a long tradition of supporting Scouting. Of the three basic Scouting programs, the Explorers (especially Sea Scouts) are old enough to reap many benefits from the Coast Guard. Explorers are coed programs with members aged 14 to 18.
  - (a) Our Scouting support is not a recruiting effort. Coast Guard personnel may answer career-oriented questions but should not engage in direct recruitment.
  - (b) Commandant (CG-09223) is the national liaison with the Scouts and serves on the National Sea Scout Advisory Committee and Community Relations Committee. District Youth Liaison Officers should work closely with regional and local leaders.
  - (c) Scouts of all programs are welcome at Coast Guard units for tours or other activities. They may camp for short periods if units have suitable facilities, with approval from the district commander.
  - (d) Scouts may use training and recreation facilities at Coast Guard facilities. This can include assigning Coast Guard instructors in non-military subjects – particularly on water safety.
  - (e) Unit commanders, with approval from the district commander, may authorize Scouts to go on routine daylight or overnight local cruises when it is reasonable to expect that the vessel will not be diverted to a hazardous mission. Each Scout must sign a properly executed release form.
  - (f) Air unit commanders may authorize Scouts to go on local orientation flights. For more information, see Chapter 4, Section O.5 of the Coast Guard Air Operations Manual, COMDTINST M3710.1 (series).
  - (g) When Scouts are camped at a Coast Guard shore unit or embarked in a Coast Guard vessel, they may receive the following services, if available and appropriate:
    - (1) Suitable lodging, with laundering costs borne by the Scouts.
    - (2) Use of exchange, limited to purchase of items for immediate personal use. See the Non-Appropriated Fund Activities Manual (COMDTINST M7010.5).
    - (3) On-the-job training.

- (h) Boy Scouts who attain the rank of Eagle Scout and Girl Scouts who receive the Gold Award are eligible to receive a certificate from the Commandant of the Coast Guard. Refer requests to Commandant (CG-09223).
- j. Volunteerism.
- (1) Policy. The President has directed federal agencies to encourage all employees – including military – to volunteer their time and talents to community programs.
    - (a) Commandant (CG-09223) is the Coast Guard coordinator. District and unit commanders carry out the effort at the local level.
    - (b) Personal involvement should occur on personal time and can include a variety of projects, including local charities, sports programs, Scouting, counseling, school activities, etc.
    - (c) No Coast Guard unit or person may expend federal funds in support of voluntarism.
  - (2) Partnership in Education. A strong voluntarism program is “Partnership in Education.” The Coast Guard encourages commands at all levels to support “adopt a school” efforts. Volunteer activities can include tutoring students, supporting extracurricular activities, etc. See Coast Guard Partnership In Education COMDTINST 5350.22 (series) for guidance on setting up a partnership for your unit.
    - (a) Private Schools. The Coast Guard can support private schools, including establishing Partnerships in Education, when participation clearly supports education or recruiting.
  - (3) First Book. As an extension of the Partnership in Education program, the Coast Guard has established a national partnership with First Book, a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to give disadvantaged children the opportunity to read and own their first books. Commandant (CG-09223) is the Coast Guard’s national coordinator for the partnership. Support for First Book is voluntary and is to be provided as operations permit; additional information is provided in Coast Guard Partnership With First Book COMDTINST 5350.5. Support may include but is not limited to making spaces, facilities and vessels available to:
    - (a) Store and help facilitate the distribution of new books to disadvantaged children.

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- (b) Host book parties sponsored by First Book.
  - (c) Host unit tours for First Book children.
  - (4) Drug Education Programs. Participation in local programs of drug awareness education also is encouraged. While the Coast Guard's involvement in drug law enforcement causes its members to be perceived as authorities on the subject by the civilian community, Coast Guard personnel should generally limit their comments to operational activities of the service.
  - (5) Environmental Cleanup Programs. Team Coast Guard is encouraged to participate in community environmental cleanup activities including Earth Day, beach cleanups and Adopt-a-Highway programs.
2. Activities generally not approved for participation. Unit commanders must adhere to the following guidelines when determining possible participation in an activity:
- a. Discrimination. The Coast Guard must not support any event or organization that discriminates in any way, such as excluding any person from its membership, because of sex, race, creed, color, age or national origin. This does not include well-recognized patriotic, military, and civic organizations whose membership may be composed of persons of similar characteristics, but do not espouse discriminatory or chauvinist principles, and where the particular event benefits the public. For example, support for ethnic-related organizations is appropriate in support of programs oriented to the veteran rather than the sectarian or national origin objectives of the organization (e.g., Polish War Vets, Catholic War Vets, etc.).
  - b. Organizations and Events of a Religious or Fraternal Nature. The Coast Guard must not, as an organization, lend support to religious, sectarian or fraternal organizations other than internal publicity for religious events. (See para C.1.e. above concerning support to public broad-based cultural observances.)
    - (1) Religious, sectarian and fraternal groups include, but are not limited to: B'Nai B'Rith, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Loyal Order of the Moose, Free and Accepted Masons (Scottish Rite, York Rite and Shrine), Knights of Columbus, Knights Templar, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and Order of the Eastern Star, and religious or ideological movements such as "Up With People."
    - (2) Service or luncheon clubs are not considered fraternal groups. Examples of such clubs are: Rotary International, Kiwanis International, Lions International, Optimists, Toastmasters International or Junior Chambers

of Commerce, etc. Coast Guard participation in activities sponsored by service clubs is generally permissible so long as the event does not violate any of the other restrictions.

- (3) Of course, individuals may choose to exercise their freedom of religion and freedom of association when they are not representing the Coast Guard.
- c. Favoritism. Be careful not to repeatedly support only a few organizations, while turning down others. Do not play favorites.
  - d. Endorsements. The Coast Guard must not directly or indirectly endorse, or selectively benefit or favor, by participation or cooperation with any private individual, sect, fraternal organization, commercial venture, corporation (whether profit or nonprofit), political group, quasi-religious or ideological movement or be associated with the solicitation of votes in a political campaign. Contact Commandant (CG-09223) for guidance.
  - e. Coast Guard assets. Coast Guard assets, including facilities, and ships, may not be used as backdrops or as transportation for media or community relations events hosted by other U.S. government entities unless the Coast Guard is a participating partner in the event itself.
  - f. Political Conventions and Campaign Activities. The following guidance must be followed in contacts with political candidates and political campaign organizations. The Coast Guard does not provide facilities, bands, color guards or other military support for political candidates (either incumbent or new office seekers), or their staffs, for political assemblies, meetings, fund-raising or other partisan activities. Political candidates for elective office may be given the same access to units to which any other visitor is entitled. Active-duty Coast Guard personnel may not participate in partisan political campaigns or conventions, *except* as a spectator when *not* in uniform, or make public speeches at such events. The wearing of the uniform by Coast Guard personnel (including retired members and members of the Reserve and Auxiliary) is prohibited during or in connection with furthering political activities, private employment or commercial interests, when an inference of official sponsorship for the activity or interest may be drawn.
    - (1) Coast Guard personnel may not attend partisan political events in uniform, even if only as “honorees.” A sharply limited exception is made to provide Armed Forces color guards for national-level political conventions; such requests are handled by Commandant (CG-0922).
    - (2) Active-duty members may not make speeches at partisan political events, in or out of uniform. Reserve members not on active duty may make speeches at partisan political events, but may not do so in uniform,

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and must comply with the general requirement that “any activity that may be viewed as associating the Coast Guard directly or indirectly with a partisan political event shall be avoided.”

- (3) The use of Coast Guard personnel or facilities, implying in any way the endorsement of a particular candidate, is forbidden. The Coast Guard properly plays no role in partisan politics and it is wrong to create the impression that it does. Moreover, federal law prohibits the participation of Coast Guard personnel, and the use of Coast Guard facilities, for partisan political purposes. The Coast Guard does not provide facilities, bands, color guards or other military support for political candidates (either incumbent or new office seekers), or their staffs, for political assemblies, meetings, fund-raising or other partisan activities. Political candidates for elective office may be given the same access to units to which any other visitor is entitled.
- (4) When responding to queries from political campaign organizations, only information that is available to the general public shall be provided.
- (5) Unit magazines, newsletters and newspapers will not carry partisan discussions, cartoons, editorials or commentaries pertaining to partisan or campaign issues, or political advertisements.
- (6) Commanding officers must not permit the use of government facilities by any candidate, either incumbent or challenger, for political purposes, such as assemblies, meetings, or press conferences. Members of Congress or other elected officials may visit units and receive briefings related to their official duties. All candidates must only be given the same access as a member of the general public. In all cases of visits commanding officers will inform candidates in advance that all political activity and media events are prohibited. Media cannot accompany any candidate during a visit.
- (7) Community relations support, such as speakers, color guards or marching units, must not be provided for political meetings or activities.
- (8) Speeches, articles and public comment by military personnel in their official capacities as service representatives must not contain material that could be construed as political in nature.
- (9) Requests from candidates to tape or film campaign material at Coast Guard units must be denied. The Coast Guard cannot prohibit taping or filming from outside its property.
- (10) Military personnel are prohibited from distributing campaign material at Coast Guard units.

- (11) All personnel, military active duty and reserve and civilian are encouraged to personally participate in the elective process with their right to register and vote, but must exercise care in keeping personal activities and official activities separate.
  - (12) Specific guidance about permissible and prohibited political activities may be found in DOD Directive 1344.10 (August 2, 2004).
- g. Fund-Raising Activities. The Coast Guard cannot devote official time to every charity's fund-raising activity, however deserving it may be. This government-wide policy simply recognizes that there are practical limits on the government's ability to extend official support to every worthwhile local, regional, national and international charity. It carries no direct or indirect judgment of any charity.
- (1) National efforts. Normally, the Coast Guard will direct most support toward its official national or joint campaigns, which are the Combined Federal Campaign and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.
  - (2) By federal rule, Coast Guard personnel cannot personally solicit funds from known prohibited sources or from subordinates – even when fundraising in an unofficial capacity for a private organization. Individual Coast Guardsmen and their families may fill their roles as responsible citizens by working as volunteers, during their own personal time, on fund-raising activities for recognized charities. They may not, however, wear the uniform, represent themselves as acting on behalf of the Coast Guard, or imply any Coast Guard endorsement.
- h. Limitations on the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Auxiliarists and Auxiliary units are not authorized to directly sponsor any youth groups or training programs such as the Naval Sea Cadets or Scouting. Public education programs or Coast Guard active duty prototype support initiatives may be offered, but Auxiliary participation in such programs (other than public education and other support activities specifically approved by the Commandant) shall be as a private citizen, not as an Auxiliarist. This sponsorship prohibition does not restrict providing the normal Auxiliary programs available to any other citizen or organization within the scope of available personnel and equipment resources to do so, or in attending such functions as the National Scouting Jamboree or similar events.
- i. Exceptions. Possible exceptions for specific cases must be referred to Commandant (CG-09223) for approval and coordination with other government agencies.



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3. Coast Guard-affiliated organizations. The Coast Guard's relationships with the Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association, the Coast Guard Academy Parents' Association and the Coast Guard Foundation are regulated by Relations with the Coast Guard Foundation, COMDTINST 5760.12 (series) and Relations with the Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association (CGAAA) and the Coast Guard Academy Parents Association (CGAPA), COMDTINST 5760.13 (series). Contact the servicing legal officer for your command if you have a question about working with these organizations.
4. Other organizations. Refer to DOD Instruction 5410.20 (Jan. 16, 1974) for guidance on Coast Guard relations with Business and Nongovernmental Organizations Representing Business. Although the DOD instruction expressly applies only to DOD elements, the Coast Guard adopts the guidance in the DOD Instruction as a matter of policy.

D. (CG-0922) RESPONSIBILITIES IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

1. National Organizations. Commandant (CG-09223) is the primary Coast Guard contact for all types of national organizations and the editors of their internal publications. These include service-related, youth and other groups. District commanders shall designate liaison officers to work with regional leaders of national organizations.
  - a. Local unit commanders should deal directly, and to the best of their commands' abilities, with local chapters, except in the Washington, D.C., area, where groups should be referred to Commandant (CG-09223) for support.
  - b. Service-oriented organizations. These include: The Navy League, The American Legion, the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars and others. Suggested activities can be, but are not limited to: inviting organization leaders to Coast Guard ceremonies; providing color guards for their ceremonies; recognizing their exceptional efforts; providing speakers, tours, cruises, videos, pamphlets, etc., to help keep the leaders abreast of local, district and national Coast Guard matters.
    - (1) Navy League of the United States. The Navy League, founded in 1902, a key organization for the Coast Guard, is headquartered at Arlington, Va. The 70,000+ member League is an independent, non-profit, civilian, educational organization with a strong concern for our nation's naval and maritime efforts. (The term "Navy" League is misleading, for it supports Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and maritime efforts.) The Coast Guard enjoys an equal status with Navy, Marine Corps and Merchant Marine in working with the League.

- (a) Navy League is headed by an elected national president, national vice presidents, regional presidents, state presidents, national directors and local council presidents. By-laws prohibit active duty personnel from being members.
  - (b) The Navy League presents the Jarvis and Munro awards, two annual, national awards recognizing outstanding Coast Guard enlisted and officer personnel. The awards are separate and distinct from the military decorations and awards program. The Jarvis and Munro awards are explained in further detail in the Awards chapter of this manual.
- (2) The American Legion. The American Legion, chartered by Congress in 1919, is headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind., with offices in Washington, D.C. It has over three million members and is a patriotic, mutual-help, community-service organization of honorably discharged veterans. Only veterans having served at least one day of active military duty in certain periods of armed conflict, who are honorably discharged or still serving honorably are eligible for membership. The Legion is led by an elected National Commander, State Department Commanders and local Post Commanders.
- (a) Each year the American Legion holds a national convention in a major city. The Department of Defense (DOD) names one of the five services as executive agent to coordinate military convention support. Commandant (CG-09223) notifies the appropriate district PAO of the convention site and dates, and asks that a local project officer, active duty or reserve, be assigned to work with the DOD coordinator. The local project officer coordinates Coast Guard convention participation including appropriate color guard and/or marching support of the American Legion National Convention Parade.
  - (b) Each service names a flag/general rank officer to act as a Deputy Grand Marshal for the National Convention Parade. For the Coast Guard, this is generally the district commander. If the district commander is not available, Commandant (CG-09223) secures another flag representative.
- (3) Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association. The Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association is a nonprofit corporation of active duty, retirees, reserves and honorably discharged members of the Coast Guard who served in or provided direct support to combat situations recognized by an appropriate military award while serving as a member of the United States Coast Guard.

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- (4) Veterans of Foreign Wars. The VFW, tracing its beginnings to 1899, has more than two million veteran members, and is headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., with offices in Washington, D.C. It was chartered by Congress in 1936 as a fraternal, patriotic, historical and educational organization of veterans. Foreign service, an honorable discharge and United States citizenship are the qualifications for membership. The VFW is led by an elected national Commander-in-Chief, State Department Commanders, and local Post Commanders.
    - (a) The same procedures apply to the VFW national convention and parade as for the American Legion convention. See paragraph 3.D.1.b.(2) above.
    - (b) The VFW also provides free exhibit space at the national convention. The local project officer is responsible for obtaining an appropriate exhibit.
  - (5) Coast Guard Reunion Groups. While many reunion groups cater to World War II veterans, there is a growing number of post-WWII era groups. These Coast Guard veterans enjoy their association with the service and deserve active support, such as providing tours, speakers, color guards, copies of Coast Guard brochures, etc.
  - (6) Other national associations include: Naval Order of the United States, American Veterans, Disabled American Veterans, Fleet Reserve, National Defense Transportation, Non-Commissioned Officers, Reserve Officers, Military Officers, The Retired Officers, The Retired Enlisted, Vietnam Veterans, etc. Support for these organizations may include speakers and unit tours.
2. The CGC EAGLE.
- a. The Superintendent, USCG Academy, in consultation with Commanding Officer, CGC Eagle, and Commandant (CG-751), responds to all Eagle port visit invitations. The Coast Guard receives more requests than can be accommodated without interfering with Eagle's training mission. Requests or recommendations on domestic port visits should arrive at the Academy not later than 1 September the year before the cruise.
  - b. Superintendent (spa), in consultation with Eagle's commanding officer, authorizes guests to sail on Eagle. If it appears that there will be several requests in your area to ride Eagle, the unit commander should designate a representative to coordinate local requests and work with the Superintendent (spa).

- c. Superintendent, USCG Academy, in cooperation with Commandant (CG-09223), coordinates community relations support for port visits and conducts related promotion efforts.
  - d. When asking for an Eagle visit, keep in mind that training is the objective dominating all Eagle scheduling decisions. Time is limited. Eagle does not sail all year, as some other tall ships do. This prevents the cutter's participation in many events to which it is invited, including, generally, calls to our own U.S. West Coast ports.
3. The Coast Guard Band.
- a. Background. The Coast Guard Band, our premiere service band and only full-time music organization, is stationed at New London, Conn. The band is engaged in three functions: service requests, public requests and scheduled tours. Commandant (CG-09223) schedules all band engagements beyond 50 miles of New London. Submit requests for band appearances to Commandant (CG-09223).
  - b. Restrictions.
    - (1) As a matter of policy, Coast Guard Band members cannot engage in any off-duty musical performance activity for pay that interferes with a local musician's employment opportunity.
    - (2) The band may, with approval from Commandant (CG-09223), provide patriotic programs at national conventions and meetings of nationally-recognized civic, patriotic and veterans' organizations.
    - (3) The band receives more requests than it can fill. To ensure the widest exposure and to avoid favoritism, repeat performances are generally not granted.
    - (4) Even when the band is committed for an event, official Coast Guard activities take precedence over any other appearance.
  - c. Service Requests. Commands may request appearances at ceremonies and other events, such as changes of command, dinings in, retreats, etc. The requesting command must fund transportation, lodging, meals and other incidental expenses. Ample planning may allow for a band visit during a scheduled tour, reducing unit costs. Background, dinner, dance or other social music for service-sponsored events are permitted only for events held at military installations.
  - d. Public Requests. Public events must be in the best interests of the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard will participate only if the event (parade, concert,

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etc.) meets general community relations criteria, at no additional cost to the government. The sponsor must fund transportation, meals, lodging, promotion efforts, ticket printing and distribution, programs, sites, and all incidental expenses connected with the appearance. Such funding is legally considered as a gift. Commandant (CG-00), Commandant (CG-09), Commandant (CG-8), area commanders, MLC commanders, district commanders and the Coast Guard Academy superintendent all have the authority to accept offers by outside sources to pay for band travel. The authority for accepting gifts must comply with the following item:

- (1) The acceptance and collection of cash or checks for the purposes above will be handled in accordance with Part IV, Chapter 8 of the Comptroller Manual, Vol. I, COMDTINST M7300.4 (series). Each gift offer must be reviewed by a staff legal officer for potential conflict of interest. Travel orders authorizing performances by bands, honor guards and drill teams must contain the following statement regarding legal reviews: "Appropriate conflict of interest reviews have been completed. There is no conflict of interest involved with this donor's gift(s)."

- e. **Scheduled Tours.** The band conducts a few short tours each year, with free public concert appearances. Coast Guard families and friends are encouraged to attend when locations are convenient. Daytime school visits are often included in the band's tour.

- (1) Tour schedules are normally decided one year in advance and generally do not allow for added performances. If you want your community considered in a future tour, submit your suggestion early.
- (2) Commandant (CG-0922) funds tour transportation and per diem. Local sponsors are required to fund and carry out promotion, ticket printing and distribution, programs, sites, and all incidental expenses connected to the performance. Newspapers are generally the most capable sponsors. While the band generally visits large communities, travel is limited to two hours between sites. This allows the band to serve smaller communities and perform in schools during the day.

#### 4. Ceremonial Honor Guard.

- a. **Background.** The Coast Guard Ceremonial Honor Guard is stationed at U.S. Coast Guard Information Systems Center, Alexandria, Va. The Ceremonial Honor Guard is under the direct control of the Military District of Washington and loaned to the Coast Guard for special events. The Military District of Washington uses the Ceremonial Honor Guard for White House functions, dignitary visits, state funerals and other high-level, official ceremonial events.

