**Purpose**: To define the basic framework for a Regional Retiree Council (RRC). This includes providing guidance on how to identify and maintain contact with their regional retirees, a relationship with Base/Training Command leadership and liaison, meetings, events, communication methods, etc.

**Background**: Each of the fifteen RRCs in 2017 is unique in how they function due to geography, local command support, and participation of retirees. Types of activities range from social gatherings to formal meetings, weekly breakfast gathering providing a table of knowledge and mentoring, annual seminars, participation in Transition, Goals, Plan, Success Program (TGPS) and newsletters. These activities provide opportunities for active duty and retirees to *network,* to build new *friendships* and continue *comradery* with fellow service members, thereby strengthening the “Long Blue Line”. For others, it provides an opportunity to give back to the Coast Guard and support the local command by participating in local *mentoring* programs, assist *by* *example* and *experience* with *retention*, *recruiting,* or helping members *transitioning* from the Coast Guard.

**Discussion**: Given the differences in commands, councils, and retiree involvement of each RRC, better defining the organizational structure of the RRCs will help active duty and retiree components of the Coast Guard understand roles, expectations and resources required to appropriately and beneficially support the Retiree Services Program. The newly revised COMDTINST 1800.5H defines the broad responsibilities and benefits of the Retiree Services Program for the Coast Guard. This Framework further defines how this policy will be carried out at the Regional Retiree Council level and will improve standardization, organizational effectiveness, relationships and help manage expectations. The goal is to ensure retirees and their regional supporting active duty components communicate regularly and effectively for mutual benefit.

**Organizational Structure**: The framework of the RRCs begins with a *charter*. The charter creates a “change-of-command” and bilateral relationship between Commandant, DOL, FC, PPC, TC, base and the RRC in support of COMDTINST 1800.5H. An example of an RRC Charter and letter is included as addendums.

The procedures to establish an RRC begin with a letter of request from the sponsoring command and proposed/initial Co-Chairs of new RRC to CG-13. The letter should include a brief description of proposed RRC, support provided by sponsoring command and name, rank, and title of the initial command liaison.

Charters may be issued, reviewed, validated or revoked by the CG-13 and the Coast Guard National Retiree Council (CGNRC). As part of the implementation of COMDTINST 1800.H and this Framework, the CGNRC shall work with all RRCs to ensure they are active, compliant with current policy, engaged and receiving appropriate support from their sponsoring active duty command. All charters will be reviewed and validated as part of this process. Charters shall retain the original date of issue, once validated.

**Command Support**: Bases and Training Centers are directed to support RRCs and should be the primary sponsor for all Councils. Support is a DCMS function. Operational commanders are not resourced or expected to support RRCs. Any support provided should be coordinated through regional Bases or Training Commands. RRC Charters will reflect this command relationship. Space and access for RRC activities may be provided at a more geographically convenient location for the RRC and supporting command as long as it is understood that RRC support ultimately is derived from a DCMS command as directed by COMDTINST 1800.5H. Commanders are encouraged to attend local RRC events and seek participation from the RRC and its members with command events and programs.

**Enclosure (6)**

**RRC Chairs**: A key role of the RRC *Co-Chairs* is to foster and maintain a strong relationship with the sponsoring command and other military organizations that support the local retiree community. An important element of this role is a strong relationship with the command liaison. This relationship with the command liaison enhances the bilateral relationship fostering open lines of communication and support for the local retiree community.

It is important for an RRC to consider having a *Secretary* position to record and distribute meeting minutes and other requisite correspondence. When appropriate, an RRC should consider additional chairs for communication, liaison, and outreach, depending on level of activity and volunteers are available.

Finally, RRC Co-Chairs have an important two-way communication responsibility with the CGNRC. This includes regular communication on issues that impact their membership like policy, support and resources.

**Communication**: Effective communication is key to the success of any organization and COMDTINST 1800.5H paragraphs 10 - 12 highlight the importance of communication and information services to support the life-long connection and mutually beneficial relationship with the long blue line of active and retired members of the Coast Guard.

RRCs are using many methods to communicate with members within their AOR and each method has its own pros and cons. Websites require a manager and may have a small cost associated with a domain name, but if managed well can reach the largest audience with the least cost and effort. Below is a list of helpful websites:

PPC RAS – <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/ppc/ras/>

Retiree Services Program -- <http://www.uscg.mil/retiree>

Northwest RRC – <http://cgretirenw.org>

Northern California – <http://nccgrc.org>

Other forms of communication such as email and postal mail require obtaining, maintaining, and protecting a list of names and addresses which are typically protected by the privacy act. A list of retirees within your AOR may be obtained through your local Servicing Personnel office (SPO).

Social media, such as Facebook, is another communication method to consider but as with a web site, they require a moderator to monitor and post information.

Finally, the CGNRC is implementing a Communication Strategy which will assist RRCs in communicating with their membership.

**Education and Outreach**: Education and outreach offer Commanders and RRCs excellent opportunities to strengthen their bilateral relationship. Programs such as TGPS, mentoring, recruiting, retention, Blended Retirement or Financial Planning are excellent examples of how an RRC or retiree can give back to active duty and transitioning shipmates.

Seminars and Appreciation Days provide opportunities for RRCs and commands to give back to the local retiree community.

**Desired Outcomes**: Continuation and strengthening of the long blue line, recruit to a retiree. Modeling the comradery between shipmates, maintaining old friendships and creating new ones, sharing experiences to improve recruiting and retention or assisting those transitioning from active duty to a veteran status, networking.

Create opportunities for commands to utilize a volunteer retired member who desires to give back to lessen the burden on their staff by augmenting training or mentoring positions with said retirees.

Sample RRC Charter Request

1800.5H

From: Commanding Officer, Base/Training Command \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To: National Retiree Council, Retiree Services Program (CG-13)

Subj: Request for *(name)* Regional Retiree Council Charter

Ref: (a) COMDTINST 1800.5H (series)

1. It is with great pleasure Base/Training Command \_\_\_\_ with the local retiree community request a Charter to stand-up *(name)* Regional Retiree Council.

1. As the sponsoring command, the integration of an RRC at this command will better support all members of the long blue line with in our AOR. We have made space available for meetings, events, and functions and are prepared to assist with minor administrative functions such as mailings to the local retiree community in accordance with reference (a).

1. Co-chairs for our RRC are: (rank & name)\_, USCG (Ret) and \_(rank & name)\_, USCG, (Ret).

1. Our command liaison is \_(rank, name, title)\_

1. We will stand up our council with *ten* [put actual number here] members and begin operating our RRC with monthly-meetings with council members and the command liaison. To build membership and comradery we plan to meet weekly for breakfast in the galley. Additionally, council members will support the local TGPS and local mentoring programs. [Local command and RRC Co-Chairs adjust this paragraph as appropriate]

J.H. Coasty

Commanding Officer

Copy: DOL, FORCECOM, DCMS

Example Charter

