U.S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard



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1800

JAN 1 2 2021

# MEMORANDUM

From: Dr. D. M. Navarro St. Mushell Johand CG-13

To: RADM Jeff Hathaway, USCG (Ret) MCPO Lloyd Pierce, USCG (Ret) CG National Retiree Council Co-Chairs Reply to Robert Hinds Attn of: (202) 475-5451

## Subj: CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

- Ref: (a) Coast Guard Retiree Services Program, COMDTINST 1800.5H
  - (b) CG National Retiree Council Annual Report, 9 Oct 2020
  - (c) CGNRC Co-Chair Meeting with CCG, 15 Dec 2020

1. In accordance with reference (a), as the Commandant's Executive Agent for the CG National Retiree Council (CGNRC), I want to thank you for your exceptional annual report and briefing with the Commandant (CCG), MCPOCG, DCMS, CG-1, and me, references (b) and (c).

2. I commend the Council for *staying the course* throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with Regional Retiree Councils (RRCs) remaining strong advocates for area retirees, and the CGNRC conducting a productive *virtual* annual meeting in August 2020. Most notably, I thank you for your leadership in raising awareness of the CG Audit Error Worksheet (AEW) backlog, delaying retiree pay for 18+ months. The AEW backlog has now been eliminated and the Commandant has accepted your challenge to reduce AEW processing from 120 to 90 days over the next year.

3. Please extend my appreciation to the entire CGNRC, now including 19 RRCs, for their continued important volunteer service to the Coast Guard and our retiree community. I look forward to supporting the Council in addressing their current priorities and hosting the next annual meeting of the CGNRC at CG Headquarters – tentatively planned for August 2021.

#

Enclosure: (1) 2020 CGNRC Annual Report Package

Copy: PSC/PPC CG-11 DOL FORCECOM

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY U.S. Coast Guard DIGEST				
APPROVAL	SIGNATURE			
	1505 11/24/26 30 oct 2020	Date: 29 cot 24 24		
Re: 2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF TH	E COAST GUARD NATIONAL RETIRE	E COUNCIL		
Council (CGNRC). The Council	2020 Annual Report of the Co remains active in engaging o fforts with my office to full n available resources.	east Guard National Retiree our CG military retiree y implement policy promulgated		
their continued dedicated ef are well aligned with the ne	l will formally respond to th forts and this year's annual eds of the CG and our militar rvices Program remains Ready,	report. Council top priorities y retiree community - helping		
MCPOCG, DCMS, and CG-1 prior	Co-Chairs for their annual me to 1 Dec 2020 to discuss thi r your feedback and direction	eting to be scheduled with you, s report, including the ,		
	SIGNER'S COMMENTS			
11/20/20 VCG: Please a	dvise when AEW b.	achlog tanget is packed. 175 pan ky		

CG-4229 (11/13)

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OCT 2 9 2020

# **MEMORANDUM**

From:	Dr. D. M.	Navarro
	CG-13	

Reply to Robert Hinds Attn of: (202) 475-5451

To: CCG Thru: (1) CG-1 m Ourse, know 30 oct 2020 (2) DCMS (3) MCPOCG (4) VCG

Subj: CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Retiree Services Program, COMDTINST 1800.5H

1. In accordance with reference (a), as your Executive Agent, I am pleased to forward the 2020 Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CGNRC) Annual Report.

2. I will formally respond to the Council, thanking them for this report and continued help in implementing policy promulgated in reference (a). The Council's top priorities are well aligned with the needs of the Coast Guard and our military retiree community – helping to ensure your CG Retiree Services Program remains *Ready, Relevant, and Responsive*.

3. I plan to join the CGNRC Co-Chairs for their annual meeting to be scheduled with you, MCPOCG, DCMS, and CG-1 prior to 1 Dec 2020 to discuss the report, including the Council's top priorities, for your feedback and direction.