- b. Volunteer Units. Within the Ceremonial Honor Guard are separate teams – a precision drill team, a parade unit and a color guard. These units may be available for public performances; however, official honor guard activities take priority over other appearances. Submit requests to Commandant (CG-09223) for engagements outside Washington, D.C.
  - c. Service Requests. Requesting commands must fund all transportation, lodging and meals and other incidental expenses.
  - d. Public Requests. Public events must be in the best interests of the Coast Guard and the event sponsor. The Coast Guard will participate only if the event meets general community relations criteria and is without additional cost to the government. The sponsor must fund transportation, meals, lodging, promotion efforts, ticket printing and distribution, programs, sites, and all incidental expenses connected with the appearance (See para. 3.D.3.d, above).
  - e. Tours. Neither the Ceremonial Honor Guard, nor its units, go on tour.
5. Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP).
- a. Salmagundi Club. The Salmagundi Art Club of New York encourages established artists and illustrators to donate their time and talent to the Coast Guard. Artists submit samples of their work to the COGAP Membership Committee of the Club to determine acceptance into the program. Annually, COGAP members submit samples of their work for acceptance into the collection. The works are reviewed in January by the Club's Excellence Committee and the Coast Guard. Works selected are officially accepted by the Coast Guard in a June ceremony. In most cases, the artists give the Coast Guard all rights to their work, including reproduction rights.
  - b. Society of Illustrators. This professional society administers a program through which the Coast Guard annually pays a modest honorarium to a small number of professional illustrators, selected by the society, to depict contemporary Coast Guard scenes. These illustrators retain reproduction rights to their drawings.
  - c. Tracking artwork and loans. Commandant (CG-09223) will collect original artwork for displays throughout the Coast Guard and will maintain records of all items in the collection and records for external and intra-Coast Guard loans.
    - (1) Loans to Coast Guard commands and units will be recorded on loan forms and inventory transfer from DD1149. The two forms, along with a government bill of lading, will be shipped with out-going loans and

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signed copies of the loan forms will be returned to the connection manager upon receipt of the loan.

- (2) A hard copy of these forms will be maintained at the Exhibit Center. If custodial responsibility for the art changes before the loan is due back, an amended form 1149 with the name of the new custodian must be sent or faxed to the collection manager.
  - (3) Should art arrived damaged, be lost or stolen during the display, units must immediately notify Commandant (CG-09223).
  - (4) All loans, with an accompanying government bill of lading, will be returned to the Coast Guard Exhibit Center. Units will be responsible for packing art and return shipping costs.
  - (5) If returned art has been damaged, this will be recorded and units may be notified if they are liable for the damage.
  - (6) Commandant (CG-09223) will conduct a yearly inventory of all holdings in the collection. Units will be responsible for maintaining up-to-date property records on COGAP art on loan to them.
- e. **Reproduction.** Original artwork from the Coast Guard's premiere art collection is not used for private offices, decoration or change of command ceremonies below the Flag level. Units desiring reproductions may download images from the collection by visiting Visual Imagery's website at <http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/mmain.pho>. If an image of the work being sought for reproduction is not available, units may contact Commandant (CG-09223) to determine if transparencies are for loan to photo contractors. Units must bear the costs for the reproductions, including framing.
- f. For additional information on the COGAP Program, see earlier section on exhibits in "Command Participation in Community Events."
6. Launchings and Christenings.
- a. The contractor generally arranges for the ceremony, bearing all expenses.
  - b. The project resident officer (PRO) will coordinate all arrangements with the contractor and will coordinate the invitation lists with Commandant (CG-09223) and Commandant (CG-0921). The project resident officer will ask the contractor to extend invitations to the principal speaker and the sponsor, both named by the Commandant. While publicity is the responsibility of the contractor, the PRO shall send advance copies of all releases and press kits to Commandant (CG-09223) and to the appropriate District Public Affairs officers in time to permit Service release through Coast Guard channels.

- c. When the ceremony date is set, the PRO will notify the District where the vessel will be home ported, the host District and Commandant (CG-09223).
  - d. District Commanders will provide proposed invitation lists to the PRO.
  - e. Commandant (CG-0921) will recommend a sponsor and principal speaker to the Commandant and will send the Commandant's decisions to the PRO. The PRO will issue travel orders for the sponsor and principal speaker, the cost of which will be charged against AC&I funds, provided the travel orders are in conformity with Invitational Travel, COMDTINST 12570.3 (series).
  - f. For new patrol boats, christening and commissioning may often be combined in a single ceremony after delivery. District commanders will coordinate with Commandant (CG-0921) to determine keynote speakers and sponsors for WPBs (less than 120' in length).
7. Commissionings.
- a. District and Area Commanders are responsible for commissioning ceremonies held in their jurisdictions, including the date of the ceremony. The headquarters program manager is responsible for commissioning ceremonies of headquarters units. The date of commissioning ceremonies will be coordinated with Commandant (CG-0921) to accommodate attendance of the keynote speaker and sponsor. The prospective commanding officer (PCO) is responsible for publicity. The District Public Affairs Officer and Commandant (CG-09223) will help the PCO as needed.
  - b. The PCO will notify Commandant (CG-09223) of the commissioning date and send invitations to guests. The PCO will compile guest lists in cooperation with the district commander, Commandant (CG-09223), and Commandant (CG-0921). Advance copies of news releases should be supplied to the district and Headquarters public affairs offices to permit simultaneous release. All commissioning expenses will be borne by the unit being commissioned.
  - c. The project residence office, or the headquarters program manager, will issue travel orders in conformity with Invitational Travel, COMDTINST 12570.3 (series) for the vessel sponsor to participate in commissioning ceremonies (the cost of these orders will be charged against the vessel's AC&I funds). Commandant (CG-09223) will coordinate the headquarters input to the invitation list and provide the list to the PCO.



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8. Naming of Cutters and Shore Facilities.
  - a. Standing Board. The Commandant has appointed a standing board to make recommendations and review all requests to the Commandant for final approval for cutter names and facility names. Commandant (CG-0922) chairs the board consisting of representatives from Commandant (CG-37), (CG-4), (CG-09223), (CG-09224), (CG-005), and (CG-00B). It is the responsibility of this board to review all nominations and make sound recommendations to the Commandant for final approval for both cutters and shore facilities.
  - b. Nominations and Approvals. District commanders and commanding officers of headquarters units should submit nominations to Commandant (CG-09223) at least six months before the expected dedication date. Nominations for naming facilities after an individual must meet a particularly rigorous standard and such proposals should offer a detailed explanation of the historical significance of the individual's contributions. Commandant (CG-09223) can help research names if asked far enough in advance (6-12 months).
  - c. Cutters. All ships 65 feet and over. Cutters shall be named after significant geographic locations; distinguished service members and key persons shaping Coast Guard history; Secretaries of the department under which the Coast Guard has served or is serving; important events throughout Coast Guard history; other service ships that were manned by Coast Guard personnel; famous past cutters; flowers/trees; birds; lakes; Indian tribes; Greek gods; winds; bays; rivers; islands; points; capes; tools; nautical gear (e.g. vice, bit, chock, anvil, etc.). The board may consider other categories of names that a nomination official substantiates as appropriate. Please reference the Policy for Naming of Cutters and Shore Facilities COMDTINST 5726.10 (series) when submitting a naming request.
  - d. Buildings. Any and all types of buildings to include: barracks, mess hall, administration buildings, hangars, athletic facilities, supply depots, etc. Buildings will be named for deceased individuals with historical significance to the Coast Guard. They include Coast Guardsmen who are: firsts/lasts, died in action or line of duty while involved in an act of heroism, heroes, famous lifesavers, or known for some heroic deed. The board will also consider Coast Guard-related heroes; Life-Saving, Lighthouse and Revenue Cutter Service personnel; lifesaving medal winners and people having a significant impact on Coast Guard history.
  - e. Outdoor Facilities. Outdoor facilities (athletic fields, port facilities, air fields, hangars, etc.) will be named for cutters, historically significant people, famous battles, nautical terms, noteworthy rescues, or former lighthouses, light stations or lifesaving stations.

- f. Streets, roads, circles, avenues, lanes, and parking lots shall be named for Coast Guard cutters, historically significant people, famous battles, nautical terms, lighthouses, light stations, lifesaving stations, or noteworthy rescues. The board has delegated to unit and/or installation commanders the authority to name roads, streets, avenues and drives.
- g. Interior compartments are not required to go before the board for approval. Examples of these include: classrooms, wings, halls, miscellaneous rooms, etc. Naming these compartments, while they do not require Commandant approval, is still a matter that should be researched thoroughly to ensure they are named after deserving members who meet the heroic or distinguished requirements. Names for compartments that have not been officially approved by the board may not be affixed permanently to the space or compartment.

#### E. THE USE OF PROTECTED WORDS AND SYMBOLS.

##### 1. General policy.

- a. Use of the U.S. Coast Guard's name by non-federal entities requires the approval of the Coast Guard. The Community Relations Branch of (CG-09223) is the point of contact.
- b. Federal law (14 USC 639) is the basis for Coast Guard policy. The law protects the words "United States Coast Guard," or any variation thereof, including but not limited to "USCG" and "U.S. Coast Guard." This law prohibits the use of these words as part of a business name; for the purposes of trade or business; or as part of any advertisement that would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the individual, business or association has any connection with the Coast Guard. The law also prohibits anyone from falsely representing that any project, business, product or service is in anyway endorsed, authorized or approved by the Coast Guard.
- c. The Coast Guard may approve the use of its protected words and symbols by non-federal entities provided that the usage falls within the provisions of the federal law, the public interest is served and the Coast Guard in no way appears to endorse a product or service.
- d. Requirements for Coast Guard approval apply to all forms of promotional materials (such as advertising, marketing, publicity or public relations) intended for use via any media (such as publications, radio, television, visual aids, billboards, direct mail, telephone solicitation). While the requirement applies primarily to the use of the name "Coast Guard" in a commercial promotion, it also applies to promotions by non-profit organizations. For example, a non-profit association would need Coast Guard approval for a

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press release or a public service announcement claiming Coast Guard support for their project.

- e. Requirement for Coast Guard approval also applies to filming or photographing, or use of Coast Guard imagery, of Coast Guard assets for promotional use by outside entities.
  - f. Development of new technologies and entertainment markets has necessitated widening the scope of these responsibilities to include direct-sale video, CD-ROM, internet programs, toys and other entertainment media.
  - g. The Coast Guard does not cooperate with tobacco or alcohol advertisers.
2. Approval authority.
- a. Commandant (CG-09223) clears all Coast Guard participation in promotional material or campaigns.
  - b. District Public Affairs officers are not authorized to clear materials intended for local use within district boundaries. Districts should refer requests regarding clearance to Commandant (CG-09223).
3. Approval Criteria. To obtain Coast Guard approval and cooperation, sponsors must submit scripts, layouts with text, photographs and/or illustrations for review. To be approved, promotional material:
- a. Must constitute a statement of fact, without misleading information or objectionable features.
  - b. Must not imply that a product or service is endorsed by the Coast Guard. The fact that the Coast Guard may purchase or use a product or service is not an endorsement. As long as it does not imply endorsement, the promotional material may call attention to products or services actually used by the Coast Guard.
  - c. Must not present testimonials by representatives of the Coast Guard.
  - d. Must not portray Coast Guard personnel using or otherwise showing a preference for the product or service being advertised.
  - e. Must neither indicate that a product has undergone service tests, nor disclose results of service tests.
  - f. Must not imply Coast Guard responsibility for the accuracy of the advertiser's claims.

- g. Must be in good taste.
  - h. Must not divulge classified information.
  - i. Must comply with laws protecting the rights of privacy of military personnel, civilian employees and dependents whose photographs, names or statements appear in the advertisement or public relations material.
4. Coast Guard Mark, Emblem and Seal. CG-09223 clears the use of the Coast Guard mark, emblem or seal. Even Coast Guard personnel may not use Coast Guard insignia in fund-raising materials without CG-09223 approval.
- a. Policy. U.S. Coast Guard Heraldry, COMDTINST M5200.14 (Series) defines the official Seal and Emblem and prescribes their use. Coast Guard Regulations, COMDTINST 5000.3B (22 Sep 1992), and 14 USC 638 expressly preclude certain uses of the Coast Guard “ensign, pennant, or other identifying insignia prescribed for Coast Guard vessels or aircraft.” The words “or other identifying insignia prescribed for Coast Guard vessels or aircraft” includes the Coast Guard Mark and Coast Guard Emblem.
  - b. Seal. The Coast Guard Seal is a pair of crossed anchors superimposed by a life ring with shield and surrounded by a line grommet. The Seal must not be reproduced outside the Coast Guard. The wall plaque reproduction of the Seal may be loaned on license agreements to service-related organizations by Commandant (CG-09223). Temporary use of the plaque by service-related organizations is approved. Exceptions include allowing use of the Seal in most instances where all other service seals will be displayed.
  - c. Mark and Emblem. The Coast Guard Mark (“racing stripe”) and/or Emblem (similar to seal but without line grommet) must not be reproduced outside the Coast Guard without approval. Vendors or others wishing to reproduce these identifying symbols must submit an outline of the intended use and a copy of the proposed design to Commandant (CG-09223).
  - d. Ensign and Standard. The Coast Guard has both an Ensign (vertical red stripes) and a Standard (white field with blue eagle).
    - (1) The Ensign is a symbol of United States Coast Guard law enforcement authority and is, by law, restricted to official use only.
    - (2) The Coast Guard Standard is used during parades and ceremonies and is adorned by our 34 battle streamers. Service-related organizations may use the Standard on temporary loan with approval from Commandant (CG-09223).

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- (3) The Coast Guard cannot donate or sell flags to individuals or organizations. Flags of historical interest or value should be sent to the Coast Guard Exhibit Center.
  - e. All members of Team Coast Guard – active duty, Reserve and civilian – also must submit an outline of and proposed design of any intended use of Coast Guard insignia for unofficial purposes. Coast Guard insignia may never be used for fund-raising purposes, even by private organizations with Coast Guard memberships, such as officer or enlisted organizations.
5. Personnel. In approved promotional material, the Coast Guard will permit:
  - a. Use of Coast Guard personnel provided that:
    - (1) Personnel are not inconvenienced and neither their training nor regular duties are interrupted.
    - (2) They are not paid for their appearance.
    - (3) The advertiser obtains permission of the personnel involved.
  - b. Use of professional models in Coast Guard uniforms as long as they meet uniform regulations and do not discredit the Coast Guard.
6. Official Photographs. Upon request, the Coast Guard may supply official photographs for use in approved promotions. Official photographs are available on the Coast Guard Imagery database, accessible through the World Wide Web at [cgvi.uscg.mil](http://cgvi.uscg.mil).
7. Internet.
  - a. Official Coast Guard World Wide Web sites may not include any advertisements. Official Coast Guard sites may provide hyperlinks to sites outside the public sector provided that there is no perception of implied endorsement of any product or service.
  - b. Commercial and personal Internet sites may include links to official Coast Guard Web Sites. The Coast Guard Emblem and Mark may be used as hyperlink buttons from a commercial Web site to an official Coast Guard Web site provided that the insignia is used in good taste and is not used to portray the commercial Web site as an official Coast Guard site. The Coast Guard Seal is reserved for official Coast Guard use and may not be used as a hyperlink button on such web sites.
  - c. The words “United States Coast Guard” or “USCG” or any variation thereof may not be used for commercial purposes as part of an Internet domain name,

email address or to “brand” Web pages by any commercial or private entity. Federal law (14 USC, Section 639) is the basis for this Coast Guard policy. The law prohibits unauthorized use of the words “Coast Guard,” or any variation thereof, to lead people to believe that any individual, association or business has any connection with the Coast Guard. The same law also prohibits anyone from falsely representing that a product or service is in any way endorsed, authorized or approved by the Coast Guard.

F. JOINT CIVILIAN ORIENTATION CONFERENCE.

1. Secretary of Defense program. The JCOC program, sponsored each year by the Secretary of Defense, brings together 60 noted civilians from around the country – a broad cross-section of opinion leaders – and gives them a weeklong, intense orientation on the U.S. military. The program begins with high-level briefings at the Pentagon and then takes the participants to various installations across the country for “hands-on” experience.
  - a. Commandant (CG-09223) is the coordinator for Coast Guard participation. CG-09223 releases an ALCOAST each year requesting nominations for the program.
  - b. The Coast Guard has been allocated 15 JCOC nominations. Nominators should focus particular attention on leaders of institutions and organizations who, both professionally and personally, communicate on an on-going basis with key audiences. Examples of appropriate nominees include, but are not limited to: presidents of universities and colleges; publishers or editors of newspapers and others with management positions in print or broadcast media; published authors and syndicated columnists; national association and regional leaders of professional, minority and women’s organizations; rising state and local elected and appointed officials; and CEOs and senior officials of private enterprises with regional or national reach. Once nominees are selected and invited to attend they are responsible for the cost of the trip if they choose to accept their selection. The cost of the trip can vary from \$2,000 dollars to \$3,000 depending upon the location of the conference.
  - c. The program is intended to be educational. The purpose is to reach individuals who have neutral, uninformed or negative opinions of the military.

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## CHAPTER 4. INTERNAL INFORMATION PROGRAM

### A. IMPORTANCE AND OBJECTIVES.

1. Need for communication. Because of the very nature of our jobs, the Coast Guard and its employees must communicate with each other clearly, concisely, constantly and consistently.
  - a. Effective managers understand that people are their most important resource. Coast Guard active-duty members, Reservists, Auxiliarists and civilian employees must understand the importance of their service and the part they play in it. Loyalty, proficiency and our “esprit de corps” come from keeping Coast Guard people well-informed about their history, traditions, activities, accomplishments, benefits and opportunities.
  - b. The success of the missions you carry out relies on your willingness and aggressiveness in keeping your people well-informed. In the Coast Guard, we place a great deal of responsibility on each of our members. In order for them to do their jobs, in order for them to manage their careers, in order for them to want to remain in the service, it is essential that every member of the chain of command make every effort to pass the word.
  - c. One of the challenges we face in our internal information program is our increasing reliance upon computers. While we should maximize technology to communicate quickly and efficiently, we must consider those members of the Coast Guard family who may not have access to a standard workstation or even a home computer.
2. Mission Support. The Coast Guard’s internal information program supports Coast Guard missions by keeping our “family” aware of what and why things are happening.
  - a. Awareness of benefits and opportunities.
  - b. Awareness of requirements, obligations and changes in policy or procedures.
  - c. Awareness of issues and challenges facing the Coast Guard.
  - d. Recognition of individual and team accomplishments.

### B. RESPONSIBILITY.

1. Commandant (CG-092). The Director of Governmental and Public Affairs is responsible for the Coast Guard’s internal information program and its objectives.



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2. Unit commanders. All successful internal information programs succeed because the unit commander cares about his or her people. Without the support of unit commanders and their commitment to PASS THE WORD all the valuable information generated in publications, message traffic or e-mail is useless. Unit commanders must supervise and vigorously carry out local internal relations programs through their command PAO. As a commanding officer, be upfront and forthright with your people. Tell them what you know. If you do not have complete information, let your people know that you will inform them when you do. Remember, you are the first link in the chain of command.
3. Command public affairs officers. Command public affairs officers must bear the brunt of the internal information work. The following sections of this Chapter will show you how to create an aggressive internal information program at your unit. The rewards?
  - a. Trust. If you provide people with good information, they will return the favor. You may find yourself serving as an informal liaison between the crew and command.
  - b. Maximum output; minimum effort. One of the best ways to approach this job is to get some free help. Recruit that seaman who is on the waiting list for PA school. Ask a Reservist or Auxiliarist to help out. Use your unit ombudsman.
4. Individuals. Everyone in the Coast Guard has some responsibility for communicating with other members of the Coast Guard. Members, especially in command, management, supervisory or leadership roles, must keep their people informed of Coast Guard "news."

C. POLICY.

1. Be Aggressive. Unit commanders must run a proactive and continuous internal information program, keeping individuals informed of the missions, functions and activities of their command and the Coast Guard.
  - a. Unit commanders will insure that adequate two-way communications are available.
  - b. Units may develop and evaluate new and innovative techniques in carrying out a Coast Guard internal information program.
2. Pass the Word. Unclassified information must flow quickly to Coast Guard people and in an understandable form. They are entitled to the same access to news -- both good and bad -- as are all other citizens. The Coast Guard will not tolerate the withholding of unfavorable news stories from Coast Guard personnel, particularly when those stories may affect members of the Coast Guard family and the quality of their lives or careers.

#### D. REACHING THE ENTIRE COAST GUARD FAMILY.

1. Active Duty Members. All members of the Coast Guard are responsible for managing their own careers, but can they be truly effective and successful if they are not aware of all the information that may affect them? Think of the most junior people at your unit. Do they have enough knowledge of the Coast Guard to make informed decisions? Do they learn enough about changes to know what will affect them? Remember that they are the Service's future; if we fail to keep them informed and successful, what will be the future of our Service?
2. Members of the Coast Guard Family. Information should be passed to all members of the Coast Guard family. This family includes all active duty members, Reservists, Auxiliarists, civilian employees, retirees, and all members of their families. Sometimes, this includes people and organizations we've "adopted," such as Coast Guard-trained foreign nationals, members of various organizations you've dealt with, etc.
3. Programs for Families. Families have a great deal of influence on our members. Their attitudes and knowledge have a great effect on the sponsor's career decisions and on-the-job performance. A good internal information program addresses their needs and interests. Again, you can make effective use of both oral and written information.

