

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. Coast Guard
DIGEST

APPROVAL

SIGNATURE

INFORMATION

From: CG-13 Dr. Donna Mischell Navarro
Digitally signed by Dr. Donna Mischell Navarro
Date: 2022.11.18 10:53:18 -05'00'

To: CCG *LL Fagan 21 Dec 22*

Thru: CG-1 *PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721* Digitally signed by PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721
Date: 2022.11.21 12:25:39 -05'00'

DCMS-DPR *PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721* Digitally signed by PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721
Date: 2022.11.21 12:25:47 -05'00'

DCMS *11/22*

MCPOCG *11/28*

VCG *20 Dec 22*

Subj: 2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COAST GUARD NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL

1. Enclosed, please find the 2022 Annual Report of the Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CGNRC). The Council remains active in engaging our CG military retiree community and coordinating efforts with my office to fully implement policy promulgated in COMDTINST 1800.5H - within available resources.
2. As your Executive Agent, I will formally respond to the Council, thanking them for their continued dedicated efforts and this year's annual report. Council top priorities remain well aligned with the needs of the CG and our military retiree community.
3. I plan to join the CGNRC Co-Chairs for their annual meeting with you, MCPOCG, DCMS, and CG-1 on 8 Dec 2022 to discuss this report, including the Council's top priorities, for your feedback and direction.

SIGNER'S COMMENTS

Signer's Name:

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commandant
United States Coast Guard

2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE
Washington, DC 20593-7801
Staff Symbol: COMDT (CG-1D/13)
Phone: (202) 475-5210
Email: Donna.M.Navarro@uscg.mil


1800

MEMORANDUM

Dr. Donna Mischell Navarro
Digitally signed by Dr. Donna Mischell Navarro
Date: 2022.11.18 10:54:33 -05'00'

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

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

To: CCG  21 Dec 22
Thru: (1) CG-1 PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721 Digitally signed by PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721 Date: 2022.11.21 12:22:32 -05'00'
(2) DCMS-DPR PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721 Digitally signed by PENoyer.BRIAN.K.1091648721 Date: 2022.11.21 12:22:43 -05'00'
(3) DCMS  11/23
(4) MCPOCG  11/28
(5) VCG

Subj: 2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL

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 2022 Annual Report of the Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CGNRC).
2. I will formally respond to the CGNRC, thanking them for this report and continued support in implementing policy promulgated in reference (a). The Council's priorities remain well aligned with the needs of the Coast Guard and our military retiree community.
3. I plan to join the CGNRC Co-Chairs for their annual meeting with you, MCPOCG, DCMS, and CG-1 on 8 Dec 2022 to discuss the report, including the Council's priorities, for your feedback and direction.

#

Enclosure: (1) 2022 CGNRC Annual Report

Copy: CG-PSC-C
CG-PPC
DOL
FC-C



**U.S. COAST GUARD
NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL
RETIREE SERVICES PROGRAM (CG-1335)
2703 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVE SE
WASHINGTON, DC 20593-7801**

1800
14 Nov 2022

MEMORANDUM

From: RADM Jeffrey Hathaway, USCG (Ret.) *JH*
MCPO Lloyd Pierce, USCG (Ret.) *RLP for* Reply to: Robert Hinds
Attn of: RSP Manager (CG-1335)

To: Commandant (CCG) *LH* 22Dec22

Thru: (1) CG-13 *Dr. Donna*
(2) CG-1 *Dr. Donna*
(3) DCMS *11/21*
(4) MCPOCG *11/28*
(5) VCG *20Dec22*

Subj: 2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL (CGRNC)

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

- 1) The Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CGNRC) held its 21st annual meeting on 7-8 September 2022. This years' annual meeting was conducted in a hybrid format with roughly half of our attendees in person at Coast Guard Headquarters and the remainder joining virtually utilizing Microsoft Teams. As co-chairs, we submit the following 2022 Annual Report for the CGNRC in accordance with reference (a).
- 2) BACKGROUND. The Council was established in 1982 and is comprised of the national co-chairs, members from 19 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 65,000 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.). Retiree community functions and meetings began to reappear in 2022 as COVID-19 restrictions began to ease. The fact that half of our regional retiree council leaders

attended our meeting in person gives a good indication of where our regional councils stand in returning to a normal "battle rhythm". This years' meeting agenda is provided in enclosure (1). The meeting included representatives from almost all RRCs, CG-13 staff, senior leaders, and several guest speakers. Names are contained in the CGNRC meeting minutes, included as enclosure (2). DoD national retiree councils also returned to in person meetings in 2022. MCPO Lloyd Pierce and Mr. Bob Hinds attended a portion of the DoN national retiree council meeting, held in August, and provided an update on CG national retiree council progress and priorities.