#

Enclosure: (1) 2020 CGNRC Annual Report

Copy: PSC/PPC CG-11 DOL FORCECOM



U.S. COAST GUARD NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL RETIREE SERVICES PROGRAM (CG-13) 2703 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVE SE WASHINGTON, DC 20593-7801

> 1800 9 Oct 2020

## MEMORANDUM

From: RADM Jeffrey Hathaway, USCG (Ret.) Reply to MCPO Lloyd Pierce, USCG (Ret.) **RCH for** Attn of:

To: Commandant (CCG) Thru: (1) CG-13 1/24/20(2) CG-1 3/24/20(3) DCMS 1/24/20(4) MCPOCG (5) VCG to Robert Hinds f: RSP Manager (CG-13)

Subj: 2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL (CGRNC)

Ref: (a) Coast Guard Retiree Services Program, COMDTINST 1800.5H

- The Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CGNRC) held its 19<sup>th</sup> annual meeting on 20 August 2020. The meeting was conducted virtually, utilizing Microsoft Teams, from Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, DC. As co-chairs, we submit the following 2020 Annual Report for the CGNRC in accordance with reference (a).
- 2) BACKGROUND. The Council was established in 1982 and is comprised of the national cochairs, members from 18 Regional Retiree Councils (RRC), and several at-large members. The co-chairs consist of one retired flag officer and one retired master chief petty officer. The Council is chartered as directed by reference (a) to represent more than 55,000 active duty and reserve retirees, including family members, annuitants, and survivors, and to:
  - a. Promote open and positive lines of communication between the Commandant and the retiree community through the Commandant's Executive Agent (CG-13); and
  - b. Inform CG leadership about ongoing retiree issues.

The Council meets annually to review the Retiree Services Program, address ongoing priorities and discuss retiree issues. Upon conclusion of the meeting, they report findings via the chain of command and directly out-brief senior leadership, including the Commandant.

3) This report was prepared by national co-chairs, RADM Jeff Hathaway (Ret.) and MCPO Lloyd Pierce (Ret.). As experienced by all this year, COVID-19 restrictions caused almost all retiree community functions and meetings to be conducted online, or not at all. This included our normal multi-day CGNRC meeting which was originally scheduled to be held at USCG HQ in late April. Instead, we held a three hour virtual online meeting in August. The meeting agenda is provided in enclosure (1). The meeting included representatives from almost all RRCs, CG-13 staff, senior leaders, and guest speakers. Names are contained in the CGNRC meeting minutes, included as enclosure (2). Importantly, the CGNRC bid farewell to MCPO Kevin Isherwood, after a marvelous four year tour as a CGNRC co-chair. MCPO Isherwood was awarded the Distinguished Public Service Award for his extended performance of duty. We also welcomed MCPO Lloyd Pierce as our new CGNRC co-chair. He retired in 2014 after gold badge tours at JIATF-S, CCGD 8, and USCGA. He resides in the Tampa, FL area and is currently employed by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.

- 4) As can be seen in the meeting agenda, our focus this year was mainly on updating RRCs on progress made on our current CGNRC priorities list for the CG Retiree Services Program. An updated list is provided as enclosure (3). We did not remove or add any items from the current list. The following items were highlighted during our CGNRC meeting:
  - a. Retiree Strategic Communications The new retiree newsletter, The Long Blue Line, has received rave reviews throughout our retiree community! The National Coast Guard Museum Association is producing a consistently high quality product in coordination with CG-13. We have forwarded suggested "tweaks" offered from members of the retiree community that will be integrated in future issues. The fact that a hard copy of the Long Blue Line is mailed to all retirees (unless a retiree otherwise directs) is a great benefit as we are still working on closing the gap of retiree/annuitant e-mail addresses contained in Direct Access (DA). Currently, about 50% of retirees/annuitants are listed in DA with e-mail addresses. A major "advertising" push continues to urge our retiree community to update e-mail addresses in DA, with CG-13 tracking closely. Additionally, the CG Retiree Services website has been redesigned for easier access and searching. Our fellow DOD Services retiree councils recently mentioned it as "best of breed."
  - b. Audit Error Worksheet (AEW) Processing Your CGNRC sees that significant progress is being made in clearing the backlog in AEW processing by PPC, related to Concurrent Retiree and Disability Pay (CRDP). Under the watchful eye of CG-1, a directed increase of personnel to PPC (both PCS and TAD), coupled with PPC developed automation, is steadily chipping away at the backlog, which has been a constant source of retiree community complaints for years. While COVID-19 restrictions slowed the projected ramp-up slightly, it now appears that AEW processing will be reduced to 90 days by the end of calendar year 2020, and will be able to remain steady at that level going forward. Updates to our retiree community on this issue are being provided in each issue of the Long Blue Line. Your CHNRC will continue to monitor progress carefully as long delays of years in receiving VA disability pay caused by CG processing delays sends the wrong message to our CG retiree population.
  - c. Regional Retiree Councils While COVID-19 restrictions disrupted the "battle rhythm" of our Regional Retiree Councils (RRC) for the last several months, annual reporting indicates that RRCs have done as much as possible to stay connected to their respective retiree populations. Work will continue to assist some of our RRCs that lack adequate volunteer leadership, regular communication with their active duty sponsor unit, or are having issues maintaining a connection to their geographic retiree community. The