#### E. INTERNAL INFORMATION TOOLS.

1. Passing Information. You pass information in many ways. Unfortunately, the "rumor mill" is the most common, yet least factual method. Word-of-mouth and the written word are most effective. Make good use of musters and other all-hands gatherings to pass along new information.
2. Coast Guard magazine. *Coast Guard* magazine is the Service's primary internal information tool. Program managers should send key information about your program to the editor of the magazine for consideration. Units have a great opportunity to showcase their significant achievements by submitting timely, well-written articles with photographs. Each unit is sent a limited number of copies, so ensure the widest possible circulation. *Coast Guard* magazine is also available online at <http://www.uscg.mil/magazine>.
3. Internal publications. Many headquarters offices, programs and units, as well as Area and District offices, produce their own publications (Area and District publications are primarily online e-zines that can be found on their websites). These publications contain excellent information for members that affect their duties and their careers. Unfortunately, cost limits the number of copies available at each unit. Command PAOs should make an effort to copy and circulate articles of particular interest to all members of the crew.

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- a. Unit publications. Internal publications, such as a plan of the day or unit newsletters, are effective ways to pass information. They can be produced easily by simply combining material from other Coast Guard publications.
  - b. An easy but very useful tool is a list of recent message traffic, such as ALCOASTS, ALDISTS, etc. with a brief summary of each. Just posting a list of subject lines and date-time groups outside the ship's office or in each division will help keep members better informed because they can quickly learn about any new information that interests them. If there is something of interest, the member can then look up the appropriate message. Remember, not everyone has the chance to read message traffic.
  - c. Familygrams are newsletters from a unit commander to dependents of the crew that talk about unit accomplishments, people and activities. They are not limited to use by ships at sea! They work just as well for ships in port, small stations, thousand-member commands, or the whole Coast Guard. They work best when published on a regular schedule, instead of sporadically. Units that decide to use the Internet must ensure that appropriate security and privacy information policies are followed.
  - d. Welcome Letters. A personal letter from the command welcoming dependents should include names, addresses and phone numbers of sponsors and key points of contact. Also include maps of the local area, and information on housing, schools (all grades including evening college), and shopping. Remember that some of the most stressful times in military life occur during a transfer.
4. Planned Events. Include family members in your planning for regular holidays and events (e.g., Christmas, Thanksgiving, Independence Day, Coast Guard Day and award ceremonies, for example). Consider inviting dependent children to bring their classmates for a unit tour. Contests and recognition from the command are also useful tools ("honorary crew" certificates, for example).
  5. Captain's Call. A Captain's Call is a meeting between a unit commander and all unit personnel, keeping them informed of unit schedules, policies, etc., and often to offer two-way communications. Attendance is usually required for all military personnel not on watch and is encouraged for civilian personnel. Captain's Call can strengthen command credibility, squelch rumors and improve mutual support and understanding.
    - a. Scheduling should not conflict with off-duty time and should allow for maximum attendance, with provisions made to inform people on leave or on duty. An after-inspection meeting may be the most convenient for both the command and the crew. One hour is a good target length.

- b. Your program's format and content may vary according to your requirements, unit size, and audience composition. An informal, open climate is usually most productive. The meetings should address: unit accomplishments, suggestions for better unit efficiency, goals, unit problems. You may want to add a question-and-answer period, introduce newcomers, recognize individual achievements, and discuss problems and issues affecting the crew. You may consider inviting a guest speaker, such as a tax preparer or a health benefits advisor. Captain's Call may also be appropriate after exercises or deployments to discuss lessons learned or suggestions for improvement. You may find it appropriate to ask the crew for agenda items.
  - c. Hold the Captain's Call in a place that makes communication easy. For example, consider how weather or noise may hamper the communications process.
  - d. At large units, it may be necessary to divide the crew into groups to improve the two-way communication. Captain's Call should be scheduled regularly--as often as once a quarter. Publicize the event well in advance, using internal publications, the plan of the week or bulletin board notices.
  - e. Captain's Call will not be used to avoid or satisfy other requirements (such as military training), for disciplinary purposes, as a substitute for complaint channels or as quarters. It's a time for passing the word and solving problems.
  - f. Remember that ALCOASTS and many other internal communications often do not reach the people they were intended to reach. Reading excerpts from these forms of written communication is an excellent and effective way to pass the word. You should also post the items on a common area bulletin board for the crew to read at their leisure.
6. Clubs. Spouse clubs are an excellent way to pass information on to family members (See The Role of Coast Guard Spouses' Clubs, COMDTINST 1750.6 (series)). If your unit is too small for a formal spouse's club, you may be able to use other information tools to reach families. A telephone tree headed by an interested spouse or ombudsman is a good way of passing information on ship schedule changes while underway or regular status reports on the unit's missions. A selected spouse might also serve as a troubleshooter to speak with the command on families' problems, acting as a representative for several families. A "spouses only" meeting with the commanding officer should also be considered.
  7. Family Days. These help acquaint the family with the unit and our Service's missions. Coast Guard Day, open houses, Armed Forces Day and other special events offer excellent opportunities for these get-togethers and may include underway time. Consider inviting guest speakers from within the Coast Guard, other government agencies, or public service groups to discuss benefits, health subjects, Coast Guard policy and similar topics.

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8. Coast Guard Websites. With the explosion of blogs, chat rooms, and other Internet-based websites, it may be hard to sort out fact from fantasy. There is current Coast Guard news and extensive information available on the Internet at our official website, <http://www.uscg.mil>. All of our Districts and many local units also maintain websites that contain pertinent information.

F. PUBLICATIONS.

1. Internal Publications. It is the policy of the Coast Guard and the federal government that appropriated funds will not be spent on publications unless they fill a unique information need that cannot be met in any other fashion and that the information should be necessary to the conduct of official business. Use of public funds for self-aggrandizement or publicity is strictly illegal. Area and district offices should not publish newspapers or magazines if they serve only to showcase the work of the authors.
  - a. Internal publications compete with all media for a slice of each Coast Guardsman's time. The content must be useful and the design attractive. The publication as a whole should be readable and understandable.
  - b. Commands are encouraged to submit articles to Service publications, such as *Coast Guard* magazine. Bear in mind that articles submitted to *Coast Guard* should be of Coast Guard-wide significance.
2. General Content of Internal Publications. All sorts of written communications can be effective -- whether a magazine, newspaper, plan of the day, familygram, etc. They should inform, educate and (sometimes) entertain. The unit commander should discuss command policies, philosophies and command views with the people who prepare local publications. Editors should give as much attention as possible to the following topics:
  - a. Important individual contributions.
  - b. Unit accomplishments.
  - c. Unit missions.
  - d. Community involvement.
  - e. Explanations of people-oriented programs.
  - f. Career enhancement and retention.
  - g. Facilities and services available.

- h. Personal and moral responsibilities.
  - i. Equal opportunity and human relations.
  - j. Leadership.
  - k. Pay and benefits.
3. Personal opinions. Unit commanders may permit properly-identified columns, commentaries and letters to the editor expressing personal opinions. These articles should be accomplishment-oriented -- they must serve a purpose other than airing an opinion.
- a. When news stories contain opinions, identify the sources. Otherwise, readers assume the opinions belong to the editor or the unit commander.
  - b. Editorials will support the interests of the U.S. Coast Guard and the readership. They should state a problem or situation and offer solutions and/or alternatives. The readers should be encouraged to make their own decisions and take their own actions. Editorial or opinion columns will not dominate any publication.
4. Endorsements. Your publications should not influence a reader's decision on commercial products or services, or political causes; however, you can (and should) endorse non-commercial activities which benefit your readers.
- a. You have an obligation to advise your people on their rights and obligations to vote but you should in no way influence their decision on how to vote. Campaign news or editorials dealing with specific political candidates or issues are specifically prohibited. Support voting rights, the Federal Voting Assistance Program, and other rights of citizens -- including their rights to contact elected representatives.
  - b. Commercial advertising is prohibited, except in legally contracted commercial enterprise publications. No news article will imply that the Department of Homeland Security or the U.S. Coast Guard endorses or favors a specific commercial product, commodity or service. This does not prohibit notices for property or services offered by unit personnel or promotions of NAFA activities.
  - c. Your publications may support community services and non-commercial organizations with announcements and news stories. This includes publicity for service-sponsored, non-profit activities, such as religious services, blood donor campaigns, Mutual Assistance, Combined Federal Campaign, non-commercial civic or sports events.

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- d. Your publications should not support activities which involve gambling (such as a club's bingo-for-prizes night). Publications that publicize gambling activities should not enter the United States mails.
  - e. Under no circumstances will any publicity campaigns support an activity or organization that prohibits or restricts attendance, participation or membership on the grounds of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.
  - f. You may publish brief, objective announcements or reviews on movies, books, etc., if the goal is to serve the best interests of the readers.
  - g. Most offices now use desktop publishing systems. Although they save time and manpower, these systems offer so many features that novices easily become overzealous. Layout should always be clean and simple to enhance readability. You should always be able to explain the purpose of every line or box on a page.
5. Restrictions and Requirements. Authorized Coast Guard publications must follow regulations on security, and laws involving libel, copyright, printing and mailing of materials.
- a. New Publications. If you want to create a new publication (other than an informal unit newsletter), consult with the Directives, Publications and Printing Branch, Coast Guard Headquarters, to make sure you are following current Office of Management and Budget and Department of Homeland Security policies. If you are producing a simple unit newsletter, these procedures are not necessary.
  - b. Masthead and Disclaimer. Within the first eight pages, each issue will include a masthead or disclaimer (even if it is included elsewhere in the publication). The masthead may be incorporated into a contents page or other element, but must include:
    - (1) Name of publication
    - (2) A statement that it is an authorized publication
    - (3) Name of publishing Coast Guard unit
    - (4) Postal address, including ZIP code
    - (5) Area code and telephone number of publishing office
    - (6) Publication frequency (monthly, weekly, etc.)

- (7) The statement that “The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Homeland Security or the U.S. Coast Guard. Material is for information only and not authority for action.”
  - (8) Method of reproduction and circulation
  - (9) Any additional information desired by the unit commander
- c. Nameplate. The nameplate (“flag”) of each issue will include at least the date of publication. Readers also appreciate the date of publication on each page, since covers are sometimes removed, or pages photocopied. The flag may also include the name and location of the printing unit.
  - d. Credit. Unless editorial material is credited, readers assume it originated at the publishing command, or at least within the Coast Guard.
    - (1) You should credit all material obtained from sources outside the Coast Guard. (For example: American Forces Press Service.) You **MUST** credit all material you obtain from sources outside the U.S. government.
    - (2) Credits, such as bylines, may be used with material from any source. This includes articles, columns and photographs.
    - (3) When crediting copyrighted material, indicate that the material is copyrighted and is reprinted with permission. This lets readers know that they cannot reproduce it without permission from the copyright holder. If you do not have permission from the copyright holder **DO NOT REPRODUCE THE MATERIAL. IT IS A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW.**
  - e. Mandatory distribution. On the normal distribution date, send two copies of each issue of the authorized Coast Guard publication to Commandant (CG-0922).
  - f. Reproduction of the official Coast Guard Seal and the Coast Guard Emblem. All uses of the Coast Guard official seal, emblem, signature and mark will follow the rules in U.S. Coast Guard Heraldry, COMDTINST M5200.14 (Series). Generally, you should not use the Coast Guard Seal in Coast Guard publications. See Chapter 3, section E.4. for the guidelines.
6. Writing for Internal Publications. You must consider many factors when producing your own, or writing for, internal relations publications. Here are some simple writer’s guidelines.
    - a. Know your readers. Include something for everyone in your publication. If you are writing for a command newsletter to be distributed to the housing



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community, include items such as community events, places of local interest, and recognition of community members. Write simply, so the younger members of the community can read it too.

- b. Write for the reader. Write in simple, concise, English. Do not write articles as you would for a report, directive or log entry. Refer to the *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Laws* for generic guidance on writing.
  - c. Emphasize how the article affects the reader. For example, when describing new technology, explain how it will make the job better. Describe benefit and pay information to show how your people are affected by it. This sort of emphasis is possible in most articles.
  - d. Use photographs that tell the real story. Avoid the standard award ceremony photograph. In its place try to show the award winner doing what won the award. When photographing hardware -- machinery, ships, aircraft, etc., -- show people doing something in, on, to or around the hardware.
  - e. Government publications are not copyrighted. Most information found in a government publication may be reproduced locally. Any information printed in government publications that is protected by copyright should be properly marked.
7. Copyright. Materials must have a copyright mark to be legally protected under copyright laws. When in doubt, contact the author, call the publication that printed the material, or contact your legal officer for guidance.

## CHAPTER 5. COAST GUARD IMAGERY.

### A. RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUPPORT.

1. Commandant. Commandant (CG-09221), Imagery Branch is responsible for:
  - a. Advising on Coast Guard imagery policies. Imagery is defined as all visual media products, including video, film, slide, graphics and print photography.
  - b. Maintaining the Coast Guard central repository for still imagery called the Coast Guard Visual Imagery gallery or CGVI, located on the Internet at <http://cgvi.uscg.mil>.
  - c. Maintaining the Coast Guard video library located at Coast Guard Headquarters.
  - d. Production of *Coast Guard* magazine.
2. Area and District Public Affairs Officers. Area and District PAOs are responsible for:
  - a. Imagery support to District staff and units within their District for events that have definite, marketable, public affairs value.
  - b. Imagery documentation for Commandant (CG-0922) of significant District activities.
  - c. Forward imagery to Commandant (CG-09221) for inclusion in the central video archive and CGVI.
3. Unit Commanders. All imagery documentation carried out within a command's jurisdiction is under the control of the unit commander. Unit commanders are responsible for:
  - a. Ensuring all significant operations are documented to the extent allowed by safety and operational limits.
  - b. Providing adequate support and cooperation to unit public affairs officers.
  - c. Insuring that still and video imagery do not violate security.
4. Command Public Affairs Officers. Public Affairs Officers are responsible for:
  - a. Making imagery available for all public affairs functions.

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- b. Obtaining imagery of all significant events related to their operations and organization.
- c. Forwarding imagery to the District Public Affairs Office.

### B. THE NEED FOR GOOD IMAGES OF COAST GUARD OPERATIONS.

1. Visual documentation. Capturing images of Coast Guard activities is essential so our customers can see what the Coast Guard does. Imagery captured by Coast Guard personnel is used to generate interest in and support for Coast Guard operations. Video and still imagery is widely used for internal and external information, training, historical purposes, as well as legal evidence. The popularity of digital slide presentations and the growth of the Internet have also increased interest in Coast Guard images.
  - a. Video footage and still photography tell the Coast Guard's story more dramatically than any news release can. Even minor cases can receive wide media coverage if good video or photos are available. In most cases, the media will not have access to the scene of an incident, and Coast Guard imagery will often be the only images available. The same imagery is used by television and motion picture producers, "Reality TV" programs, documentaries and feature motion pictures. Still photos find their way into magazines, exhibits and books. Good documentation of normal operations featuring Coast Guard people doing their jobs, as well as dramatic scenes of vessels and aircraft, is always in great demand.
  - b. Operations permitting, units should visually document all significant activities. Image gathering should be integrated into normal operating procedures. For example, most units currently have still and video cameras and could designate a crewmember to act as unit photographer during SAR cases and boardings. Many aircraft carry video and still cameras on every flight and use them as operations permit. Normally, capturing a few minutes of video and a few still photos will not affect operations.
  - c. Public affairs staff at every unit should be given wide access to document routine as well as sensitive operations. Public Affairs personnel should not be excluded from their visual documentation role for operational security reasons; limits can be placed later on how such documentation is used. Public Affairs staff also can become weapons-qualified if necessary to participate in ride-alongs on assets.
  - d. Where possible, both video and still photos are desirable. If time and operations limit the photographer's time, video should take precedence over still photos. Video also makes the best evidence for an investigation package.

- e. Auxiliarists are often on-scene at events or locations not covered by Coast Guard public affairs staff (such as boating activities on the Western Rivers or other inland waterways). These Auxiliarists can be a resource for Coast Guard public affairs offices to obtain photographs of activities in those areas.
  - f. Imagery of unauthorized activities or practices (improperly marked boats or aircraft, operation of unauthorized boats or aircraft, operations without proper protective gear in use, or firefighting vs. suppressing fire to save lives and then withdrawing) can create misconceptions about the Coast Guard.
2. Required equipment. Commands must have adequate video and still cameras to document their operations. The following recommendations are intended for units looking to acquire new equipment or replace old equipment. These recommendations do not mean that you have to replace any existing equipment before the end of its operational life.
- a. Still cameras.
    - (1) Recommended are 35mm digital cameras with full automatic capabilities and interchangeable lenses. A 35-70mm zoom lens can handle most jobs. A 70-200 zoom lens is also preferred.
    - (2) The camera should have at least 5 megapixel resolution. A digital image can easily be downloaded from the camera to your standard work station where it can then be uploaded to CGVI, burned to a CD or e-mailed to the appropriate media outlets..
    - (3) If you must use film, use color film (black and white film requires special handling, takes longer to process and costs more). Color film can be quickly processed at a 'one-hour' photo-finishing lab. When you drop off the film, request digital copies of each image in a JPG format. The appropriate images can then be posted onto CGVI or given to the media.
  - b. Video.
    - (1) Digital video or mini DV is the current Coast Guard standard, but it is rapidly being replaced by digital video. It is compact, easy to use and provides high-quality recording at a reasonable price.
    - (2) Units with HI-8 video equipment should continue to use it until it is no longer serviceable. When replacing video equipment, digital or mini DV is the required format.
    - (3) When buying a digital video camera, it is not necessary to purchase a new video recording deck as well. Most digital cameras have adapters so they can record directly to your standard work station or stand-alone

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computer. Units may need to purchase an inexpensive USB/Firewire hub to connect the camera to their computer. This will allow further distribution of the Coast Guard video either internally or to the news media without losing control of the original tape. Only when it is absolutely unavoidable should you release an original tape to the news media for duplication. Ensure that the original tape is returned to the command.

- (4) When purchasing a new camera, you should strongly consider the purchase of a camera equipped with a LCD monitor as opposed to a simple eyepiece. On aircraft and smallboats, looking through an eyepiece for any extended period of time can quickly cause motion sickness. Monitors are also generally safer underway because the camera operator can see what is happening all around rather than just what is in the camera lens.
  - (5) Be aware that, in all but high-end model cameras, still images captured from video footage may be too low a resolution for publication use.
3. Official Photography and Video. Media, especially television, thrive on good images that help tell the story. A few seconds of video or a strong action photo could move your news to the top of the program or onto Page 1. Unit commanders should make every attempt to put either a 35mm still camera or a video camera (or both) on every vessel or aircraft at their unit. And the unit PAO should make every attempt to get any images captured to the media as quickly as possible.
- a. General. Photographic and video equipment on Coast Guard ships, boats, aircraft and stations, is subject to command policy. All photographs and video, including those taken with personal cameras, taken aboard Coast Guard units are subject to screening and approval of the commanding officer prior to release for commercial or public use. All such photography is considered official and may not be sold, or used for marketing, under any circumstances for private gain.
  - b. Official photographers and videographers.
    - (1) Coast Guard Public Affairs Specialists are at all times official photographers unless in leave status.
    - (2) Unit commanders may designate any Coast Guard members (active duty, Reserve, civilian or Auxiliary), as official photographers or videographers.

- (3) Volunteer amateurs can be an important resource. Unit commanders should encourage crewmembers to record Coast Guard operations and submit photos or video to the local PAO for dissemination to the news media and to the Coast Guard.
  - (4) Official photographers will not be used for unofficial photography, such as recording social events, which competes with commercial photographers, or providing photos for private collections, which constitutes a misappropriation of government funds. This precludes the use of public affairs specialists using government camera equipment and film from photographing events with little or no publication potential.
- c. Release guidelines. Before photos or video can be released, the approving official will evaluate the materials and ensure that they meet the following standards. If the tape or film fails any of these standards, do not release it.
- (1) Video or photos must not be of classified material or any information that may jeopardize security or ongoing operations.
  - (2) If operational guidelines do not specify a clearance process for law enforcement cases, the District public affairs office should be consulted for coordination with the appropriate District staff elements to determine if video and still photos can be released. Generally, photos of seized contraband and the exterior of vessels can be released. Close-ups of suspects or evidence, tape statements or confessions by suspects, or videos/photos of any testing being done on suspects (for intoxication, etc.) cannot be released.
  - (3) If personnel from other law enforcement agencies are depicted, or if the film was shot in another country, the District public affairs office must coordinate release with the appropriate U.S. agency or embassy.
  - (4) If next of kin have not been notified of a death or serious accident, imagery of the incident should be withheld until notifications are complete.
  - (5) The tape or photos must be in good taste. Images of corpses, violence, graphic injuries or nudity generally will not be released.
  - (6) Video should not contain inappropriate language by Coast Guard personnel. Generally, Coast Guard members should be in proper uniforms; however, the release authority may overlook minor problems. For example, the newsworthiness of an incident captured on video may outweigh the fact that a crewmember is not wearing a hat or may have an outdated uniform item.

