

2025 CGNRC “VIRTUAL” MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Ref: (a) [RETIREE SERVICES PROGRAM, COMDTINST 1800.5I](#)

Background. In accordance with reference (a), the Assistant Commandant for Workforce Management (CG-WM), Executive Agent for the CG National Retiree Council (CGNRC), hosted the annual meeting of the CGNRC at CG Headquarters, Washington, DC on 3–4 Sep 2025. Due to CG travel restrictions, this year’s meeting was conducted *virtually* during afternoon sessions (1-4 pm ET) to support participation by CG PPC and Regional Retiree Councils (RRCs) in all time zones.

[CG Meeting Agenda](#) (Click link)

[CG Meeting Participants](#) (Click link)

Meeting Kick-Off, CGNRC Co-Chairs – RADM Meredith Austin/MCPO Jason Vanderhaden.

- **[CG MILITARY PERSONNEL ESTATE PLANNING & FINAL AFFAIRS HANDBOOK](#)**, digitally accessible, has been well received and is being mailed to all CG retirees & annuitants aged 65 years and older by late Sept. Need to mail to remaining CG/PHS/NOAA retirees & annuitants in 2026. Thanks to the late RADM “Joe” Raymond (CG-1M) and retired CAPT Mike Rosecrans (JAX, FL RRC) for directing/leading development of this important resource, also of benefit to other Services. See action items.
- Thanks to the CGNRC! Keep abreast of CG changes. Happy with new CG resources (\$24.9B), needing to be shared in support of CGNRC priorities. See action items.
- Recognized new RRCs (NY/NY/E PA, Great Lakes) and efforts to reenergize New Orleans RRC led by retired CAPT Kathryn Herty,

RDML Zeta Merchant, Assistant Commandant for Workforce Management (CG-WM)

<https://www.uscg.mil/Biographies/Display/Article/3808717/rear-admiral-zeita-merchant/>

- Thanked CGNRC for continued service to the retiree community. Need to leverage top-line budget, CGNRC, and retirees in support of FD28 (e.g. *People Campaign*). CG *identity* is important.
- Suicide prevention is a priority. Partnering with non-profits in related initiatives (e.g. [Coast Guard Foundation | Fundraising Campaign to Support Coast Guard...](#))
- Developing full support package, including funds for “wrap-around services” (e.g. Housing, Relocation, Personal/Family Services).
- Recognized Mrs. Lula Carpenter. See [Award Presented to Mrs. Lula Carpenter, CGNRC Annuitant-at-Large \(2010 - 2025\)](#)



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RADM Charles Fosse, Deputy Commandant for Personnel (DCP)

[Rear Admiral Charles E. Fosse > United States Coast Guard > Display](#)

DCP has the key responsibilities highlighted below. DCP will be visiting PPC The retiree population is growing. Need to accommodate that growth with needed services/people. FD-28 will increase base budget, fund additional people (e.g. PHS Medical Officers, Corpsman). Encouraged the CGNRC and retiree community to “keep communications coming.”

Key Responsibilities:

- Workforce Management (Military and Civilian).
- Workforce and Family Services
- Force Readiness (Recruiting, Training, Leadership development)
- Medical Policy and Healthcare.
- Safety and Environmental Health
- Security Policy and Management

National Retiree Help Desk Update (Click Link) – David Bernstein

The Capital Area Retiree Council established the NRHD in 2006. NRHD virtual watch-standers continue to help connect the retiree community with timely, needed information and resources (24 X 7, 365 days per year). Declining demand reflects an increase in younger, better-informed retirees, *The Long Blue Line*, and social networking. See action items.

Regional Retiree Council Updates (See additional attached input from RRCs)

NORTHEAST (Tom Hall) – Sense of loss upon retirement can contribute to suicide ideation. Younger retirees appear better connected/engaged. Health care challenges remain for retirees, referencing RAND study. See May 2025 report [Health Services for Coast Guard Beneficiaries](#). Need to leverage FD28’s more intense CG mission focus, new threat assessments, mission diversity, and greater responsibility given to E5/E6s in marketing the CG to prospective recruits. We need to update our e-mail distribution list for retirees in the Northeast. See action items.

NY, NJ, E PA (Mike Moriarty) – Large CG Reserve presence. Explore RRC info *push* role. See attached input from Frank Gorman.

CAPITAL AREA (David Bernstein) – Invited to events at CGHQ. Mentoring initiative has helped area active-duty members transition back to civilian life and been a success thanks to administration by Robert Miller (BASE NCR). Monthly newsletter sent by Bob Hinds via Gov Delivery to MD, DC, DC, and VA retirees. Long standing annual Capital Area Retiree Holiday Party was broadened to include all area CG “family” (e. g. CWOA, CPOA/CGEA, CGAUX, CG Spouse’s Club, ROA).