CGNRC and CG-13 have built a strong relationship with both the Force Readiness Command (FORCECOM) and Director of Operational Logistics (DOL) over the past year. Both are committed to ensuring that Base and Training Center COs/XOs under their control that sponsor a RRC, understand the importance of an active relationship and an attentive retiree services collateral duty officer. The Deputy Commandant of Mission Support (DCMS) instituted program to have senior CG leadership, while on field visits, recognize praise worthy retirees identified by RRCs and their active duty sponsors continues to receive positive reviews from the retiree community. Although, also hampered by COVID-19 travel restrictions, several retirees were recognized over the past year. Additionally, the number of RRCs continues to grow. RRC Ohio Valley (#18) was chartered in the latter part of 2019, while RRC Charleston (#19) just received its charter on September 25, 2020! Discussions to create our 20<sup>th</sup> RCC under the charter of Base LA/LB are currently ongoing.

- d. Better Integrate CG Retiree Services Program (RSP) and CG Transition Assistance Program (TAP) – Through CG-13, the CGNRC is working hard to standardize the distribution of the Retiree Services Program Guide tri-fold, accompanied by a letter signed by the CGNRC co-chairs, welcoming service members to our retired community. Our vision is that service members will learn during CG TAPS that they remain a member of the Long Blue Line as they join our retired community and have the opportunity to join their closest RRC. Finally, an initiative to pilot a Retiree Mentor Program by our National Capital RRC, has not launched to date, mainly due to COVID-19 restrictions. After re-affirming pilot leadership, tasks ahead include creation of mentoring interest surveys, recruiting volunteers, creation of a program guide and more. It is hoped that this pilot will both learn from and cooperate with the Coast Guard's active duty mentoring initiatives.
- 5) The National Retiree Council extends its gratitude for the enduring and strong support of the Retiree Services Program to the Commandant, DCMS, Assistant Commandant for Human Resources (CG-1), Director of Military Personnel (CG-13), Retiree Services Program Manager, Regional Retiree Council members, DOL, FORCECOM, Commanders of sponsoring Bases and TRACENs, and the CG Pay & Personnel Center, Retiree & Annuitant Services (PPC-RAS).

Enclosures: (1) CGNRC 2020 Meeting Agenda

- (2) CGNRC 2020 Meeting Minutes
- (3) CGNRC 2020 Priorities for the Retiree Services Program

Copy: CG-11, CG-PSC, CG-PPC, DOL, FORCECOM

### ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL 20 AUGUST 2020

#### Meeting Agenda

#### Rev: 8/18/2020

General: Because of the "virtual" format, our goals have been simplified:

- Allow CG leadership and CGNRC Chairs to directly address our 18 Regional Retiree Councils (RRCs).
- Provide updates on CGNRC Priorities and other items of general interest to our retiree community.
- Identify any new RRC/Retiree Community issues requiring CGNRC attention/action.