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- (7) Video or photos that might jeopardize the safety of a Coast Guard member or law enforcement agent, or that depicts information protected under the Privacy Act will not be released. Deployed Coast Guard personnel in combat zones or those who are conducting sensitive operations should not wear identifying information such as name tags in photos, nor should they be identified by name or unit in photo cutlines. This prohibition also applies to photos and text posted on the Internet, except for postings to secure Intranet sites. Such release of information could endanger personnel and negatively impact operational security. Personnel depicted in such sensitive photos may be described as “a Coast Guardsman” or “a member of a Port Security Unit,” etc., and the location depicted in the photo should be described in only general terms. Ensure there are no location identifiers such as landmarks or road signs in the photo that would make it possible for enemy combatants to determine the location of deployed troops.
  - (8) The Coast Guard releases as official Coast Guard photography or video only images that pertain to Coast Guard operations. The Coast Guard does not release photography or video on non-Coast Guard operations because to do so would create competition against non-government sources.
  - (9) Unless a photograph or video depicts a newsworthy event that cannot be duplicated, images should not be released if they depict Coast Guard members not wearing the proper uniform or safety equipment. Because the duty of the person with the camera is to produce images that may be released or published, it is incumbent upon the camera operator to also police what is seen through the lens, within reason. Obviously, a photographer would not attempt to stop a dramatic rescue to make certain everyone is wearing a lifejacket. However, a photographer, especially a public affairs specialist, who takes feature photos of a member out of uniform or an unsafe condition during a normal work day is simply wasting film and time, because the images cannot be released. Use your time and resources wisely, and spare your subjects the embarrassment of depicting their mistakes.
- d. Personal photography or video by Coast Guard personnel. As a team Coast Guard member – whether active duty, reserve, Auxiliary, or civilian employee - you may have access to news events that the media and other members of the public cannot see. You may not sell or market in any way either photos or video that you take of these events. Federal law prohibits federal employees and military members from accepting any compensation for activities that pertain to the member’s official duties. For additional guidance, see the *Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch*, which is available from your District or area legal office.

- e. Security. Commanding officers, or other competent authority, can confiscate any imagery — photographic or video — aboard their units whenever those photographs deal with an official matter that is, in their opinion, of a highly sensitive nature (e.g., a law enforcement case or SAR operation), or violates security requirements, whether those images were shot by a Coast Guard member, a member of the news media or a civilian. Photographs containing classified information become official Coast Guard photographs. Unclassified materials may revert to the owner.
    - (1) Photographs containing classified information become official Coast Guard photographs. Unclassified materials may revert to the owner.
    - (2) If a visitor photographs or videotapes classified information, the classified portion of the film, prints or video becomes the property of the United States Government. Unclassified portions revert to the owner. The Coast Guard will provide processing, or, at the photographer's discretion, proper disposal of undeveloped film.
4. Handling Coast Guard imagery.
- a. Release of images. Release of video and still images to the local news media is normally done at the unit level in coordination with the group, District or area public affairs office. Complete guidelines for release of Coast Guard imagery are contained in Chapter 2 of this manual.
  - b. All video or still photos must be evaluated by a designated person at the local unit, such as the CO, OINC, XO, PAO or OOD, before being released.
  - c. The news media should be provided with copies of video and stills. The primary method of releasing Coast Guard imagery is through CGVI. This system makes it easy for units to post and media outlets to download high resolution imagery. Contact your District public affairs office for detailed CGVI user information. Only when it is absolutely unavoidable should you release an original tape or undeveloped film to the news media for duplication. A better choice is to ask the news media to come to the unit to make copies, if possible or to hand carry it to them and wait while they duplicate tapes. Discuss the situation with your District public affairs office before giving any original material to the media.
  - d. Timeliness is important. The sooner a unit releases video or photos, the better chance it will have of getting news or media coverage.
  - e. All video and photos released are Coast Guard property. All video and photos will be labeled with the date, unit, name and description of the incident. The news media shall be instructed to credit the images to "U.S. Coast Guard."



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Photos shall also include the name of the photographer and be credited as “Photo by (name), U.S. Coast Guard.”

- f. Units operating offshore (cutters, air detachments) will forward video and photos for release directly to the public affairs office of the District in which they are operating, by the most rapid means possible. The greatest news interest will be among the media closest to the operation, so videotapes and photos should not be sent back to the unit’s home District. The closest District public affairs shop will take responsibility for coverage in the unit’s homeport.
  - g. After release to the local news media by the unit, the original videotapes and still photos (including negatives) will be forwarded to the area or District public affairs office within five days of the event. The public affairs office will attempt to further market the images to the national news media, incorporate them into District image files and forward the best images that tell the story and meet standards of technical quality to Coast Guard Headquarters. High quality copies of all material submitted to the area or District public affairs office will be returned to the submitting unit.
  - h. The area and District public affairs offices will work through the Coast Guard Motion Picture/Television Liaison Office in Los Angeles to market the images to “Reality TV” shows or other entertainment programming. Any Coast Guard participation in, or providing images to, these non-news programs must be authorized by the liaison office Commandant (CG-0922M). For additional guidance, see Chapter 9 of this Manual.
  - i. The sale of official photos or video of Coast Guard images is strictly prohibited by federal law. There are no circumstances where a Coast Guard military or civilian employee can accept reimbursement for photographs/video taken of Coast Guard events, or while on Coast Guard assets. This prohibition includes photos and videos taken with personal photographic or video equipment when the issue of reasonable public access is in question or when the images are taken as part of a member’s official duties.
5. Accessibility standards. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act requires Federal agencies to comply with accessibility standards for video and multimedia products.
- a. Informational video and multimedia products that support the Coast Guard’s mission must be prepared in a format accessible to multiple senses. Those that contain speech or audio information necessary for comprehension must be open- or closed-captioned. Those that contain visual imagery necessary for comprehension must be audio described.

- b. When replacing or purchasing new television monitors, the Coast Guard is required to select equipment that has the capability to display captions.

C. IMAGE FILES AND DISTRIBUTION.

1. Forwarding images. All video footage and still photos (non-digital) will be forwarded to Commandant (CG-09221) via the appropriate District office. The District must submit the video in a timely manner—no later than two weeks after its immediate news value is exhausted.
  - a. Digital imagery must be submitted via CGVI.
  - b. Videotapes, and still photos shot on film, must be forwarded to Commandant (CG-09221) via Federal Express, DHL or UPS as warranted.
2. Headquarters.
  - a. Commandant (CG-09221) maintains CGVI and a central Coast Guard video file and fills requests for current photography and video from all headquarters units, Districts, and the national/international private sector.
  - b. District units should use CGVI to locate stills and video. If the imagery needed is not on CGVI, unit should request photos and video via their District public affairs offices.
3. District PAOs.
  - a. District public affairs offices maintain regional photo files and respond to requests from District units and the private sector.
  - b. In order to keep CGVI and the central video files current, District PAOs must select appropriate photography and video and upload them, with complete caption information, to CGVI. Tapes must be sent to Commandant (CG-09221).
4. Command PAOs.
  - a. Units are not required to maintain photo files. You should keep only enough photos to meet local, official needs. Send duplicates and unused photos to your District PAO, complete with caption material. Public affairs officers at Headquarters units forward materials directly to Commandant (CG-09221).
  - b. Floating units should not store original negatives or slides, since deployments will render them inaccessible. Contact your District public affairs officer for guidance on what photo files should be left ashore.

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- c. Do not release original , videos, slides or negatives to the public without the approval of the District PAO. An exception to this policy is turning over unprocessed film to the news media in order to ensure rapid processing and release.
5. Charges for Photo Services. The Coast Guard occasionally charges for photos sent to organizations or individuals in the private sector. Your decision whether to charge a requester should be based on the volume and type of request. Consult with the District FOIA coordinator regarding specific requests.

### D. PORTRAITS.

1. Official Portraits. The recommended uniform for official portraits is Service Dress Blue. Official portraits should show ribbons and name tag. Poses showing sleeve lace are not required. The combination cap is the preferred cover.
2. Official VIP Photographs.
  - a. Chain of Command portrait displays are not required. Due to the high costs of maintaining current portraits of high-ranking officials, they are strongly discouraged except at major training commands, where they serve a defined purpose.
  - b. Three or more portraits displayed together constitute a “portrait display.” All portrait displays must include the President and Secretary of Homeland Security.
  - c. No other portraits in the display may be larger or be reproduced by a method more expensive than the President’s and Secretary’s.
  - d. Small quantities of the President’s portrait may be ordered from the White House Photo Office (Phone: 202-395-4050). The Secretary’s portrait may be found on CGVI. Photos may not be reproduced locally or used for any purpose other than chain of command display.
  - e. Major training commands may obtain portraits of the Commandant, Vice-commandant and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard from CGVI at <http://cgvi.uscg.mil>.

## CHAPTER 6. COAST GUARD HISTORY.

### A. OBJECTIVES.

1. Yesterday's History. The Coast Guard's history is a key to its future. In contrast to the other four military services, the Coast Guard has a unique background as a humanitarian service in direct and daily contact with the people it serves. Public support for present and future Coast Guard missions is based on its history; the support and loyalty of active and retired Coast Guard members, and the recruitment of new members, is strengthened by the Service's history.
2. Tomorrow's History. Coast Guard history is being made today. Today's story will be accurately told tomorrow only if it is documented and preserved. Printed records, imagery, artwork, electronic records and a variety of artifacts, no matter how ordinary they may seem, can serve as a record of the Coast Guard of the 21st century. In the post-9/11 era, the Coast Guard plays an expanded and critical role in protecting our citizens and guarding our nation. It is crucial that the lessons from our experiences serve to improve the Service's capabilities and readiness. In order for history to serve, it must document past events and record the service's important daily and operational activities.

### B. RESPONSIBILITIES.

1. Commandant. Commandant (CG-0922) manages the Coast Guard's history program.
  - a. The Historian's Office (Commandant CG-09224) collects, preserves, manages and interprets documentary Coast Guard history. In addition, the Coast Guard strives to document significant operations through a combination of document preservation and the collection in the field of oral history interviews.
  - b. Commandant (CG-09224) also administers the Coast Guard's museum system and collects, preserves and manages the Coast Guard's historical artifacts. This includes all Coast Guard-owned artifacts in the custody of a unit, organization, agency or individual, and for which the custodian is accountable to the U.S. Coast Guard.
  - c. Commandant (CG-09224) also administers either directly or indirectly through staff members, the execution of any Coast Guard-supported archaeology fieldwork or conservation activities. The Historian's Office also sets policy for the protection and care of submerged cultural resources.
  - d. Area historians at the Coast Guard's Atlantic Area and Pacific Area offices support all the activities of Commandant (CG-09224) at the Area level.

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2. District and unit commanders. All units have a responsibility to recognize and pass historic data and artifacts to Commandant (CG-09224).
  - a. The Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series) publishes requirements for transferring historical records. There are also other, less official, documents that should be submitted to Headquarters.
  - b. Retired flag officer biographical material requirements. The retention of information relating to Coast Guard flag officers is necessary to maintain the history of the service. To assure that this information is permanently retained, Coast Guard offices that generate and keep biographical information on flag officers are requested, as per the Retired Flag Officer Biographical Material/Requirements, COMDTINST 5700.3, to send such material to the Coast Guard Historian's Office when a flag officer retires. This material should include the most current biographical statement, portrait photography, and other pertinent file material. The official biographical material should be sent in hard copy and digitally. Flag officer biographies should contain: chronology of duty assignments (including dates if possible); chronology of Coast Guard promotions (including dates if possible); most important accomplishments; medals and awards and date of birth and hometown. Sample flag biographies may be found at:  
<http://www.uscg.mil/history/FAQS/comm.html>.
  - c. When an artifact is no longer needed at a unit, or when disestablishing or decommissioning units, steps must be taken to preserve these historical items. Artifacts should be transferred to the Coast Guard Exhibit Center, 7945 Fernham Lane, Forestville Business Park, Forestville, MD 20747, after first contacting Commandant (CG-09224). Artifacts include any three-dimensional items that reflect the history and traditions of the service and its operations.
  - d. Coast Guard units, activities and representatives cannot issue loans of Coast Guard artifacts to other installations, agencies, organizations and individuals. All loan requests must be processed through Commandant (CG-09224). See Property Management Manual, COMDTINST M4500.5 (series), chapter 8.

C. DEFINITIONS.

1. Documents. Documents are official, unofficial or private papers that record the Coast Guard's operations, functions, equipment and people. Documents do not have to be old to be considered historical. Documents recording today's Coast Guard are tomorrow's history. If not collected now, that history may be lost.
2. Photographs. Photographic documentation, while not always yielding significant information, is an important graphic record. Besides providing positive evidence

of events or scenes, photographic images are especially important to researchers wishing to publish their works. Historic photographs are used in Coast Guard publications and presentations and are also sought by model builders, historic preservation organizations and retirees.

3. Artifacts. Historical artifacts are defined as historically significant items that have been designated historical artifacts by Commandant (CG-09224). Historic buildings and structures are not considered artifacts. Some items may not have been so designated but, because of their age or obvious historical significance, are inherently historical artifacts. Such items help illustrate the military, social and cultural heritage of the U.S. Coast Guard and its predecessor agencies (Lighthouse Service, Life-Saving Service, Revenue Marine, Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection Service, and Revenue Cutter Service). In addition to revealing much about the Coast Guard's past, they are often ideal for public exhibition. A sample list includes, but is not limited to, those items described in section E.4. of this chapter. For further guidance, contact Commandant (CG-09224) at (301) 763-4007/08.
4. Art. Paintings, drawings, sketches, cartoons, statuary and other visual evidence of Coast Guard history are also important documentation. Since little attention was given to their preservation until recently, they are often found in private collections or have been discarded. It is imperative that even contemporary Coast Guard art be considered a part of the Service's history. For more information on Coast Guard art, see Chapter 3, Section D.5. of this manual (Coast Guard Art Program).
5. Oral History Interviews. Oral histories are the spoken remembrances of participants in significant operations. They are recorded digitally, transcribed and archived as a primary source of historical data on a given operation. They are a vital aspect of preserving the experience of Coast Guard personnel during significant operations. Oral histories of participants in operations of national significance can both augment and supplant the more traditional sources of historical documentation mentioned above.

#### D. PRESERVING RECORDS.

1. Formal Records. The primary guide to preserving Coast Guard documents and photography is the Information and Life Cycle Management Manual COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). For more guidance, contact the Coast Guard Records Officer at (202) 475-3534 or Historian at (202) 372-4650.
2. Informal Records. There is no requirement for an annual history report. However, the Historian's Office has a special interest in items not specifically described in the Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series) such as district newspapers or newsletters, clipping files and finding aids (phone books, unit listings, personnel locators, etc.).

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- a. District public affairs officers and Headquarters units should send copies of general-interest internal publications to the Historian's Office. These are valuable for building the Coast Guard's historical files.
  - b. Before disposing of old or obsolete publications (such as Light Lists, Annual Reports, Manuals and Notices to Mariners), please check with the Historian to see if they are needed for the reference collection.
  - c. Contact the Coast Guard Historian if you have questions on the proper disposal of any Coast Guard-related historical item.
  - d. Individuals. The most important resource in recognizing and preserving Coast Guard history is people. Each Coast Guard employee can have a significant effect. The Coast Guard encourages individuals -- especially retirees -- to will or donate privately owned documents, photographs, artifacts and artwork that help tell the history of the service.
3. Reference Files. The Historian's Office creates reference files from a variety of sources. The materials are filed in broad categories, which must be narrowed by additional research.
  4. File Categories. Please bear these categories in mind when disposing of materials. The Historian's Office is very interested in obtaining material that reflects the history of the Service, such as, but not limited to, cruise books, brochures (commissioning, decommissioning, change of command, welcome aboard, etc.), and unit newsletters.
    - a. Cutters. Arranged alphabetically. These file contain limited information and photography on all 20<sup>th</sup> century, many 19<sup>th</sup> century and some 18<sup>th</sup> century cutters.
    - b. Aircraft. Arranged by seaplanes/amphibians, land planes and helicopters. They contain limited information and photography on all aircraft flown by the service.
    - c. Stations. Arranged alphabetically. Principally photographs of 20<sup>th</sup> century stations. There is little historical documentation.
    - d. Disasters. Arranged alphabetically. Principally photographs and varying degrees of data on shipwrecks, oil spills, and collisions occurring since 1950.
    - e. Subjects. Arranged alphabetically. Subjects of repeated interest to the service, such as the Aids to Navigation, Ocean Stations and Vietnam.

5. Research Assistance. The Historian's Office presents Coast Guard history by responding to research inquiries, preparing limited publications, public speaking engagements, representing the Coast Guard on internal and external boards as well as meetings and conferences, and researching material for exhibition.
    - a. While the Historian's Office tries to respond to all inquiries, including phone calls, the best way to ask for history support is by letter or email, if time permits.
    - b. The Historian's staff is too small to respond fully to the more than 8,000 inquiries the office receives each year. Priority goes to those that will give the Coast Guard the greatest return.
    - c. The Historian's Office responds quickly to public requests for prepared materials but is unable to devote time to research. The archive is open to the public. Persons wishing to use the archives should first make an appointment.
  6. Internet. The Internet has become the major tool for the Historian to reach the public. The Historian's Office site [www.uscg.mil/history](http://www.uscg.mil/history) has posted material that should answer any general questions that may arise. Primary historical publications, generated by the Service, are available here. The bibliographic material on the web site is kept current. The bibliography is the starting point for research beyond the general material provided on web site. More data and photography is added to the web site on a daily basis to accommodate the needs of the public.
- E. PRESERVING ARTIFACTS AND ART.
1. General. The Coast Guard Historian manages the Coast Guard's Museum and the Curatorial Services Program.
  2. The Coast Guard Museum. The Coast Guard's primary exhibition facility is the U.S. Coast Guard Museum located at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. The mission of the museum is to: (1) ensure the proper collection, preservation, security, accountability, and educational use of historically significant Coast Guard art and artifacts, and (2) to educate the public about the history of the Coast Guard through display and interpretation of historically significant Coast Guard artifacts. To accomplish its mission, the Coast Guard Museum performs the following functions:
    - a. Maintains the inventory of Coast Guard art and artifacts stored at the museum, ensuring that they are identified, appraised and recorded into the accountable property inventory system.



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- b. Ensures appropriate preservation, security, handling, storage, interpretation, and display of Coast Guard art and artifacts in accordance with Coast Guard Curatorial Services Program Standard Operating Procedures.
  - c. In consultation with Commandant (CG-09224), determines the feasibility of new loans made from the museum's inventory of art and artifacts; arranges loans made from or to the museum; manages loan documentation; implements, when appropriate, renewal of loans made from or to the museum.
  - d. Coordinates donation offers to the Coast Guard Museum of historically significant art and artifacts in accordance with appropriate gift acceptance authorities.
  - e. Provides access to museum art and artifacts to support scholarly or official research and documentation related to the Coast Guard history.
  - f. Develops and implements museum exhibits that educate the public about Coast Guard history through display and interpretation of historically significant Coast Guard art and artifacts.
  - g. Works cooperatively with the Coast Guard Curatorial Services Program to develop and implement Standard Operating Procedures for the management of historically significant Coast Guard art and artifacts.
3. Curatorial Services Program. The mission of the program is to ensure the proper identification collection, preservation, accountability, security and educational use of the Coast Guard's historically significant artifacts and art. It collects, preserves and manages the Coast Guard's historical artifacts. This includes all Coast Guard-owned artifacts in the custody of a unit, organization, agency or individual, and for which the custodian is accountable to the U.S. Coast Guard. To accomplish its mission, the Curatorial Services Program performs the following functions:
- a. Maintains a service-wide inventory of Coast Guard artifacts, ensuring that they are identified, appraised and recorded into the accountable property inventory system.
  - b. Establishes service-wide Coast Guard preservation, security and interpretation standards for the handling, storage and display of Coast Guard artifacts and art.
  - c. Advises and assists Coast Guard personnel in the correct management procedures for historical artifacts and art, and maintains a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for guidance.