- 4) As can be seen in the meeting agenda, we addressed a broad range of issues in addition to 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). The following items were highlighted during our CGNRC meeting:
 - a. **PPC Audit Error Worksheet (AEW) Processing** – The Commanding Officer of PPC, Captain Derek Smith, attended our entire conference and provided an insightful brief showing that AEW processing time is holding at a current average of 75 days, well below their current goal of 120 days. Since almost 50% of USCG retirees apply for Concurrent Retiree and Disability Pay (CDRP), approval of which requires AEW processing by PPC, your CGNRC hopes that the Coast Guard will establish a maximum 90 day processing goal for AEWs, which mirrors DoD's maximum processing time. Given the ongoing delays in digitizing health records of retiring members (addressed in d.) we are concerned that PPC may experience a flood of AEWs as some retirees, that were forced to delay applying for CDRP, are finally able to do so in the coming months. CGNRC will continue to closely monitor.
 - b. **PPC Responsiveness to Retiree Inquiries** – Captain Smith also briefed on the optimization of the Retiree & Annuitant Services Branch (RAS), in response to long standing retiree complaints regarding long delays or no replies to email or phone requests for assistance from PPC. A variety of system changes have been instituted that has resulted in a large decrease in retiree complaints. The RAS optimization study also concluded that about 30% of retiree/annuitant requests coming into PPC could be performed via Direct Access self service. PPC and your CGNRC are working together to better advertise this to our retiree/annuitant community. In fact, the Fall issue of the **The Long Blue Line** contains an easy to follow summary on how retirees can take control of their retired pay account. The CGNRC will continue to monitor the results of PPC-RAS improvements.
 - c. **Retiree Access to Health Records** – The Coast Guard continues to digitize a large backlog of Service Treatment Records (STRs) under a new contract. Once digitized, they can be electronically archived in a system that interfaces with the VA for disability claims processing. In the interim, some retirees have had to rely on getting a certified copy of their health record from their last servicing health clinic in order to support VA disability claims (almost 50% of CG retirees file for disability). The Coast Guard has issued guidance for members to make a copy of their health record before retirement accompanied by a DD-2963 certification. However, many retirees have reported trouble getting access to their STR in order to make a copy and then getting overworked clinics to issue the required DD-2963 certifying authenticity. Retirees that did not make a copy

of their STR prior to retiring have had an even harder time gaining access to their last servicing health clinic to perform this task. Until the backlog of electronic STR archiving is erased, the CGNRC requests that the Coast Guard supports a better process for members/retirees to get a certified paper copy of their STR, if still held at a CG clinic.

- d. **CG Retiree Assistance to USCG Recruiting Efforts** - The CG retiree community is well aware of the difficulty that all Services are having in recruiting future members. We spent a long discussion period with representatives from the CCG Incident Management Team and the CGRC to brainstorm how interested retirees could contribute to ongoing CG recruiting initiatives, without becoming a burden to those initiatives. One example that will be implemented is to connect the recruiting liaison at all large CG units with their closest RRC. That way RRCs can be kept aware of upcoming recruiting activities and those responsible can request retiree community support, if desired. Retirees are also aware that they are the largest part of our Long Blue Line that is ineligible to receive monetary compensation for identifying a new member that eventually enters Cape May. There appears to be legal hurdles to making retirees eligible for monetary compensation for individual recruiting efforts. However, your CGNRC feels that there would be much great "buy-in" from the retiree community if those legal hurdles could be resolved.
- e. **Retiree Strategic Communications** – Again, the Council received briefs from several Coast Guard and other service organizations in order to assess their connections and relevance to retirees. It is our intent to inform retirees of the benefits and opportunities available to them (retirees) through engagement with these organizations. **The Long Blue Line**, continues to receive rave reviews throughout our retiree community! The National Coast Guard Museum Association is producing a consistently high quality product in coordination with CG-13. 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 60% of retirees/annuitants are listed in DA with e-mail addresses. We are continuing an "advertising" push to urge our retiree community to update e-mail addresses in DA, with CG-13 tracking closely. The "My CG" app has added a retiree section but, for now and by agreement, it simply links to the CG-13 Retiree Services website which, itself, requires updating for easier access and searching.
- f. **CG Retiree Mentoring/Final Sponsor Program** – Two pilot programs to connect retirees with retired/retiring individuals, and seeking different forms of assistance, have yielded some positive results. It has been difficult to truly assess the long term demand signal of such a program. However, we have been able to determine the type of assistance that our retirees may ask for and are willing to provide. The goal, at this point, is to create a low cost, self-registration software program that can be launched on a host website outside of the Coast Guard "firewall". It will allow retirees and transitioning retirees in search of assistance, the ability to view retirees that have registered and can offer assistance in a variety of areas. The software has been identified and is currently being tailored to best fit program needs.
- g. **Regional Retiree Councils** – Our Regional Retiree Councils (RRC) have done a good job in weathering COVID-19 restrictions over the last two years. We are hoping that in 2023, all are able to successfully reengage with interested CG retirees in their geographic

areas. As shared with CCG, the CGNRC requests that RRCs be provided a mechanism to initiate relationships with CG units in their immediate area. RRCs are currently limited by CI 1800.5H to sponsorship by Bases/TRACENs, often far from their location. CI 1800.5H additionally contains several ongoing and annual reporting requirements that will be reviewed for relevance. Since each RRC is rather unique in geography and the way they function, we don't want "standard" reporting requirements to stand in the way of individual RRCs best serving their members. We 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 continue to forge a strong relationship with both the Force Readiness Command (FORCECOM) and Director of Operational Logistics (DOL). Both show commitment 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. We currently have 19 standing RRCs. Efforts continue to charter a 20th RRC sponsored by Base LA/LB.

- 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 2022 Meeting Agenda
(2) CGNRC 2022 Meeting Minutes
(3) CGNRC 2022 Priorities for the Retiree Services Program

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