Start	Min	Activity	Speaker/Facilitator	
1250	10	MS Teams Check-In	YN1 Pagan, CGNRC Chairs, Bob Hinds	
1300	10	Welcome, Recognize new CGNRC Chair (MCPO Pierce), Updates		
1310	5	CG-1 Coin Presentation RADM Nunan (CG-1)		
1315	20	DCMS Recognize new CGNRC Chair (MCPO Pierce), Update, Q&A	VADM McAllister (DCMS)	
1335	10	CGNRC Co-Chair kick-off, meeting goals, guidelines	RADM Hathaway, MCPO Pierce, Bob Hinds (CG-1335)	
1345	15	RRC partnership with Bases/TRACENs Top 3 – 5 issues/initiatives.	Mr. Stephen Sabellico (DOL) CMC Jeffrey Waters (FORCECOM)	
1400	15	Audit Error Worksheet Update	eet Update Mr. Steve Hudson (PPC)	
1415	15	DHA consolidation and Commissary & Exchange Merger	LtGen Pete Osman, USMC (Ret), SECNAV Retiree Council Co-Chair	
1430	15	National Retiree Help Desk Update	LCDR Dave Du Pont, USCG (Ret) CAPT Bob Warakomsky, USCG (Ret)	
1445	15	Retiree Mentoring Pilot Program	Capital Area Retiree Council (TBA)	
1500	30	Other program issues/initiatives (*discuss suggestion to standardize RRC Chair email addresses.)	*RADM Hathaway *Jeff Rosenberg (Pensacola RRC) RRC Chairs	
1530	30	CGNRC Priorities, Open Discussion (COVID-19 issues), Wrap-Up	CGNRC Chairs Bob Hinds	

### 2020 "VIRTUAL" CGNRC MEETING – MINUTES 20 AUGUST, 1300 – 1600 Eastern Time

General: Because of "virtual" format, meeting objectives were simplified to: (1) Allow CG leadership and CGNRC Chairs to directly address our 18 RRCs; (2) Provide updates on CGNRC Priorities and other items of general interest to our retiree community; (3) Identify any new RRC/Retiree Community issues requiring CGNRC attention/action. LT Taylor Peace and YN1 Nayip Pagan (CG-1), provided exceptional support in facilitating first-time use of *MS Teams* and conducting the meeting. Despite some technology challenges, the meeting was a great success, with active engagement by participants, meeting objectives achieved, and lessons learned for future virtual meetings. The Council was fortunate to have LtGen Pete Osman, USMC (Ret), SECNAV Retiree Council Co-Chair, and CAPT Marty Menez, USN (Ret), SECNAV Retiree Council Draft minutes are being sent to participants for review/update, with a complete list of "virtual" participants to be distributed.

**1300 – 1315: RADM Nunan (CG-1), CAPT King (Acting CG-13).** Thanked CGNRC/RRCs and NRHD (noting CG-1 letter/coin to 14 watch-standers). Recognized CAPT Hulser/CAPT Williams (prior Acting CG-13) and welcomed CAPT King (Acting CG-13). Welcomed MCPO Lloyd Pierce, new CGNRC Co-Chair. Presented CG-1 Coins to Mr. Rich Etheridge (PPC) for exceptional support as Retiree Services webmaster (noting praise from SECNAV Retiree Council for website) and YN1 Stumpf (PPC) for design/development of database that streamlined AEW processing and significantly reduced backlog. CG-1 is looking forward to the Council's 2020 Annual Report.