- d. Arranges, tracks and updates each loan of Coast Guard artifacts, including assigning current values and inventory numbers, and reporting the current condition of artifacts.
  - e. Determines the feasibility of new loans.
  - f. Collects artifacts and properties of historical significance to the Coast Guard.
4. Artifacts. Such items help illustrate the military, social and cultural heritage of the Coast Guard and its predecessor agencies. These items include, but are not limited to: contract builder's (and other) models; lighthouse, lightship and buoy lenses; ship's, buoy and fog bells, helms, binnacles, compasses, engine order telegraphs; peloruses, inclinometers, sextants; chronometers, deck watches, Chelsea clocks and radiobeacon clocks; commissioning/shipbuilder's ID plates; ship's seals, decorative dodgers, flags, pennants; ship's (and other) unique silver; life rings; operational clothing (e.g., firefighting, flight, survival, other); aviation material; medals and insignia; weapons; religious articles; items from humanitarian operations, search and rescue, drug interdiction, and wartime activities; and other items which represent the uniqueness of Coast Guard missions and members.
- a. The Coast Guard's historical artifacts cannot be sold, traded or given away for any reason (see the Property Management Manual, COMDTINST M4500.5 (series) for further guidance concerning specific artifact policy, loans and reporting artifacts as property).
  - b. For further information on the Coast Guard's artifact identification, preservation, inventory and loan procedures, contact Commandant (CG-09224) at (301) 763-4007 or (301) 763-4008, or Commandant (CG-842) at (202) 372-3634.
5. Reporting. All personnel who manage and dispose of Coast Guard property must carefully screen and evaluate all material and make appropriate entries to the unit's accountable property inventory, using Item Name Code (INC) ART01 for art, ART02 for artifacts, and MOD01 for models. In addition, they must report artifacts to Commandant (CG-09224) as outlined in the Property Management Manual COMDTINST M4500.5 (series), chapter 8, Supply Policy and Procedures Manual COMDTINST M4500.5 (series). Forward a list of historical artifacts to Commandant (CG-09224) at least 30 days prior to decommissioning or disestablishment of a unit. Artifacts are the property of the U.S. Coast Guard and any unauthorized transfer of artifacts is illegal. Artifacts will be shipped directly to the Coast Guard Exhibit Center, 7945 Fernham Lane, Forestville Business Park, Forestville, MD 20747, unless authorized otherwise by Commandant (CG-09224). Include all items that reflect the history and tradition of the Coast Guard and its operations, including its predecessor agencies.

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6. Gifts. Historical artifacts may only be accepted as gifts by the recommendation of Commandant (CG-09224), with the approval by Commandant (CG-8) transmitted by Commandant (CG-842) (IAW Financial Resource Management Manual (FRMM), COMDTINST M7100.3 (series), Chapter 5X.) Units must advise the Historian's Office of potential artifact gifts and after approval from Commandant (CG-8) must then complete a deed of gift (IAW Accounting Manual, COMDTINST M7300.4 (series) and send copies to Commandant (CG-09224) and Commandant (CG-842).
  - a. Historical art and artifacts may be accepted as gifts to the Coast Guard Museum through the Coast Guard Academy. Donations valued at \$5,000 or less may be accepted by the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy (see Acceptance and Accounting for Special Projects and Other Gifts to the Coast Guard from Non-Federal Sources, COMDTINST 5760.14). If the donation exceeds \$5,000 in value, only Commandant (CG08) can accept the gift.
7. Loans. As part of its stated mission, the Curatorial Services Program of the History Branch ensures the proper preservation and educational use of the Coast Guard's historically significant artifacts. Artifacts will only be lent for educational purposes in order to promote the public awareness of the Service. Although loans of historical artifacts may be initiated by district commanders and commanding officers of Headquarters units, all artifact loans require prior approval by Commandant (CG-09224).
  - a. Only Commandant (CG-09224) is authorized to make loans of the Coast Guard's historical artifacts. See the Property Management Manual (COMDTINST M4500.5 series).
  - b. Individual units may not loan artifacts.
  - c. Loan requests must be directed to Commandant (CG-09224).
  - d. The Coast Guard Museum may loan artifacts from the museum's inventory following consultation and concurrence with Commandant (CG-09224).
  - e. All borrowers of Coast Guard artifacts must sign a formal Coast Guard loan agreement with Commandant (CG-09224).
  - f. Coast Guard artifacts will not be lent on a "permanent loan" basis.
  - g. No artifact will be lent for a term to exceed 25 years.
  - h. Artifacts cannot be lent for purposes of profit, commercial promotion or decoration of private property.

- i. Artifacts will not be lent for consumptive use (historical flags will not be flown, clothing will not be worn, etc.).
  - j. Artifacts will not be lent to installations, agencies or organizations that have lost, damaged, destroyed or otherwise mismanaged artifacts in the past, unless tangible evidence of a change in management is provided.
  - k. Commandant (CG-09224) maintains the right to inspect artifact loans on-site with as few as 24 hours notice to the borrower.
  - l. Artifacts on loan through district offices and Headquarters units will be carried in the lending unit's accountable property report in accord with the Coast Guard Property Management Manual (COMDTINST M4500.5).
  - m. All units shall review existing loan files and ensure that copies of all loan records are forwarded to Commandant (CG-09224) and Commandant (CG-842).
  - n. Commandant (CG-09224) maintains the right to recall any artifact from current loan status.
  - o. The current replacement or market value of the artifact will be recorded on each loan agreement. Commandant (CG-09224) may determine artifact values for the use of Coast Guard personnel.
8. Reporting Loans. Commandant (CG-09224) will maintain a master inventory of all Coast Guard artifacts and loan agreements. A copy of every loan or license agreement must be sent to Commandant (CG-09224). Include the name and address of the borrower, a photograph and detailed description of the property, a report of the property's physical condition, the property number, estimated dollar value, and the expiration date of the loan.

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## CHAPTER 7. PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARDS.

### A. PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS.

1. Background. Public Service Awards recognize private citizens, groups or organizations for helping the Coast Guard carry out its missions. Awards can serve to both recognize those who have helped us and to encourage others in a position to contribute. Each award signed by the Commandant must be sent to the Commandant via the Office of Public Affairs (CG-0922) for processing. Any Coast Guard member can nominate an individual or organization for a public service award through his or her chain of command. The level of award should be determined by the extent of the contribution, not necessarily by the stature of the awardee. For concerns about what level is appropriate, contact your district public affairs office.
2. Eligibility. The awards may be given to people or organizations not directly affiliated with the Coast Guard. A nominee who was eligible at the time of an action remains eligible if later affiliated with the Coast Guard.
  - a. Military and civilian personnel of the Coast Guard are not eligible.
  - b. Actions eligible for Coast Guard Reserve, Coast Guard Auxiliary, DHS, DOD or other service medals and awards are not eligible for Public Service Awards. Reservists and Auxiliarists are eligible when it is clearly demonstrated that no other award is appropriate.
  - c. Those having a profit-making tie to the Coast Guard are not eligible unless their actions are clearly beyond the scope of that relationship and not performed merely in self-interest.
  - d. Individuals already awarded the Gold or Silver Lifesaving Medal for the same act are ineligible.
  - e. A Letter of Appreciation may recognize modest contributions. (Medals and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25, (series)Chapter 2.)
3. Award format.
  - a. Each award includes a two-sided folder with signed certificate. Light blue matting, 11”X14”, one-inch wide, is used to frame the certificate.
  - b. A citation is required in the two senior awards and is optional for the others. The two senior awards also include a medal set; the other three levels include a lapel pin.

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- c. For information on ordering award supplies, see the listings in section A.10 of this chapter.
4. Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award. This is the highest public recognition (other than the Gold and Silver Life-Saving Medals) that the Commandant of the Coast Guard may award.
    - a. Award: Signed certificate (CG-4769); citation (CG-4769A); medal set.
    - b. Signed by: Commandant, Vice Commandant, Chief of Staff, Atlantic Area Commander or Pacific Area Commander.
    - c. Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
      - (1) Extraordinary heroism in advancing the Coast Guard's mission.
      - (2) Exceptional coordination and/or cooperation in matters pertaining to the Coast Guard's responsibilities.
      - (3) Personal and direct contribution to the Coast Guard that had a direct bearing on the accomplishment of the Coast Guard's responsibilities to its citizens.
  5. Coast Guard Meritorious Public Service Award. This is the second-highest award of this series and should be used for substantial contributions that do not meet the criteria of a Distinguished Public Service Award.
    - a. Award: Signed certificate (CG-4770); citation (CG-4770A); medal set.
    - b. Signed by: Any Flag or their SES equivalent.
    - c. Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
      - (1) Unusual courage in advancing a Coast Guard mission.
      - (2) Substantial contribution to the Coast Guard that produced tangible results that measurably improved, expedited, or clarified administrative procedures, scientific progress, work methods, manufacturing techniques, personnel problems, community relations activities or public information. The activity does not have to directly affect an overall Coast Guard mission.
      - (3) Specific individual accomplishments that provide unique benefits to the public.

6. Coast Guard Public Service Commendation. This award is intended primarily to recognize personal and beneficial contributions to the Coast Guard's responsibilities. The activity does not have to directly affect an overall Coast Guard mission.
  - a. Award: Signed certificate (CG-4771); optional citation (CG-4771A) or citation filler (CG-5450); a lapel pin.
  - b. Signed by: Any Flag or their SES equivalent.
  - c. Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
    - (1) Courage or initiative in advancing one or more Coast Guard missions.
    - (2) Beneficial contribution that may have affected the Coast Guard in only one mission area or a limited geographical area.
7. Coast Guard Certificate of Merit. This award recognizes significant endeavors by private individuals and groups.
  - a. Award: Signed certificate (CG-4772); optional citation (CG-4772A) or citation filler (CG-5450); a lapel pin.
  - b. Signed by: Any Headquarters Office chief, Commanding Officer/Officer-in-Charge or anyone authorized to sign the next higher award.
  - c. Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one of the following:
    - (1) Displayed initiative in advancing one or more of the Coast Guard's missions.
    - (2) Significant effort that resulted in the completion of a project, program, contract or other effort that is so significantly beneficial to one or more of the Coast Guard's missions and/or statutory responsibilities as to require a tangible expression of appreciation. This effort may be limited geographically.
8. Coast Guard Certificate of Appreciation.
  - a. Award: Signed certificate (CG-4773); citation filler (CG-4773A) or optional citation (CG-5450); a lapel pin.
  - b. Signed by: Any Headquarters Office chief, Commanding Officer/Officer-in-Charge or anyone authorized to sign the next highest award.
  - c. Criteria: Nominee must have exhibited the following:



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- (1) Public-spirited efforts that benefit Coast Guard personnel or missions.
9. Procedures. This program is administered overall by the Chief, Office of Public Affairs. Local awards boards should administer the program at lower levels. Report the number of each level of public service awards given under the same procedures as you would military awards. Awards boards coordinators should forward quarterly the public service award information to Commandant (CG-09223) or call (202) 372-4620.
- a. Send nomination letters to the signing authority through the chain of command. The nomination package should include:
- (1) OPTIONAL: CG-1650 Coast Guard Award Recommendation, completing applicable blocks 1-4 and 18-20 (SSN is not needed).
- (2) A nomination letter stating the nominee's impact on the Coast Guard and the public interest. The letter also should include:
- (a) Relationship between the nominee and Coast Guard.
- (b) Supporting facts.
- (c) Proposed citation.
- b. Each level of formal review will:
- (1) Approve and send through the chain of command to the signing authority, or
- (2) Deny and return through chain of command with reasons for denial, or
- (3) Return to a lower command recommending a lesser award or Letter of Appreciation.
- c. Public Service Awards to be signed by the Commandant require three weeks for completion. Allow ample time for processing.
- d. Awards should be signed at the lowest level authorized, unless the nominating command feels the recipient warrants forwarding to a higher signing authority.
10. Supplies.
- a. Engineering Logistics Command Baltimore stocks public service award supplies. Units and Headquarters Directorates authorized to issue awards should stock a reasonable supply.

- (1) CG-5450 - Citation Filler, FSN 7530-01-GF3-2010.
  - (2) CG-4770 - Meritorious Public Service Award, FSN 7530-00-F02-5030.
  - (3) CG-4770A - Citation to accompany the Meritorious Public Service Award, FSN 7530-00-F02-5040.
  - (4) CG-4771 - Public Service Commendation, FSN 7530-00-F02-4970.
  - (5) CG-4771A - Citation to accompany the Public Service Commendation, FSN 7530-00-F02-4980.
  - (6) CG-4772 - Certificate of Merit, FSN 7530-00-F02-4990.
  - (7) CG-4772A - Citation to accompany the Certificate of Merit, FSN 7530-00-F02-5000.
  - (8) CG-4773 - Certificate of Appreciation, FSN 7530-00-F02-5010.
  - (9) CG-4773A - Citation to accompany the Certificate of Appreciation, FSN 7530-00-F02-5020.
  - (10) Public Service Award Presentation Folders, FSN 8455-01-GG0-1102.
  - (11) Public Service Award Lapel Pin, FSN 8455-01-370-2364.
- b. Purchase light blue matting through a local art supply vendor. Purchase CG Meritorious Public Service Medal Sets and CG Distinguished Public Service Medal Sets through Iva Green, 1-800-663-7487, IMPAC Program Coordinator. Allow two to three weeks for receipt of medal sets.

**B. CHIEF JOURNALIST ALEX HALEY AWARDS.**

1. Background. The Chief Journalist (JOC) Alex Haley Award is named in honor of the Coast Guard's first Chief Journalist and renowned author. It rewards individual authors and photographers who have had articles or photographs communicating the Coast Guard story published in internal newsletters and/or external publications.
2. Eligibility.
  - a. The JOC Alex Haley Awards program is open to individual active duty and reserve members.

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- b. Entries will be divided into two categories: Coast Guard author and Coast Guard photographer/videographer.
    - (1) Public affairs officers are those officers formally trained as, and assigned as, headquarters, area or district public affairs officers during the competition year. Specialists are graduates of the Coast Guard's Public Affairs Specialist "A" School.
    - (2) Since conducting public affairs is not their primary responsibility, command public affairs officers and graduates of the five-day Coast Guard Public Affairs Course (CGPAC) will be included in the "all others" category.
  - c. Each category will be further separated into two sub-categories: public affairs members (officers and specialists); and all others.
3. Submission criteria. All works, defined as photographs/video or articles, must have been published during the calendar year.
- a. Articles. An article refers to any published material that tells the Coast Guard story in internal newsletters or external publications - newspapers, magazines, etc. Examples of articles include, but are not limited to, a story publicizing a Coast Guard operation (rescue case, drug bust, etc.), an informational piece (Deepwater, Year of the Ocean, etc.) or personality feature (Race Across America, rescue swimmer school, etc.).
  - b. Photographs. Photographs refer to any original still image depicting the Coast Guard in action and published in internal newsletters or external publications. Video will be considered for the JOC Alex Haley Award.
  - c. Refer to Chief Journalist Alex Haley, Commander Jim Simpson and DOD Thomas Jefferson Awards, COMDTNOTE 5780 for specific submission instructions.
4. Judging. Chief, Office of Public Affairs, will appoint a judging panel at Coast Guard Headquarters.
- a. The panel will consist of Coast Guard members and Defense Information School Instructors, and may include members from academia and civilian media organizations. Ideal panel candidates will possess a proficiency in journalism and photography.
  - b. The panel will select finalists for each of the four award categories. Finalists' names will be announced in an ALCOAST.

- c. Refer to Chief Journalist Alex Haley, Commander Jim Simpson and DOD Thomas Jefferson Awards, COMDTNOTE 5780 for specific judging criteria.

### C. CDR JIM SIMPSON AWARDS.

1. Background. The CDR Jim Simpson Award is named in honor of the late public affairs officer who is best known for his efforts to raise the Coast Guard's visibility through the news media. It recognizes a unit's excellence in its entire public affairs program – media relations, internal information and community relations. Units may submit Coast Guard news used by television, radio or print media; internal newsletters and publications; and evidence of community relations programs.
2. Eligibility. This competition is open to all Coast Guard units.
  - a. Units with public affairs specialists on staff will be judged separately from those units without assigned public affairs specialists.
  - b. Chief, Public Affairs Staff will further sub-divide submissions by unit size and/or unit type.
    - (1) Unit Size. The number of active-duty military personnel assigned to the unit will determine unit size. Although many units employ Reservists and Auxiliarists to assist in their public affairs efforts, these members are not available full-time and will not be included to determine unit size.
    - (2) Unit Type. Should the number of submissions make it possible, and to provide a more equitable competition, submissions may be sub-divided by unit type. For example, all medium-endurance and high-endurance cutters may fill one category, all air stations another, and patrol boats in yet another competition field.
3. Submission criteria. Submissions should depict a unit's overall public affairs program and provide support material in each of three sections – media relations, internal information and community relations. Refer to Chief Journalist Alex Haley, Commander Jim Simpson and DOD Thomas Jefferson Awards, COMDTNOTE 5780 for deadline and specific submission criteria.
4. Judging. Chief, Office of Public Affairs, will appoint a judging panel at Coast Guard Headquarters.
  - a. Judges will evaluate a unit's consistent and aggressive efforts to tell the unit's story and the Coast Guard story through the news media, to its internal audience and to the community. Refer to Chief Journalist Alex Haley,

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Commander Jim Simpson and DOD Thomas Jefferson Awards, COMDTNOTE 5780 for specific judging criteria.

- b. The panel will select finalists for each category. Finalists will be announced in a future ALCOAST.

### D. THOMAS JEFFERSON AWARDS.

1. Background. The American Forces Information Service sponsors the annual Thomas Jefferson Awards contest. The Thomas Jefferson Awards recognizes military and civilian employee print and broadcast journalists for outstanding achievements in furthering the objectives of the military's internal information programs.
2. Eligibility.
  - a. Entries must contribute to the internal information objectives of the Armed Forces. No single entry may be submitted in more than one category, with the exception of DoD Print or Broadcast Journalist of the Year and Command Information Campaign.
  - b. Military personnel and civilian employees or units of Armed Forces newspapers published under DoD Instruction 5120.4, magazines, and radio and television stations are eligible to submit entries through their appropriate service.
  - c. Refer to the Thomas Jefferson Awards Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for specific eligibility, submission and judging criteria. The Chief, Public Affairs Staff releases the Thomas Jefferson Awards SOP and publishes an in-service deadline prior to the American Forces Information Service deadline.
3. Judging. Services are permitted to submit only one entry per award category. Chief, Public Affairs Staff will appoint a judging panel at Coast Guard Headquarters to select and forward service entries to the American Forces Information Service.

### E. MILITARY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR.

1. Background. The American Forces Information Service, through the Defense Information School, sponsors the annual Military Photographer of the Year (MILPHOG) Awards program. The MILPHOG Awards Program is designed to recognize and reward the best of military photographers and videographers.

2. Eligibility.
    - a. Only active duty and reserve members holding a military designation (MOS, NEC, AFSC or rating) as photographer, videographer, photojournalist, journalist or public affairs specialist in the five armed services are eligible.
    - b. Entries from Reserve and National Guard personnel must not have been created as part of a professional or business enterprise and must conform to the rules of the competition.
    - c. Personnel assigned to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Civil Air Patrol are prohibited from competing, unless eligible under another category.
  3. Submissions. Chief, Public Affairs Staff will announce deadline and release the MILPHOG Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to all units with assigned public affairs specialists. All interested members must submit their entries directly to the American Forces Information Service as described in the MILPHOG SOP.
- F. “A COAST GUARD CITY” DESIGNATIONS.

1. Purpose. The Commandant takes great pride in the many services provided by the men and women of the Coast Guard to American citizens in general and, in particular, to the residents of the communities in which they are assigned. It is the intent of this program, in accordance with federal law, to provide for the recognition of those cities that, in return, have made special efforts to acknowledge the professional work of the Coast Guard men and women assigned to their area by regularly reaching out to them and their families and making them feel “at home at their home away from home.” Such efforts should be indicative of a long-standing and enduring relationship with an emphasis on considerations the community has made for the members of the Coast Guard family and their dependents. This document provides information as to how a city or municipality may submit a request to be designated “A Coast Guard City” and to provide the range of requirements to be met in order to be considered for such designation.
2. Background. On November 13, 1998, a law was enacted that allowed the city of Grand Haven, MI, to formally be called “Coast Guard City, USA” (Section 409 of P.L. 105-383). That law also provides for other cities to be similarly designated with a 90-day notice of intent from the Commandant to the two authorizing congressional committees. In accordance with that provision, on 3 June 2000, Eureka, CA, became the second city to receive the tribute and was proclaimed “A Coast Guard City.” Grand Haven’s designation was based on their 75-year-long history of extraordinary support for Coast Guard personnel assigned to the Grand Haven area. Eureka’s designation, likewise, was based on a multi-year history of community sensitivity to the needs of the local Coast Guard personnel and the many actions they took and activities they sponsored each year to benefit the Coast Guard personnel in their area. While formal criteria did not exist for the

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designations of either Grand Haven or Eureka, the precedence of those actions provided de facto criteria for future considerations. It should be noted that neither designation focused on the size of the local Coast Guard community nor on what the Coast Guard personnel, either active duty or retired, contributed as volunteers to community projects. However, for the purpose of consideration for future designations of Coast Guard Cities, weight will be given to partnerships on local community projects that would be indicative of a robust, on-going relationship between the community as a whole and the local Coast Guard unit or units.

3. Designation request process. In order to maintain the honor and integrity of the designation, those who desire to have their city designated “A Coast Guard City” should provide a written rationale to the local Coast Guard district or sector commander, who will review the application and forward it with or without an endorsement through the Coast Guard’s chain of command to Commandant (CG-09223). A standardized form is available from Commandant (CG-09223) for crafting the rationale. The city’s written rationale should specify examples of the city’s enduring relationship with the Coast Guard and the city’s consistently demonstrated support for our service members. Additionally, the city leadership should show a strong interest in garnering the recognition. Commandant (CG-09223) will recommend to Commandant (CG-092) if the city’s support of the Coast Guard warrants such a designation and, if approved, will craft an appropriate citation, based on the information provided, for the proclamation ceremony.
4. Procedures. A city or municipality must make formal request by letter, signed by the mayor or city manager, addressed to Commandant (CG-092), 2100 Second St. SW, Washington, D.C. 20593. The request must include a narrative of no more than two pages describing its relationship with the local Coast Guard unit(s) in terms that would be indicative of a proactive, systematic outreach and support agenda based on community-wide efforts. In addition, the city must provide a separate document listing specific examples of actions the community has taken and events it has sponsored that would be descriptive of how it has reached out to Coast Guard personnel, welcomed them into the community, and embraced them in a full community partnership. A board comprised of Commandant (CG-092), (CG-00B), (CG-0922), (CG-0921), (CG-111), (CG-0944), and (CG-122) will review the request, consider recommendations from the appropriate field commands and, should the request meet the requirements detailed below, provide a recommendation to the Commandant. Upon approval by the Commandant, the appropriate congressional committees will be notified and a required 90-day waiting period will begin. With no dissent from either committee, the requesting city will be proclaimed to be “A Coast Guard City.” The proclamation will have a five-year term after which the city will be required to apply for recertification. Recertification is an abbreviated form of the procedures required for the original request in that the city need only provide a letter six months prior to the end of the five-year term describing its on-going relationship with the Coast Guard with examples of their recent programs and projects. As with the original request,

letters requesting recertification should be addressed to Commandant (CG-092), and go before the Board. The designation of “A Coast Guard City” may, for cause, be rescinded with 60 days notification issued by Commandant (CG-092).

5. Requirements. A city’s request will be judged against the following list of actions and programs that are examples of the types of support shown Coast Guard personnel in cities where the Coast Guard serves. It is necessary for a city to have initiated nor replicated every one of the actions listed. Rather, a city should be able to demonstrate that its people command(s) in a manner that would include, but not limited to, a number of initiatives below. In addition, the request should specify which groups or organizations within the community are responsible for, or participated in, the initiatives. They could include city government, Chamber of Commerce, non-government organizations (e.g., Navy League), civic organizations (e.g., Lions, Kiwanis, etc.), corporate, police/sheriffs/fire departments, EMS, educational organizations, or individuals.
  - a. Support for MWR events.
  - b. Support for educational/scholarship programs
  - c. Availability of community support services to Coast Guard members and their families.
  - d. Sponsorship of Sailor of the Quarter, Sailor of the Year, Recruiter of the Year, and other similar types of awards
  - e. Demonstrations of sensitivity to life-altering events within the Coast Guard community including expressions of congratulations for weddings and newborns, and expressions of sympathy or deaths and other family tragedies.
  - f. Sponsorship of community patriotic events that specifically include members of the Coast Guard family. These events could include but not be limited to Memorial Day picnics, July Fourth picnics, Armed Forces Day events, Veterans Day observances, Coast Guard Birthday events, etc.
  - g. Offer military or Coast Guard “Days” within the business community, at local sporting events, and other entertainment events.
  - h. City-Coast Guard partnerships in community-based projects including law enforcement/fire/EMS projects, civic organizational projects, food drives, home building projects, educational projects, etc.
  - i. Establishing monuments, memorials, commemorations, or other tangible forms of public recognition.



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6. Information. Questions regarding this program should be directed to the Community Relations Branch of the Office of Public Affairs in Coast Guard Headquarters (CG-09223).

## CHAPTER 8. COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS.

### A. SELECTION.

1. Best qualified. The selection of command PAOs should be based on the individual's knowledge of the Coast Guard, missions of the command, and ability to speak well in public. When assigning a command PAO, unit commanders should remember that the individual assigned will be the person who most often represents the unit, the CO and the Coast Guard to the media and the public. For that reason, the duty should not fall simply to the newest officer in the wardroom or a very junior enlisted member.
2. Enthusiasm. A necessary trait in a PAO is enthusiasm for the job. Enthusiasm and sincerity are contagious. An enthusiastic PAO will put in the additional hours to complete projects after attending to other duties. An enthusiastic PAO also will be more creative.
3. Temperament. Another good trait to look for when selecting a PAO is an even temperament. Remember, the PAO will represent the command in crisis situations, possibly even an accident involving your unit and injury or death of a crewmember. A good PAO should not be flustered by hectic tempos, constant demands or tragedy.
4. Trust. The ideal candidate for command PAO must be able to gain and hold the respect of the unit commander, the crew, the media and the public. But most important, the unit commander must be able to trust their PAO. Without the CO's trust, the PAO will serve no useful function, especially during a crisis situation.
5. Value of PAO. Lastly, unit commanders should consider the selection of a command PAO as if their careers depended upon it. More than one unit commander has been relieved because of public criticism due in part to poor communications. A good command PAO is key to the public's opinion of your unit and, in turn, your leadership.

### B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMMAND PAO

1. General duties. As a command PAO, you will be responsible for all of three of the public affairs missions at the unit level: media relations, community relations and internal information.
  - a. Media Relations. You will be the unit commander's primary spokesperson to the media on all activities of the unit. You can expect to handle all media inquiries into unit operations, and you can expect to answer more than a few tough questions about the Coast Guard's response in a particular case. Also,

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expect all calls from the public to come to your desk. You can find more information in Chapter 2.

- b. **Community Relations.** We are not only a part of the Coast Guard, but also of the communities where we work and live. Therefore, it is absolutely imperative that the cities and towns we call home understand our missions and the importance of our service to them and the country. We have no greater advocates than our neighbors. Chapter 3 will provide you the information you will need to run an effective community relations program.
  - c. **Internal Information.** No group has a greater impact on our daily operations and our overall accomplishments than our internal audience. What is your role as command public affairs officer? Your primary task is to **PASS THE WORD**. You need to ensure that the active duty, Reserve, Auxiliary, civilian employees and family members assigned to your unit received career and policy information and current news about our Service. For more details, see Chapter 4.
2. **Job requirements.** As a PAO, you will need to possess keen knowledge about two important subjects to properly perform your duties.
- a. First, you must learn as much about the Coast Guard, its missions, your unit and its operations as possible. As a PAO, you will be the person to whom the media and the public turn to learn that information. And while you can't be expected to know everything, you should have a good idea of where to get the information quickly to answer questions promptly. You should:
    - (1) Know your unit and district public affairs policy. Does the CO, XO, OINC or XPO want to see all press releases before they go out? How does the fax machine work? Which phone number should the media use to reach you? What kind of support can you get from your district public affairs office, and even more importantly, how can you reach the district public affairs watchstander if something bad happens at 4 a.m. on a Sunday?
    - (2) Know your AOR. You should learn the geography and nature of your entire area of operations. Part of this knowledge will come during break-in as an OOD, coxswain or watchstander. In addition to the where, you'll also need to know "the what" of your particular AOR. You'll need to know the specifics of the local fishing industry, the local recreational activities and the commercial maritime operations. If you're in New England, you should know what the Hague Line is. If you're on the Gulf of Mexico, you should know what a TED is. If you're in Alaska, you should know about the "donut hole." These are issues in which the local media are well versed, and they will know quickly if you aren't.

- (3) Know the units you work with. Again, you will pick up some of this information during your break-in for other duties. But you'll have to learn some additional information. Know the other PAOs in the area. They may be able to share valuable information about the local media.
  - (4) Know the cooperating agencies and their representatives. In all of our operations, we work closely with other state and federal agencies. In a crisis situation, you will coordinate release of information concerning joint activities with their public affairs offices. You should know who their public affairs people are and how to contact them.
- b. Second, you should learn as much as you can about the media, the communities and the public issues in the communities your unit serves. The unit commander should be able to turn to you for guidance on handling a particular issue. This will require you first to become familiar with the public affairs policy outlined in this manual. But that will be only the beginning. You should also:
- (1) Create a list of the media in your area. During a crisis is no time to sit down with a media directory or a phone book to look for newspapers and television stations. You don't have time to waste calling radio stations whose format is all music -- no news. If your unit doesn't already have a list of local media, first check the phone book and then call the district public affairs office for help assembling one.
  - (2) Meet the media in your area. Don't simply accept a list of phone numbers from the PAO you have just relieved. Call the reporters and meet them personally. Ask about their needs and deadlines. Invite them out to the unit for a tour. Accept an invitation to come tour their pressroom or studio. Seeing how the news gets put together will give you a better understanding of how you can meet their needs.
  - (3) These informal meetings will also establish rapport with reporters that will help you in a crisis situation. Like all of us, reporters tend to trust people they know and distrust "figures of authority." In a serious emergency, you will have a lot more credibility if you call a reporter and say, "John, this is Petty Officer Jones, at the Coast Guard station," than if you have to say "Hello, this is Petty Officer Jones from Coast Guard Station Arundel. Who is your assignment editor, please?"
  - (4) Learn about community issues. Read your community's newspaper. Attend town council or school board meetings. Talk to the Coast Guard's customers in your area. Community contact is especially important for single or unaccompanied unit PAOs who may live aboard the unit and have little interaction with the local residents. How can your unit serve the public -- our customers -- if you don't know who

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they are and what they need? As the command PAO, your job is to be the liaison with the entire community.

- (5) Learn some local history. Depending upon where you are stationed, your command has a history in the community that could stretch back 200 years. Don't assume it has always been a happy relationship. In some fishing communities, you'll find bitterness about our law enforcement efforts. Some boaters may resent "zero tolerance" forfeitures. To some people, we represent the "intrusive" federal government. In some SAR cases, people will believe we didn't do enough. In some LE cases, people will believe we did too much. In some communities, we will be the peacekeepers separating two differing viewpoints on such issues as ecology. Real-life example: When the CGC Storis arrived at St. Paul Island in the Bering Sea to complete several community work projects, the village leaders were initially unreceptive to the Coast Guard presence. But understanding the prior history between the federal government and the native Alaskan community, the command had brought along a Russian Orthodox chaplain and a badly needed medical team. Just two days after a rather cool welcome, the islanders hosted a community-wide potluck and celebration of the Storis' visit.
- c. Get some public affairs training. You can learn public affairs from a variety of sources much less painful than bitter experience.
    - (1) The Coast Guard Public Affairs Course is a one-week resident course taught at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Maryland. Solicitations for applicants are issued by Commandant (CG-09225).
    - (2) Commandant (CG-09225) offers a traveling two-day Media Relations Course at various locations around the country each year. Attendance is normally solicited through the district public affairs shop.
    - (3) Local colleges also offer a variety of courses in communications, public relations and journalism. Use of Tuition Assistance is authorized. In some cases, training funds may be used to pay for short-term courses in public relations or media relations.
  - d. Keep a well-stocked public affairs desk. The command PAO should make every effort to maintain, at a minimum:
    - (1) An up-to-date fact sheet describing the unit, including the commissioning date, a brief history of the unit, mechanical features or assets assigned the size of the crew and other relevant material.
    - (2) A current biography of the commanding officer.

- (3) Digital images of your unit and approximately 10 copies of a recent photograph of the unit. Your Area or District public affairs office may be able to assist you in taking this photograph.
  - (4) A list of the major media outlets in your geographic area, including newspapers, radio and television. The list should include the phone number, fax number, address and point of contact. Your Area or District public affairs office should be able to help you compile this list.
  - (5) A 35mm digital still camera with spare batteries. A film camera may be substituted; ensure that there is a proper supply of color film. Before making new purchases, review Chapter 5 of the Public Affairs Manual.
  - (6) A video camera with six blank video tapes and a backup battery. The required format is digital or mini DV. Existing equipment should be retained as long as serviceable. Before making new purchases, review Chapter 5.
  - (7) A good reference library, including the most recent Public Affairs Manual with changes, a dictionary, the most recent edition of the "Coast Guardsman's Manual," a history of the U.S. Coast Guard, and recent publications of the Coast Guard, such as an Annual Report, the CG-092 Compass Rose, the Commandant's Direction, and other periodicals of note. If, for example, *Coast Guard* magazine produces an insert describing your particular mission area, you should order additional copies to have onboard for inclusion in media kits.
- e. Looking for help in all the right places. Because the unit PAO normally has several other pressing collateral duties, you must be creative and imaginative in finding ways to achieve the media, community and internal information program objectives for the unit. You should take every opportunity to identify individuals who may be able to help you with your duties, including :
- (1) Your district public affairs office.
  - (2) Non-rates on the PA school list.
  - (3) Reservists, especially Reserve Public Affairs Specialists.
  - (4) Auxiliarists.
  - (5) Fleet Home Town News Center. A quick way to release information about a member of your unit back to the member's hometown. See Chapter 2 for details.

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- (6) Family members. You would be surprised by the number of spouses who work in the media. Take advantage of their expertise and contacts.
- (7) Others with an interest in journalism. For assistance in writing feature articles about your unit, ask the journalism teacher at your local high school or college to consider it for a class assignment.
- (8) Use your imagination.

## CHAPTER 9. ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA RELATIONS.

### A. POLICY.

1. General. The Coast Guard welcomes the opportunity to cooperate with the entertainment media. Inclusion of the Service in the entertainment media can significantly contribute to public awareness, information, and education, as well as enhance recruiting and retention initiatives. Cooperation is authorized for productions in which the best interests of the Coast Guard are served and the support can be accommodated on a not-to-interfere with operations basis. The Coast Guard Motion Picture and Television Liaison Office (CG-0922M) manages all entertainment production arrangements for the Coast Guard.
2. Entertainment vs. News. When considering support for a production, the Coast Guard first determines whether the production is entertainment or news. This determination dictates the nature of the Coast Guard's relationship with the production company and its representatives.
  - a. Entertainment is a commercial enterprise principally concerned with making a profit. The Coast Guard's relationship with the entertainment media is bounded by law authorizing cooperation with film producers (14 USC 659), and the general restriction on the use of public resources for commercial or private enterprise. Specific support criteria are employed to determine whether the use of personnel, equipment, and facilities in entertainment productions is appropriate and in the best interests of the Service. Entertainment business practices, legal concerns, and practical considerations related to the on-screen portrayal of the Service also make it prudent for the Coast Guard to implement cooperative agreements specifying the terms and conditions of support.
  - b. News, as it relates to the Coast Guard, is principally concerned with reporting on the activities of government. The relationship between the Coast Guard and the news media is governed by the Constitutional principle of a free press. The Coast Guard would not attempt to negotiate a cooperative agreement for a news production, nor would the news media entertain the idea of it. Chapter 2 of this manual provides more information regarding cooperation with the news media.
  - c. Yet, the determination that a production is news or entertainment is not always so readily apparent. What if a news organization such as CBS News strikes a deal to produce a documentary for The Learning Channel, an entertainment outlet? Is it news or entertainment? Are the news magazine shows and the reality programs news or entertainment? On the other hand, might it not be in the Coast Guard's best interest to treat certain productions as news even if they are clearly entertainment?



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- d. In making its determination, the Coast Guard will consider the primary purpose of the production, the producing organization, the outlet(s) to the public, and any legal or practical factors relative to defining the relationship.

### 3. Entertainment vs. Advertisement.

- a. Advertisements are produced to promote or sell commercial products or services (as opposed to simply entertain). Use of personnel, equipment, and facilities in advertising productions is prohibited because of the potential for actual, implied, or perceived Coast Guard endorsement of the products or services.

## B. RESPONSIBILITIES.

### 1. Commandant (CG-0922M).

- a. Commandant (CG-0922M) – the Motion Picture-Television (MOPIC) Liaison Office – located in Los Angeles, California, shall coordinate all Coast Guard cooperation with the entertainment media.
- b. MOPIC, in coordination with Commandant (CG-0922), shall be responsible for determining which productions are entertainment and which are news. In some instances, documentaries, “reality television”, and “info-tainment” projects may be categorized by the Coast Guard as news and handled accordingly.
- c. MOPIC actively pursues projects in which Coast Guard story lines can be inserted. With allowances for dramatic value, primary considerations for authorizing cooperation are that the depictions of Coast Guard life, operations, and policies are reasonably accurate and realistic. MOPIC is responsible for:
  - (1) Evaluating all requests from the entertainment media for Coast Guard involvement.
  - (2) Providing research and technical assistance.
  - (3) Assisting writers and producers with story line and script development.
  - (4) Arranging familiarization and research visits to Coast Guard facilities by writers, producers, and actors.
  - (5) Arranging Coast Guard resources for approved productions.
  - (6) Preparing cooperative agreements and ensure appropriate documents (insurance, reimbursement, screen credit, etc.) are executed.

- (7) Serving on location as technical advisor/Coast Guard representative responsible for enforcing legal, safety, and accounting agreements.

2. Areas, Districts, Units, and Individuals.

- a. Units or individuals in the Coast Guard contacted by an entertainment media representative soliciting Coast Guard cooperation shall refer that contact to MOPIC. Even in instances where a production company seeks Coast Guard operational support not involving the Service on camera (i.e., safety zone request for underwater explosion or vehicle entering the water from shore side), MOPIC should be contacted. These types of contact sometimes result in successfully inserting the Coast Guard in on-screen roles not originally scripted.

C. APPROVAL AND COOPERATION CONDITIONS.

1. MOPIC will implement a written cooperation agreement based on, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. Approval of a script, treatment, outline, or other pre-production document(s) and availability of resources at the shooting location.
  - b. The Coast Guard must be depicted in an acceptable, accurate and dignified manner in the final product and promotional segments.
  - c. Coast Guard safety requirements must be adhered to.
  - d. Coast Guard operations and readiness must not be impaired.
  - e. A Coast Guard representative must be present during filming of “Coast Guard segments” at the production company’s expense to ensure the conditions for cooperation are met.
  - f. The producers must execute an industry-standard insurance policy covering intentional or accidental loss or damage to government property resulting from the production company’s presence or actions on or in government property and sign a “hold harmless” agreement.
    - (1) Project specific conditions required by MOPIC must be agreed to by the film company.
    - (2) Television series may be approved on a thematic basis. However, each episode must also be individually approved in line with the above criteria.

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### D. USE OF COAST GUARD PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT, AND FACILITIES.

1. General policy. The Coast Guard will provide resources consistent with a cooperative agreement on a not-to-interfere with operations basis.
2. Non-competition with other sources. Coast Guard personnel, equipment, and facilities will not compete with commercial and private enterprises (i.e., the Coast Guard will not provide a camera helicopter or a pier to shoot scenes if there are adequate commercial helicopters and piers available, even if the scenes being shot involve other Coast Guard resources).
3. Rules on compensation. Coast Guard personnel are prohibited from receiving compensation for duties rendered incident to officially supported productions (e.g., boat crew, aircrew). Producers may wish to use individual Coast Guard personnel as extras or for “bit parts” playing the role of Coast Guard men and women. Coast Guard personnel may accept compensation for these types of activities provided they are in a leave status and have no other official connection to the production. Selection of these types of extras and their on-camera activities will be coordinated through MOPIC and the affected command(s).
4. Employment of extras. Producers may wish to hire Coast Guard personnel as extras for non-Coast Guard roles. Coast Guard personnel may accept such employment when off-duty or on leave. Individuals should coordinate these activities with unit commanding officers and MOPIC in order to avoid violating conflict of interest regulations.
5. Facilities as locations. Use of facilities as “locations” for entertainment productions without on-screen portrayal of the Coast Guard or some sort of Coast Guard content will not be authorized. “In the best interests of the Service” is defined to include on-screen portrayal in order to adequately serve public affairs goals while at the same time providing good stewardship of public resources. Authorized exceptions include providing assistance to other government agencies officially cooperating with a production, and in certain circumstances when no other private or commercial source is reasonably available to a production and the use is not in conflict with other policy or regulations. Contact MOPIC regarding requests to use Coast Guard property for filming. The MOPIC office will coordinate the completion of the required Location Agreement for the filming.

### E. COAST GUARD OWNED FOOTAGE.

1. Release policy. Coast Guard footage may be provided to specific entertainment productions upon request.
2. Release forms. Copyright issues must be addressed and formal footage release forms must be executed with each transaction. Requesters wishing to re-use

previously released footage must resubmit requests for permission. The process will be coordinated by MOPIC and Commandant (CG-09221).

#### F. REIMBURSEMENT.

1. Authorization. The Coast Guard is authorized by 14 USC 659 to seek reimbursement for some costs associated with assisting the film producers. MOPIC will coordinate all reimbursement.
2. Tracking expenses. Field units may be reimbursed for expendables used during authorized projects. Reimbursement will be required for evolutions that are carried out specifically for the purpose of filming (sorties or diversions from normal operations and training that are exclusively for the purpose of filming). In order to accomplish reimbursement, participating units are required to keep track of fuel and other expendables used during a filming and provide that data to MOPIC.
3. Gifts of travel. Neither MOPIC nor any other Coast Guard entity is authorized to pay for unit travel related to film and TV productions. If the commercial entity offers a gift for travel related to such a production, MOPIC requires five days in which to process the gift acceptance in coordination with Commandant (CG-0922) and Commandant (CG-094). Last-minute gift offers will be declined.
  - a. The Coast Guard is not authorized to accept gifts of travel for participation by personnel in the commercial promotion of a completed motion picture or television production. The Coast Guard must not appear to endorse any commercial production and must not take part in any related marketing and advertising efforts.