**1320 – 1340: VADM McAllister (DCMS).** Welcomed MCPO Pierce as new CGNRC Co-Chair. Presented coin to Bob Hinds for assisting CG Retiree/family locate long-term care. Highlighted CCG/DCMS direction to CG senior leaders to recognize retirees for their continued volunteer service to the CG. Provided update on:

- OPERATIONS Global OPS; Counterdrug; Middle East; SAR up 25% (including Auxiliary/Boating Safety) since COVID-19; Cruise Ship Industry – CG off-boarding 200,00 passengers with minimal incident; Managing waterways – 95% of U.S. goods through waterways.
- SUPPORT Steady acquisitions (OPCs, NSCs, Replacing Black Hulls with Waterways Commerce Cutters, Polar Icebreakers with increased presence/importance in Arctic, New Aircraft and life extensions.
- INFRASTRUCTURE Base Charleston to be largest homeport (10 major cutters, Sector, ATON, Stations, etc.), Base Seattle (Polar Icebreakers).
- "TECH-REVOLUTION" CSI Service Center, Mission Ready Technology ("we're no longer attached to desks")
- PEOPLE CG Academy in session with hybrid approach, leading the way among Services in diversity and inclusion; Overhauling CG Training System (Virtual, "Distributed Learning").
- HEALTH CARE Electronic Health Record System (same as U.S. Veterans Affairs); Tele-Health (no longer tied to Clinics); Increase in Mental Health Resources
- RECRUITING VERY IMPORTANT. NEED RETIREE SUPPORT RECRUITING BEST/BRIGHTEST. Other Services are currently out-competing the CG.
- MENTORING New commercial mentoring application demonstrated at CG Academy, technology-based connections, connecting people with desired skills and "groups" (e.g. TRANSITIONING MEMBERS/RETIREES).
- SUMMARY A LOT OF POSITIVE CHANGES, EXCITING TIME TO BE IN THE CG.
- Q&A No plans to procure Nuclear Icebreakers. No current initiatives to transition to DoD Retiree Trust Fund.

Encl. Z

1345 – 1400: Mr. Steve Sabellico (DOL/Bases). Provided overview of DOL organization. 16 Bases and 2 Detachments deliver a LOT of support services. Bases have needed to limit access to retirees due to COVID-19 (e.g. CGEX, Gyms) subject to the unique challenges of each area. Bases are encouraged to partner with their Regional Retiree Councils in supporting area retirees and promoting mutually beneficial relationship (e.g. Retirees mentoring young people). Strong relationship with CG Retiree Services. CGNRC Co-Chairs invited to join monthly DOL phone meetings with Base COs.

1400 – 1415: Mr. Steve Hudson (PPC), AEW update. PPC on track to eliminate backlog by DEC 2020. See attached slides.

1415 – 1430: LtGen Pete Osman, USCMC (Ret), SECNAV Retiree Council Co-Chair. Provided overview and insights on Defense Health Agency (DHA) consolidation and merger of Exchanges/Commissaries. Raised concerns about both. It is ALWAYS about the money. Service Surgeon Generals have been "emasculated." It is "bazaar" to think of combining Exchanges (NAF, profits support MWR) and Commissaries (Appropriated Funds, intended to operate at a loss to provide goods at lower cost). Very informative brief/discussion – more to follow.

1430 – 1445: LCDR Dave Du Pont, CAPT Bob Warakomsky. National Retiree Help Desk update. See attached slides.

1445 – 1500: CAPT David Bernstein, Retiree Mentoring Pilot Program. Described concept for Retiree Mentoring Program. Slides will be sent to meeting participants. Plans to send survey to active members with retirement orders, gauging interest in mentoring program – more to follow.

**1500 – 1530: RADM Hathaway, Standardizing RRC E-Mail Addresses.** RRCs Northwest/Miami are using standard e-mail addresses. See attached e-mail from RADM Kinghorn (RRC Northwest). CAPT Marty Menez, SECNAV Retiree Council, offered that it was a good idea to use standard e-mail addresses. There were no strong opinions in support or against the use of standard e-mail addresses – with additional discussion planned.

**1530 – 1600: RADM Hathaway, MCPO Pierce, Bob Hinds Wrap-up.** MCPO Pierce extended thanks to all, noting his relatively recent retirement in 2014. Smooth hand-off with MCPO Kevin Isherwood, former CGNRC Co-Chair with many connections, and intends to leverage his connections (e.g. MCPOCG's Office). Has learned a lot about the transition from active duty to retirement, having spent the first year of retirement pursuing new career. Referenced the Ship's "Billet Board" where EVERYONE on the team is listed along with their responsibilities. Noted that he is still new, quiet in the beginning, and will be more vocal with time. RADM Hathaway thanked 18 highly qualified retired MCPOs who volunteered to serve as CGNRC Co-Chair, noting MCPO Isherwood volunteered to serve a fourth year in the absence of volunteers 2019, and asked the RRCs to keep an eye out for future senior enlisted candidates. RADM Hathaway discussed 2019 CGNRC Priorities, with no major changes planned. See attached 2020 CGNRC Priorities. RADM Hathaway and MCPO Pierce thanked all for their participation and adjourned meeting.

## 2020 CGNRC Priorities for the CG Retiree Services Program

## (Updates to 2019 CGNRC Priorities in RED)

Item#	Priority	Objective	Discussion	Action/Responsibility/Dates
1	1	Promote CG efforts to reduce backlog of Audit Error Worksheets (AEWs) and expedite processing of Concurrent Retirement Disability Pay (CRDP).	In response to CGNRC Co-Chair briefing on AEWs to CCG following 2019 CGNRC Meeting, CG-1 placed surge team at PPC in Spring 2020 and extended the tour of AEW database administrator. PPC to eliminate AEW backlog (cases over 120 days old) by DEC 2020.	Action: PPC on track to eliminate AEW backlog by DEC 2020.
2	1	Better integrate Retiree Services Program (RSP) into Coast Guard Transition Assistance Program (TAP).	Ensure transitioning members are appropriately informed of RSP services. Better leverage CG Transition Seminars, (Transition Goals, Plans, and Success) in messaging RSP to transitioning members.	Action: Continue distributing RSP Guide (Tri-Fold) at TAP Seminars and e-mailing to active duty members with retirement orders. Engage RRCs in TAP Seminars. Ongoing.
3	1	Continue to improve communications to the CG retiree community. Implement CG Retiree Communications Strategy and validate effectiveness.	Communication is the single most important activity of the CGNRC/RRCs, ensuring effective communication with retirees & annultants, sponsoring active duty units, retiree services organizations, and other retiree services providers.	Action: CGNRC work with CG-13 in implementing, evaluating, & updating CG Retiree Communications Strategy, leveraging emerging communications systems (e.g. THE LONG BLUE LINE)
4	1	Better standardize RRC structure & procedures, as published in the RRC Guide	The RRC Guide supplements CI 1800.5H with additional guidance/tools to better standardize RRCs and strengthen their relationship with sponsor units and retirees in their AOR. Need to ensure seamless network of RRC AORs.	Action: No action to "standardize" RRC structure at this time. Standard RRC e-mail addresses to be explored.
5	2	Issue updated CG National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD) SOP and revise Help Desk Tracking Log to reduce recordkeeping burden.	NRHD SOP provide essential operating procedures aligned with CI 1800.5H, including NRHD Tracking Log, used in collection of customer data needed to assess and improve RSP/NRHD services.	Action: NRHD SOP updated. SOP will be regularly reviewed and updated, as needed.
6	2	Update CG Retirees' Caregivers Guide.	Need to ensure Caregivers Guide remains updated with current information and is accessible via the web and via hard copy.	Action: RSP/RRCs will regularly review and update, as needed.
7	2	Ensure CG retirees & annuitants are informed of opportunities to volunteer their time & talents to the CG and retiree community.	There are opportunities locally/nationally for retirees to contribute that are not always communicated effectively. RRCs and NRHD offer volunteer opportunities. Retiree Mentoring is also under review.	Action: CG-13/CGNRC/RRCs continue to communicate retiree volunteer opportunities through newsletters, websites, & social media. Prototype Retiree Mentoring Program. Ongoing.
8	3	Ensure Retiree & Annuitant volunteerism is appropriately recognized.	Modest, but timely CG active duty recognition of retiree volunteerism is consistent with CG Core Values and strengthens the Long Blue Line.	Action: CCG/DCMS redoubling CG senior leadership efforts to recognize retirees. CG-1 thank-you letter/coin sent to 14 NRHD watch-standers

Encl. 3