#### G. DONATIONS TO UNIT MORALE AND RECREATION FUNDS.

1. Donation offers. Production companies, from time to time, may offer cash or other contributions to the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) funds of units impacted by filming. Donations are not required, shall not be solicited in any way before, during or after the course of filming, nor are they to be construed to be a condition of cooperation.
2. Donation acceptance. MOPIC will handle the gift acceptance process and collection of such donations in accordance with Part IV, Chapter 8 of the Comptroller Manual, Vol. I, COMDTINST 5760.14.

#### H. DISCLOSURE.

1. Trade secrets. The Coast Guard considers television and motion picture industry story ideas to be trade secrets. Coast Guard personnel may not reveal any aspects of scripts, story ideas, movie or TV series content, resources provided by the

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Coast Guard and other “inside” information relating to Coast Guard cooperation unless cleared by MOPIC.

2. Other prohibitions. Use of written accounts, or photos or videotape taken by members of the Coast Guard or Coast Guard employees of filming activities on movie or television locations, may not be used in internal or external publications unless cleared by MOPIC. Union rules and individual contracts of actors frequently prohibit these types of photos from being obtained or used. MOPIC negotiates these issues on a case-by-case basis.

### I. CREDITS AND PROMOTIONS.

1. Appropriate credits. MOPIC will coordinate with production companies for appropriate wording to be used in motion picture and television credits.
2. Coordinating promotions. MOPIC is responsible for coordinating Coast Guard participation in promotional materials such as marquee posters, TV program teasers and promotional materials, trailers for motion picture products, media interviews with Coast Guard participants and other products of a promotional nature.

### J. MEMBER PARTICIPATION IN TELEVISION PROGRAMS

1. Approval to participate. Members must route their request to participate in any television program through their chain of command at their unit before applying for participation on any television program. If approved, the member’s command shall forward such requests to MOPIC for final approval. Members must be in a leave or liberty status for their entire participation in any television program on an individual basis. If a command is approached by a television program or game show regarding providing Coast Guard members to participate, such requests must be forwarded to MOPIC for approval.
2. Quality of programming. Due to the high visibility that television programming provides, it is imperative that all television programs be screened with the highest discretion before any commitments are made to participate. While there are many television programs which are positive and nature, there are also many which participation would reflect negatively on our service.
3. Conduct during participation. Members are reminded that their conduct falls with the regulations and requirements of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice including participation in any entertainment-related program.
4. Uniform for television. MOPIC will make the determination regarding the appropriate uniform for participation in a television program. The appropriate uniform for participation will usually be Tropical Blue Long or Service Dress Blue, depending on the season. If a program includes members from other

services, efforts will be made to identify the closest Coast Guard uniform to ensure alignment with the uniform selected by other participating services.

5. Game Shows. Game shows often seek military members to participate on their programs. If your command or a member of your command is offered such invitation to participate, route this offer to MOPIC for approval. If the show is not an “all-military” episode, members must be randomly selected for participation. Members can not use their membership in the Coast Guard in any way to be selected to participate in a game show or any contest.
6. Reality Shows. Today’s television programming has become dominated by reality-based programs. These programs can be very luring as they potentially bring fame, stardom or “your lucky break.” However, many reality-based shows are inherently designed to discredit and embarrass participants in order to make their show more entertaining for their audiences. Participants can easily be portrayed in a very different light from who they really are and may later regret participating on such shows. Reality shows usually require participants to sign a contract requiring them to be available for large time periods. Members must obtain their command’s permission before applying for participation on such programs.
7. Other programming. Cooking shows, home improvement and sports-related shows may look for Coast Guard participants. While participation on these sorts of programs may appear benign on the surface, commands are encouraged to review all television programs to ensure that these programs are in alignment with the Coast Guard’s core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty.

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## CHAPTER 10. AUTHORS

### A. AUTHORS.

1. Purpose. Authors, both within and outside of the Coast Guard, help to inform and educate the public about the Coast Guard's roles, missions and policies. Coast Guard public affairs policy covers the following: non-government authors, Coast Guard Academy faculty members, and other Coast Guard authors, and applies to both print and online publishing activities.

### B. COAST GUARD ASSISTANCE TO NON-GOVERNMENT AUTHORS

1. General. The U.S. Coast Guard Authors Program provides assistance to non-U.S. government fiction and non-fiction authors in the research and production of works focused on the past and present missions and personnel of the Coast Guard. Coast Guard cooperation is authorized when a planned work is in the best interest of the service or the national interest, and when support can be accommodated on a not-to-interfere with operations basis based on consideration of the following factors.
2. Support. When considering support for production, the Coast Guard must consider the following factors:
  - a. The planned work, as described in a story outline or treatment, must be authentic in its depiction of actual personnel, places, operations, and historical events.
  - b. Fictional portrayals must depict a feasible interpretation of Coast Guard life, operations, and policies.
  - c. The planned work will serve the national interest by contributing to public awareness of the Coast Guard as well as potentially enhancing recruiting and retention initiatives.
  - d. The planned work will not appear to condone or endorse activities by private citizens or organizations when such activities are contrary to U.S. government policy or are not in the best interest of the Coast Guard.
  - e. Operational readiness and security of the Coast Guard shall not be impaired.
  - f. In most cases, an author must have a letter of commitment from a publisher before Coast Guard assistance is provided.
  - g. Coast Guard support to authors is limited solely to research assistance. Once the research project is complete, the Coast Guard's involvement ends.



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### 3. Responsibilities.

#### a. Commandant (CG-0922)

- (1) Commandant (CG-09223) shall coordinate all Coast Guard cooperation with non-U.S. government authors, with the exception of authors who are solely interested in working with the Historian's Office to use the service's archives.
- (2) Commandant (CG-09223) actively pursues projects with authors who have demonstrated expertise and interest in the areas of maritime and national security operations. For projects that it solicits, the Coast Guard may offer to provide the author with invitational orders to conduct research at Coast Guard units, thereby funding the author's travel and per diem expenses.
  - (a) Commandant (CG-09223) is responsible for:
    - (b) Evaluating all requests from non-U.S. government fiction and non-fiction authors.
    - (c) Providing research and technical assistance to approved authors. This may include activities such as assisting authors in their efforts to develop a story outline or treatment that might ultimately qualify for USCG assistance.
    - (d) Arranging familiarization and research visits to Coast Guard facilities for the authors.
    - (e) Maintaining liaison with units and commands providing assistance to authors, ensuring timely arrangements consistent with approved support.
    - (f) If needed, issuing a Memorandum of Understanding or other cooperative agreement and ensuring appropriate documents are executed with authors. Draft MOUs or other cooperative agreements must be reviewed by Commandant (CG-0944).

### 4. Areas, Districts, Units and Individuals.

- a. Units or individuals in the Coast Guard contacted by an author soliciting Coast Guard cooperation shall refer that contact to Commandant (CG-09223).

5. Approval and Cooperation Conditions.

- a. Written agreements. If necessary, Commandant (CG-092) will implement a Memorandum of Understanding or other written cooperation agreement based on, but not limited to, the following:
  - (1) Approval of a treatment, outline or other pre-production document(s).
  - (2) The Coast Guard must be depicted in an acceptable, accurate and dignified manner in the final product and promotional segments.
  - (3) Coast Guard operations, security and readiness must not be impaired.
  - (4) A Coast Guard technical representative must be present during the author's visits to Coast Guard units to ensure the conditions for cooperation are met.

6. Use of Coast Guard Personnel, Equipment and Facilities.

- a. General policy. The Coast Guard will provide approved authors with access to its resources – consistent with an informal or formal cooperative agreement – on a not-to-interfere with operations basis. All access must be consistent with federal law, regulations, and ethics rules – and that access must not degrade security.
- b. Privacy rights. An agreement by the USCG to provide assistance under this program does not waive the individual privacy rights of USCG military or civilian personnel.
- c. Coast Guard compliance. Approval to provide Coast Guard assistance does not relieve the author or the publisher from their responsibility to comply with other applicable USCG regulations, including those governing the use of protected Coast Guard words, symbols and images.
- d. Assistance. Approval to provide Coast Guard assistance to an author shall not be construed as USCG endorsement of the project. Any statement by USCG personnel concerning the project shall be coordinated with Commandant (CG-092).

7. Disclosure.

- a. Trade secrets. The Coast Guard considers non-U.S. government authors' story ideas to be trade secrets. Coast Guard personnel may not reveal any aspects of treatments, outlines, story ideas, or details of the authors' visits to

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Coast Guard units and other “inside” information relating to Coast Guard cooperation unless cleared by Commandant (CG-092).

### 8. Acknowledgements and Promotions.

- a. Acknowledgements. Appropriate acknowledgements. If requested, Commandant (CG-092) will coordinate with the author or the author’s publisher for appropriate wording to acknowledge the Coast Guard’s involvement in the project; this attribution may be included in the work’s acknowledgements section or in other sections of the work if deemed appropriate.
- b. Book forewords/reviews on book jackets. All members of the executive branch, which includes anyone employed by the Coast Guard, are expressly prohibited from authoring book forewords or providing written reviews for inclusion on book jackets of any commercial work.
- c. Promotions. Coast Guard support to authors is limited solely to research and technical assistance. Once the work is completed, the Coast Guard’s involvement ends. The Coast Guard cannot provide any personnel, assets or facilities to support any commercial enterprise, including book promotion activities such as book signings or related talk shows or events.

### C. COAST GUARD ACADEMY FACULTY

1. Academic freedom. All faculty members of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, including tenured, non-tenured, rotating and PCTS are entitled to academic freedom as set forth in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom established by the American Association of University Professors. The Coast Guard encourages academic public expression of knowledge because it contributes to the public good and enhances the prestige of the Academy, the Service, and the Department of Homeland Security.
2. Knowledge sharing. As public intellectuals, educators in institutes of higher learning are expected to share their knowledge through publication and public presentation. This is part of their professional responsibility as members of an academia.
3. Considerations. Faculty members are reminded that as public servants, they are obligated to consider the effect that their public statements may have on the reputation of the Service and the Academy.

4. Public statements. When making public statements as academics, faculty members should make every effort to exercise appropriate restraint. They should also ensure that their statements are accurate, respectful of other opinions, and are not interpreted as representing the views of DHS, the Coast Guard or the Academy.
5. Disclaimer. The following disclaimer may be used as to avoid confusion: *(name) (teaches or is a professor of) (subject) at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. The views here are her/his own and not those of the Coast Guard Academy or other branches of the U.S. government.*
6. Potential for adverse affect. In cases when the faculty member's analysis or argument has the obvious potential to adversely affect national security or the policy or resource efforts of DHS, DOD or the Coast Guard, the author must ensure that their department head and the Academy public affairs office are given the opportunity to read the material before publication. At all times, information should be unclassified unless prior written authorization has been granted by Commandant (CG-2).
7. Existing confidentiality agreements. This policy does not preempt existing confidentiality agreements between individual Academy faculty members and specific Coast Guard directives and entities.

#### D. COAST GUARD AUTHORS

1. Policy. The Coast Guard encourages its personnel to be published authors. Our story needs to be told — and those who are part of the story or helped make it happen are best qualified to tell it. In some cases, your writings may be subject to official review by Commandant (CG-0922).
2. Guidelines. The guidelines in this section apply only to active-duty Coast Guardsmen and civilian employees. The guidance protects the authors, the government and the people of the United States. Throughout this section, the terms writings, manuscript and publication also apply to papers prepared for presentation and other materials intended for public dissemination, including photography and artwork. Material with no Coast Guard connection, such as, fictional short stories, novels, poems, plays and scripts for movies, TV and radio, is an individual responsibility and requires no headquarters clearance.
3. Rules of disclosure. Coast Guard employees shall not, without proper authority, disclose any information whatsoever that might aid or be of assistance in the prosecution or support of any claim against the United States. In all cases, the basic rules of security apply. For more information, look in the Information Security Manual COMDTINST M5510.21.

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4. Public Works. Coast Guard personnel may write for publication, broadcast, etc., during the course of business, subject to direction from their unit commanders. For these works, they must not receive compensation, other than courtesy copies, tear sheets or public recognition. These writings are official Coast Guard releases and cannot be copyrighted.
5. Private Works. With some limits, Coast Guard authors may write and receive payment for by-lined articles, books or papers. The work must be on your own time and is your property. For complete guidance, consult the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, which is available from your District or Area legal office.
  - a. You must not use your on-duty time for such personal writings or the on-duty hours of a government typist.
  - b. Authorship must never conflict with carrying out your duties.
  - c. You may copyright private writings in accordance with current copyright laws, except when you have made an agreement that the Coast Guard will have future use of the material.
6. Use of government office equipment. Generally, Coast Guard personnel may use government equipment for authorized purposes only. However, certain limited personal use of government office equipment by personnel may be an “authorized use” of Government property, when the use does not interfere with official business and involves minimal additional expense to the government. Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment, COMDTINST 5375.1 (series) specifies the limits on personal use of office equipment.
7. Retired members. Retired members are not required to submit for review materials they have prepared for publication. However, if the topic touches upon a national security issue, it is advisable for the author to submit it for clearance. Authors should consult the Public Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5728.2 (series), or contact Commandant (CG-0922) for guidance.
8. Clearance Policy. For Coast Guard authors who are assigned to units outside of Coast Guard Headquarters, Commandant (CG-0922) delegates its clearance authority to district public affairs officers in most cases. However, CG-0922 retains its authority to clear all public or private unclassified writings prepared by any Coast Guard member or employee when it contains information about Coast Guard or Department of Homeland Security policy, U.S. foreign or military policy, sensitive issues, high technology and the policies of other federal agencies; other topics may be added by Coast Guard directives in the 5720 series.
  - a. Before you release your manuscript, submit two copies to Public Affairs for security and policy clearance.

- b. Using the proper format will speed the process — typing on one side of the paper, double-spaced. (Your editor or publisher will also want the manuscript done this way.)
  - c. Include your name, title and duty station; the manuscript title; deadlines, if appropriate; and where the writing will be published.
  - d. The clearing office will mark a copy of the manuscript with the identity of the clearing authority, the date of the clearance and any conditions for release, such as amendments, deletions, etc.
  - e. Disclaimer. All public and private writings requiring review and clearance must include the following disclaimer either at the beginning or end of the manuscript: “The views expressed herein are those of the author and are not to be construed as official or reflecting the views of the Commandant or of the U. S. Coast Guard.”
9. Accepting Compensation for writing. 5 C.F.R. §2635.807 contains the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) rules regarding Executive Branch authors (including Coast Guard civilian and military personnel) accepting compensation for, among other things, their writing activities. (As discussed below, these OGE rules also control a covered author’s ability to refer to his or her federal rank, title, or position in connection with the writing activity.) The OGE writing compensation rules, as applied to Coast Guard personnel, are as follows:
- a. Coast Guard personnel are prohibited from accepting any “compensation” – other than from the federal government– for any writing that “relates to” that person’s Coast Guard duties. The term “compensation” includes any form of payment, consideration, or remuneration, advances, salary, fees, honoraria, stipends, or royalties. The term “compensation” does not include the payment of transportation, meal, or lodging expenses (travel expenses) incurred in connection with a federal author’s writing activities. Accordingly, a Coast Guard author cannot accept compensation from any non-federal source for a writing that relates to the author’s Coast Guard duties -- but the author can accept a non-federal entity’s offer of payment of travel expenses regardless of whether the writing “relates to” the author’s Coast Guard duties. This is a fundamental rule.
  - b. A Coast Guard author’s writing “relates to” his or her duties if:
    - (1) the writing activity is undertaken as part of the author’s official duties,
    - (2) circumstances indicate that an invitation to engage in the writing activity was extended to the author primarily because of his or her Coast Guard position and not his or her subject matter expertise,

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- (3) the invitation to engage in the writing activity or the offer of compensation was extended to the author by a person or entity that has interests that could be substantially affected by the author's performance of Coast Guard duties,
  - (4) the author's conveyed information draws substantially on non-public ideas or data, or,
  - (5) the subject matter deals in a significant way with any matter in which the author is currently assigned or has been assigned during the preceding 12-month period, or with any Coast Guard policy, program, or operation.
- c. These Federal ethics rules do not apply to Auxiliarists or to reservists who are not on active duty.
10. Use of Coast Guard Title or Position. By OGE rule, 5 C.F.R. §2635.807, Coast Guard personnel engaged in writing as outside employment or as an outside activity cannot use – or permit the use of – his or her Coast Guard title or position to identify himself or herself in connection with the writing except that:
- a. Such information can be included as one of several biographical details when such information is given to identify the author – provided that information is given no more prominence than the other biographical information, and
  - b. A Coast Guard author may use his or her Coast Guard title or position – and permit others to use that information – in connection with an article published in a scientific or professional journal, provided that title or position information is accompanied by a reasonably prominent disclaimer that is acceptable to the Coast Guard – indicating that the views expressed in the article are not necessarily the views of the Coast Guard or the United States.
11. Use of Coast Guard Rank. 5 C.F.R. §2635.807 permits Coast Guard uniformed members to use – and permit the use of their military rank in connection with their writing activities.
12. Promotion or Sale of work by Coast Guard authors. The Coast Guard may in no way appear to facilitate the sale of works prepared by a Coast Guard civilian or active duty author. These works may be listed with other reference works in a section of the Coast Guard Historian's Web site.

E. ONLINE SELF-PUBLISHING

1. Purpose. This section provides guidance for Coast Guard employees who create personal Internet pages or use other media to chronicle their work activities for

public dissemination in employee weblogs, web documentaries and other public postings.

2. Background. A weblog, which is usually shortened to blog, is a website where regular entries are made (such as in a journal or diary) and presented in reverse chronological order. Blogs often offer commentary or news on a particular subject, such as technology, politics, or local news; some function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. Most blogs are primarily textual although many focus on photographs, videos, or audio.
3. Benefits. Blogging by members of the Coast Guard can have three benefits to the service:
  - a. Blogging can raise the visibility of the Coast Guard;
  - b. Blogging can contribute to greater public understanding of our missions, and;
  - c. Blogging can give the public an “inside look” at the men and women that comprise our service.
4. Concerns. Whether or not a member of the Coast Guard chooses to create or participate in a blog, a wiki or some other form of online publishing or discussion is his or her own decision.
  - a. Be mindful that what you write will be public for a long time – protect your privacy.
  - b. Any member who self-publishes online is personally responsible for everything they post. Posting content online does not absolve the member from Coast Guard regulations and policies concerning operational security and information security. Additionally, Coast Guard members may be held accountable for violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for content posted online.
  - c. Bloggers must ensure that they adhere strictly to safety and security measures so that troop and national security is not jeopardized. Simply posting photos could threaten operational security, and even some unclassified information may not be appropriate for use on the Web.
  - d. Coast Guard insignia may not be used on a blog or other unofficial Web site, and a disclaimer should be posted whenever the content could be construed to relate to the blogger’s Coast Guard capacity or concerns the Coast Guard:



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“The views expressed herein are those of the blogger and are not to be construed as official or reflecting the views of the Commandant or of the U. S. Coast Guard.”

- e. All questions regarding what may be posted should be directed to the unit’s security manager.
5. Guidelines. Coast Guard personnel who self-publish online content that either relates to the blogger’s Coast Guard capacity or concerns the Coast Guard must abide by the following guidelines, keeping in mind the concerns discussed above:
- a. **Start with a blogging service.** The Coast Guard does not host employee blogs since it adds credibility if the service does not officially sponsor them. Therefore, employees should use one of the many third-party blog-hosting sites on the Internet. Some of these are free, while others charge a nominal fee. If you use one of the latter, any expense is your responsibility.
  - b. **Write as yourself.** In other words, use your real name. No Coast Guard member or employee should be writing anonymously or under a pseudonym. Your name should be prominently displayed on your blog’s title or subtitle. This will add credibility with your readers and promote accountability within the Coast Guard.
  - c. **Own your content.** Employee blog sites are not official Coast Guard communications. Therefore, your blog entries legally belong to you. They represent your thoughts and opinions. It is important that you remind your readers of this fact by including the following mandatory disclaimer on your site: “The posts on this blog are provided ‘as is’ with no warranties and confer no rights. The opinions expressed on this site are my own and are not to be construed as official or reflecting the views of the Commandant or of the U. S. Coast Guard.” You assume full responsibility and liability for all actions arising from your posts. We also encourage you to put a copyright notice on your site in your name (e.g., “© 2005, John Smith”).
  - d. **Write often.** Whether you know it or not, you are an expert. You have a unique perspective on the Coast Guard based on your talents, skills, and current responsibilities. People want to hear about that perspective. Also, in order to develop a consistent readership, you should try to write on a regular basis. For some, this will be daily; for others, it may be weekly. The important thing is consistent posting – new content is what keeps readers coming back.
  - e. **Advertise—if you wish.** While there is no requirement to run ads on your blog, you are free to do this if you wish. Some of the free blog services run

ads as a way to offset their costs. If you use such a service, you won't have a choice. On the other hand, if you pay for your service, you can avoid advertising altogether. To the extent you have control, ads or recommend products that are featured on your blog should be consistent with our core values.

- f. **Be nice.** Avoid attacking other individuals or organizations. This includes fellow Coast Guardsmen, bloggers, contractors, vendors, or elected officials. You are welcome to disagree with the Coast Guard's leaders, provided your tone is respectful and not in violation of the UCMJ. If in doubt, we suggest that you "sleep on it" before posting it on your blog.
- g. **Obey the law.** This goes without saying, but by way of reminder, do not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, embarrassing to another person or entity, or violates the privacy rights of another. Also, do not post material that contains viruses, Trojan horses, worms, or any other computer code that is intended to damage, interfere with, or surreptitiously intercept or expropriate any system, data, or information.
- h. **Keep secrets.** Do not disclose sensitive, proprietary, or classified information about the Coast Guard, other than what is publicly available in our own press releases and public statements. This includes operations and pre-decisional deliberations. If in doubt, check with the Commandant (CG-0922) before posting.
- i. **Respect copyrights.** For your protection, do not post any material that is copyrighted unless:
  - (1) You are the copyright owner,
  - (2) You have written permission of the copyright owner to post the copyrighted material on your blog, or
  - (3) You are sure that the use of any copyrighted material is permitted by the legal doctrine of "fair use." (Please note: this is your responsibility. The Coast Guard cannot provide you with legal advice regarding this.)



## CHAPTER 11. SOCIAL MEDIA

### A. THE COAST GUARD AND SOCIAL MEDIA.

1. Background. The permeation of online social networks into the standard communications toolkit presents Coast Guard communicators with enhanced access and increased opportunities to educate and engage ever-growing and influential new audiences. These social media tools also offer direct two-way engagement with the American taxpayer which allows us to “listen” to our constituencies and consider both feedback and criticisms of how we do business as part of our larger organizational maturation process.
2. Purpose. The ability to engage with the *Right Tool at the Right Level for the Right Audience* is at the core of the Coast Guard’s social media strategy and complements localized media and community relations efforts by hundreds of independent commands. These commands rely on both the goodwill and firsthand experience of those who call the community home to be effective partners in mission execution.

### B. RESPONSIBILITY.

1. Commandant (CG-092). Commandant (CG-092) will work with Department of Homeland Security Office of Public Affairs to determine policy and specific requirements for the use of social media for official Coast Guard communications. Commandant (CG-092) will coordinate with Coast Guard national commands, directorates, areas and districts to establish a social media program consistent with policy and communication objectives.
2. Area and District Public Affairs Offices.
  - a. Oversee social media efforts within their region and provide guidance to units on engagements in social media. This manual alone is not sufficient in assisting a unit to operate a successful and appropriate social media program. Public affairs staff should maintain a posture of regular coaching, monitoring and evaluating unit-level social media engagement in the same way they do with unit media relations programs.
  - b. Collaborate with Commandant (CG-0922) and unit commanders/public affairs officers to produce and share social media content.
  - c. Maintain a list of official sites throughout their area of responsibility in accordance with Service standards.

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3. Unit.

- a. Ultimately, unit commanders are responsible for social media content posted by Coast Guard personnel at their command. Unit commanders shall establish a unit policy which clearly addresses appropriate official, unofficial and personal use of social media tools IAW paragraph E.4 below.
- b. Units should take capacity, training and resources into account when deciding whether a social media presence is appropriate for their command. Unit commanders and collateral duty public affairs personnel at units desiring a social media site shall work directly with their servicing public affairs staff to request an identity and adhere to this guidance.
- c. Unit commanders and collateral duty public affairs personnel will engage directly with their servicing public affairs staff to ensure appropriate adaptation of unit level stories, images and video for use on district and national level social media sites. Units deployed or under orders shall adhere to their Operational Commander's direction on public affairs.

4. Individual.

- a. Coast Guard personnel utilizing social media tools whether in an official or unofficial capacity must adhere to the guidelines in this chapter when they identify themselves as a U.S. Coast Guard member or employee, or if it could be construed as such. Identification as affiliated with the Coast Guard may be as a result of past site activity, photos of themselves, or other indirect activity. Even when off-duty, and on a personal site or blog, Coast Guard members are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and employees are subject to administrative or legal action if they violate policy or security regulations.
- b. Coast Guard personnel should refer to paragraph E.4. of this chapter to ensure they understand the difference between official, unofficial and personal use of social media for Coast Guard communications.
- c. Coast Guard personnel are solely responsible for any statements, comments, or blogs posted under their name. Personnel are not shielded from legal action for libel or other violations of the personal rights of others.

C. AUTHORIZED USES OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

1. Purpose. COMMANDANT (CG-092) has identified a set of social media tools appropriate for Coast Guard use and consistent with best practices, target audiences and industry research. With the overall goal of "*Right Tool... Right Level... Right Audience,*" organizational levels are authorized to use the following social media tools for official Coast Guard communications.
2. Sectors and Units. All Coast Guard sectors and units will have the opportunity to establish and maintain a social networking page as outlined in the Coast Guard

Social Media Field Guide. A social networking page is the ideal tool for building a network at a unit level among both an internal and external audience including family members, employees, and the community. Social networks represent a “one-stop shop” enabling an administrator the ability to use text, images and video in one place to tell the Coast Guard story.

3. Area and District Public Affairs Offices. In collaboration with units in their area of responsibility, each area and district public affairs staff will have the option of managing a robust set of social media tools including a blog, social networking page and micro blogging site as outlined in the Coast Guard Social Media Field Guide.
4. Commandant (CG-092). In collaboration with area and district public affairs teams and headquarters program offices, the Commandant (CG-092) social media team will maintain the full suite of national Coast Guard social media tools as outlined in the Coast Guard Social Media Field Guide including the official service-wide blog, social networking page, micro blogging sites and photo and video sharing sites.
5. Authorization. Sites will be authorized and established as permissions are sought. Area and district public affairs offices shall request to establish desired sites through Commandant (CG-092). Unit commanders and collateral duty public affairs personnel will request to establish a social networking identity through their servicing public affairs office. Sites shall be set up in accordance with the Social Media Field Guide.
6. Requesting a waiver of these requirements. Commands desiring to establish a social media presence beyond those permissions authorized in this chapter must route a request through their servicing public affairs office to the Commandant (CG-092) social media team.

#### D. SOCIAL MEDIA SITE REQUIREMENTS.

1. Requirements. All sites must comply with these requirements. Sites that cannot be brought into compliance or habitually fail to meet requirements will be removed permanently.
2. Registration. All official Coast Guard social media sites must be registered with Commandant (CG-092). Commands shall update their registration when their designated social media spokesperson changes.
3. Comment Policy.
  - a. The Official Coast Guard Comment Policy shall be clearly posted on all official social media and blog sites, which outlines public engagement expectations and the manner in which comments are reviewed, moderated and

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responded to. Commands can contact their servicing public affairs officer or Commandant (CG-092) for a copy of the policy.

- b. Comments shall be moderated prior to posting whenever the technology on the site allows. If the technology does not allow it, comments shall be regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with the Comment Policy. If comments violate the comment policy, they should not be posted or may be deleted upon the discretion of the command.
  - c. Comments submitted on official sites in connection with the transaction of public business may become a federal record. A copy shall be retained per the records retention policy before deletion or removal from the site.
4. Privacy Settings. Official Coast Guard social media sites shall be publicly accessible to the full extent available. Site managers should set privacy and account settings to ensure maximum public availability of content.
  5. Privacy Policy.
    - a. While the Coast Guard may use social media, most of the sites are controlled and operated by third parties. These sites usually provide their own privacy and use policies; however, commands shall take every effort to protect the privacy of the public, self and others.
      - (1) The command must engage on these sites in a manner that protects privacy, respects the intent of users and does not solicit or collect personally identifiable information (PII).
      - (2) Commands shall not proactively friend/fan/follow public users except other U.S. federal, state, local and tribal government agencies. Commands may in return friend/fan/follow those public users that friend/fan/follow your site.
      - (3) Commands shall clearly post their contact information (mailing and e-mail address) on all official social media sites.
      - (4) Commands shall clearly post or link to the Coast Guard's official privacy policy and external link disclaimer on all social media sites.
    - b. See Chapter 2 of this manual for more information.
  6. Records Management.
    - a. Because a social media site is conducting the communications and transactions on behalf of the Coast Guard, it shall be properly managed as a federal record. All content and comments posted on official social media sites shall be preserved IAW the Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series).

- b. Official comments left on third party social media sites may also qualify as a federal record. If in doubt, consult your servicing legal officer.

#### 7. Accessibility.

- a. Section 508 (29 U.S.C. 794d) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that federal Web sites be accessible to people with disabilities. The law requires all electronic information technology (EIT) acquired, developed, maintained or used by federal agencies to be accessible to anyone, including those who are disabled. For more information, visit <http://www.section508.gov> or <http://www.access-board.gov/508>.
- b. Official online sites shall have a text equivalent for every non-text element. Text alternatives for each photo or graphic shall be coded into the element when uploading to the site. This enables computer software, often called screen readers, to interpret and speak the text for the image.
- c. Coast Guard video and multimedia productions shall have captioning or a transcript that represents the same information found in the multimedia.
- d. Commands needing assistance with Section 508 compliance shall contact their servicing public affairs office.

#### 8. Multimedia.

- a. While imagery and video are great and easy ways to tell the Coast Guard story, personnel must follow the guidance outlined in Chapter 5 of this manual.
- b. While area and district public affairs staffs are not authorized unique multimedia sites, they shall upload newsworthy imagery and video to the Service's photo and video sharing sites as outlined in the Coast Guard Social Media Field Guide. These sites will have area and district playlists and photo sets, respectively, for uploading content. All imagery posted on these sites must also be uploaded to the Coast Guard Visual Information Gallery (<http://cgvi.uscg.mil>) within a reasonable amount of time.
- c. Units should contact their servicing public affairs office for assistance in preparing photos and video for digital release and for uploading imagery into CGVI.

#### 9. Correction Policy.

- a. Commands shall strive to ensure information published is completely accurate and conveyed in the proper context. Despite this commitment, mistakes can occur. When they do, they shall be corrected in a timely manner.



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- b. Things like spelling and punctuation edits can immediately be made, but factual or contextual errors, to include names, dates, or places, will be flagged with an “UPDATE” to the post. The “UPDATE” will appear at the beginning of the post with an explanation of what was changed, and if appropriate, why it was changed.

E. ENGAGING ONLINE.

1. Requirements. Coast Guard personnel must ensure our online communication abides by legal and security requirements.
2. Accountability. Any member or employee who self-publishes online is personally accountable for everything they post. Personnel bear a responsibility for ensuring information disclosed (including personal comments) is accurate and appropriate. Coast Guard military members may be held accountable for violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and civilian employees may be held accountable to administrative or legal action for content posted online.
3. Requirements. When engaging online, Coast Guard personnel should be aware of the following concerns:
  - a. Intellectual Property.
    - (1) Commands must follow all applicable copyright laws and standards of Fair Use. For your protection, do not use any words, logos or other marks that would infringe upon the trademark, service mark, certification mark or other intellectual property rights of the owners of such marks or any material that is copyrighted unless (consult servicing legal office if unsure):
      - (a) You are the copyright owner;
      - (b) You have written permission of the copyright owner to post the copyrighted material on your blog; or
      - (c) You are sure that the use of any copyrighted material is permitted by the legal doctrine of “fair use.”
    - (2) Refer to chapter 3.E. of this manual on the use of Coast Guard protected words and symbols.
  - b. Legal issues.
    - (1) Coast Guard personnel are solely responsible for any statements, comments or blogs posted under their name. They are not shielded from legal action for libel or other violations of the personal rights of others.

- (2) Do not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, embarrassing to another person or entity or violates the privacy rights of another.
- (3) Do not post any information that would infringe upon the proprietary, privacy or personal rights of others.

c. Security.

- (1) Coast Guard personnel are responsible for adhering to Coast Guard regulations and policies concerning Operations Security (OPSEC), Information Security (INFOSEC) and the Privacy Act.
- (2) The guidelines for release of information outlined in Chapter 2 of this manual apply equally to all modes of public engagement including official, unofficial or personal use of the Internet. Coast Guard personnel must consider the impact of any text, imagery or video content on operational or information security before posting online.
- (3) While social media is great for communications, America's adversaries also use the Internet and other social media sites to gather information about Coast Guard operations and personnel. In fact, social media sites may provide a "one-stop-shop" for intelligence collection by our adversaries. All personnel have a responsibility to ensure that sensitive information is not posted to public websites whether they are communicating in an official, unofficial or personal capacity.
- (4) Coast Guard personnel that participate in or use social media tools must engage responsibly and ensure they do not violate security, accuracy, policy and propriety (SAPP) guidelines.
- (5) Commands are reminded not to disclose sensitive or classified information about the Coast Guard. This includes operations and pre-decisional deliberations.
- (6) Coast Guard personnel are expected to exercise good OPSEC and common sense when considering the release of information. While not all inclusive, the following information should not be released:
  - (a) Rules of engagement or use of force policy;
  - (b) Details of schedules, daily routine, specific locations and courses of action for ongoing or future operations or activities;
  - (c) Speculation or discussion of terrorist events, activities and force protection posture;

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- (d) Deployment plans and procedures for Coast Guard units or other U.S. forces;
  - (e) Names of personnel assigned to sensitive deployments or duty stations;
  - (f) Personnel (recall) rosters containing any combination of personally identifiable information (PII) and/or unique identifiers of individuals;
  - (g) Family member information, home telephone numbers and addresses;
  - (h) Physical security vulnerabilities of Coast Guard or other forces;
  - (i) Detailed information about unit capabilities and sensitive or controlled missions;
  - (j) Maps or specific locations of sensitive operational units;
  - (k) Information on security systems, hazardous materials, public safety and response plans for port facilities;
  - (l) Network IP addresses;
  - (m) Existence or details of intrusions into networks;
  - (n) Specific movement of Flag officers, senior leaders, VIPs and key command personnel including itineraries, hotel reservations, events, agendas, etc.; and
  - (o) Posting or disclosure of internal Coast Guard information or documents that the Service has not officially released to the public.
- (7) If in doubt, consult with your servicing public affairs staff, OPSEC Coordinator or Commandant (CG-0922) before posting.
4. Official, unofficial and personal use of social media.
- a. Because of the dynamics of online communication where anyone can be a publisher of content, and credibility is built among peers, there is a potential to unintentionally disclose protected information or engage in a conversation that you do not have the authority to conduct with millions of people.
  - b. There are three ways to publish online:
    - (1) in an official capacity, while on duty;
    - (2) in an unofficial capacity, while off-duty but speaking about official duties;  
or

- (3) in a personal capacity, not speaking about official duties
- c. Coast Guard personnel shall adhere to the requirements outlined in Chapter 10 of this manual when authoring blog posts or other online content for official, unofficial and personal sites.
- d. Because of the self-replicating nature of online communications and to prevent the misconception of posting in an official capacity, personnel shall not post or re-post information not yet released officially (i.e. re-posting online source material from other people or news organizations).
- e. Official use of social media.
- (1) Headquarters staffs, areas, districts, sectors and units are authorized to provide information and respond to Internet discussions on matters that are under their purview as outlined in this manual. Commands are encouraged to proactively contribute to online content in an official manner to further public information, discussion and understanding of Coast Guard roles, missions and issues.
- (2) Access to some social media sites through the Coast Guard network (SWIII) may be restricted. Units may use their funds to acquire and use “stand-alone” computer terminals and Internet connections outside of the Coast Guard network to attain greater access to web content not accessible through the SWIII firewall. Additionally, a unit may allow Coast Guard personnel to blog or post from their home or personal computers for official communication efforts.
- (3) When engaging in an official capacity whether on a unit site or as a comment on a non-official site (e.g. a comment on a public blog post), responses shall include your full signature including rank, name, title and unit of the person making the post. Official postings on a non-official site shall also include the following disclaimer, followed by your full signature, to avoid the implied Coast Guard endorsement of the web site:

***Official postings on a non-official site Disclaimer***

*“This is an official United States Coast Guard posting for the public's information. Our posting does not endorse this site or anything on it, including links to other sites, and we disclaim responsibility and liability for the site and its content.”*

f. Unofficial use of social media.

- (1) Unofficial Internet posts are personal expressions developed and released by Coast Guard personnel in an off-duty status and are not initiated by any

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part of the Coast Guard organization or subject to review through any official Coast Guard approval process.

- (2) Coast Guard personnel who express their Coast Guard related thoughts, ideas, knowledge, experience and opinions by posting Coast Guard related information including their rate, rank or title to an Internet site when off-duty or when on a site for personal use, shall consider the following:
- (a) Be mindful that what you post will be public indefinitely. Protect your privacy and engage responsibly. Coast Guard personnel should keep in mind how their posts will reflect upon themselves, their unit and our Service.
  - (b) As with other forums of personal public engagement, Coast Guard personnel shall avoid off-duty behavior that negatively impacts or conflicts with their ability to execute their duties as outlined in Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment, COMDTINST 5375.1 (series), and Standards of Ethical Conduct, COMDTINST M5370.8 (series). Additionally, Coast Guard personnel should avoid engaging in argumentative online conversations and should not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, embarrassing to another person or entity or violates the privacy rights of another.
  - (c) Coast Guard personnel should not write anonymously or under a pseudonym. Your name should be prominently displayed on your blog's title or subtitle. This will add to your credibility with your readers and promote accountability within the Coast Guard.
  - (d) Employees who unofficially post content about the Service shall clearly disclose their affiliation with it on all non-government social media sites. The following disclaimer shall be clearly posted whenever the content could be construed to relate to the publisher's official Coast Guard capacity or when the content directly concerns Coast Guard missions, policies or personnel.

***Unofficial Posts Disclaimer***

*“The views expressed herein are those of the blogger and are not to be construed as official or reflecting the views of the Commandant or of the U. S. Coast Guard.”*

g. Personal use of social media.

- (1) The realities of social media present new challenges for privacy and reputation management. Personal information disclosed or private

comments posted are easily searchable online and very difficult to remove from the web. Although you can restrict or set privacy controls, anything you post online is never truly private.

- (2) Coast Guard personnel should be mindful that when they post information about themselves or colleagues, it directly reflects upon them as well as the U.S. Coast Guard. It is difficult to separate yourself from the Coast Guard in the public's eyes.
- (3) Personal accounts shall not be established with government e-mail addresses, employ the use of government logos, be used to conduct official Coast Guard business, release official Coast Guard information not already approved for release, or be used for official internal communications for employees' work activities.

#### F. TRAINING AND RESOURCES.

1. General. Your servicing public affairs office and the Commandant (CG-092) social media team can provide support and guidance on executing an effective and sustainable social media program. Commands are encouraged to consult with their servicing public affairs office and Commandant (CG-092) to obtain best practices, how-to guides, case studies and other support materials.
2. Guidance. In CG Portal, Commandant (CG-092) maintains and publishes the Social Media Field Guide that commands shall follow IAW this chapter. You can locate this content in the social media folder of the library on the Public Affairs collaboration place.
3. Training.
  - a. All Coast Guard personnel who post on official social media sites must have either attended the Coast Guard Public Affairs course at the Defense Information School or have received training from their servicing public affairs office.
  - b. Commands must provide their servicing public affairs office a letter designating their social media spokesperson and authorizing them to conduct official unit communications.
4. Technical Support.
  - a. The Coast Guard information technology community can only provide limited technical support for blogs and social networking sites. Users are encouraged to consult the Help feature on the site prior to contacting their local servicing Coast Guard Command, Control, Communications, Computers & Information Technology office for assistance.

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- b. The Commandant (CG-0922) social media team has considerable experience using social media tools and is available for general consultation.

## APPENDIX A to COMDTINST M5728.2D

**APPENDIX A**

<b><u>FORM #</u></b>	<b><u>TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>REV DATE (mm/yy)</u></b>
CG-1650	CG AWARD RECOMMENDATION	06/2004
CG-4769	DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD CERTIFICATE	07/2003
CG-4769A	DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD CITATION	07/2003
CG-4770	MERITORIOUS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD CERTIFICATE	06/2003
CG-4770A	MERITORIOUS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD CITATION	07/2003
CG-4771	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMENDATION AWARD CERTIFICATE	07/2003
CG-4771A	PUBLIC SERVICE COMMENDATION AWARD CITATION	07/2003
CG-4772	CERTIFICATE OF MERIT	07/2003
CG-4772A	CERTIFICATE OF MERIT CITATION	10/1972
CG-4773	CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION	06/2003
CG-4773A	CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION CITATION	07/2003
CG-5450	PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD FILLER	10/1986