YORKTOWN (David Bunch) – Regular breakfasts at TRACEN Yorktown. Likes Capital Area Retiree Council monthly newsletter. Surviving spouse Carroll Ferrell is an active member. Interested in FD28. Raised issue of opportunities for active-duty members to acquire training/certification. See action items.

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CHARLESTON (Ray Bryant) – Good relationship with BASE Charleston. Long Blue Line has helped connect with retirees. Relationships with USCGC STONE, Cutterman Assoc., Navy League. C5ISC Help Desk is “best help desk, quickly helped 89-year-old retiree resolve password issues and access DA. A MTF scanned a retiree’s health record into MHS Genesis. See action items.

GREAT LAKES (Lorne Thomas, Jim Bach)

Large AOR +8K. Need capability to e-mail/connect with all retirees. Helpful connection with D=9 staff. Successful outreach to West Lake High School reflects great opportunity for RRCs to partner in CG Recruiting efforts. See action items.

NEW ORLEANS (Kathryn Herty)

Efforts underway to reenergize. Meeting with BASE New Orleans. See action items.

CENTRAL GULF COAST/CPOA (Charlie Womack)

To be rechartered under sponsorship by ATC Mobile. CPOA – Thanks to Rob Bushey, CPOA Executive Director. Suicide prevention is an important new program. Dedicated to legislative efforts. Great partnership with CGNRC, sharing information in the CPOA magazine and Long Blue Line. “If I can bring someone to the 2026 CPOA Convention, who would it be”? PPC is #1 choice, VA #2.

TAMPA BAY AREA (Leroy Dennison)

Connected via e-mail with area retirees. Initiative to partner with Sector St. Pete, with Sector Units hosting visits by retirees and prospective recruits, familiarizing with current operations, supporting recruiting/retention efforts, and strengthening relationship between the retiree and active-duty community. See action items.

MIAMI (David Cinalli)

Praised retired MCPO Marc Fagenbaum for his service to the Council, area retirees, and the CG. Need to identify another Co-Chair. Noted that there are key differences between mentoring and coaching, both having value to the

EAST CENTRAL FL (Jim Reynolds)

Request change name to “SPACE COAST.” Huge retiree community. Expect more Council engagement with area retirees. Important to “check-in” with retirees, particularly aging, house-bound, and those needing assistance. Need to move worksheet depicting CGNRC/RRCs to the front of *The Long Blue Line* for greater visibility. See action items.

N. CALIFORNIA (David Swanson)

The 2025 **All-Services Military Retiree Seminar** was a success, as highlighted at: [Northern California Coast Guard Retiree Council](#) Looking for Co-Chair. Transitioning members “don’t know what they don’t know.” CG Estate Planning & Final Affairs Handbook is helpful to retirees. Challenges in connecting with BASE Alameda Command to assist transitioning members. See additional attached input.

HAWAII (Rod Schultz) – See attached input.

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SECTOR OHIO VALLEY (Jim Armstrong)

Retiree Services Program Mgr. sent CG GovDelivery newsfeed to area retirees which was very helpful in getting new members. Suggest other RRCs consider doing the same. The Council continues to place Christmas wreaths at the Zachary Taylor National Cemetery through the Wreaths Across America program, also participating in CG Day and other events at Sector Ohio Valley.

CWOA (Mark Corter, VP Retiree Affairs)

Thanks to the CGNRC for strengthening linkage between retirees and CWOA. The CWOA remains active in legislative affairs, sending letters to 50 U.S. Senators.

CG PPC Brief (click link) – CAPT John Henry, CO

PPC appreciates partnership with CGNRC, great meeting at PPC in 2024. PPC’s “Identity” is assisting PEOPLE, not just process driven.

Challenges:

- DA was compromised and moved to the cloud in March 2024 caused major disruptions, including delay in Automating VA Compensation (AVAC) in DA.
- Career Retention Selection Panel (CRSP) separations followed by compensatory payment to separated members placed a significant demand on PPC resources.
- COVID separations followed by repayment/reinstatement of separated members placed a significant demand on PPC resources.
- Hiring Freeze/Backlog has degraded PPC capability.
- Congressional Inquiries (e.g. CRSP, COVID) continue to place an additional demand on PPC resources.
- DEERS file transfer error in Nov 2024 resulted in loss of TRICARE eligibility for many members, including retirees, and resolving the issue placed significant demands on PPC resources.
- PPC needs additional staff for their call center. See action items.

Successes:

- CG Estate Planning & Final Affairs Handbook – BZ!
- DA compromise led to increased security/protection from fraud for users. Next step will be to send passwords to retirees for multi-factor authentication.
- C5ISC now handles DA technical problems, with 30 help-desk technicians quickly resolving customer issues – allowing PPC to focus on pay & benefits.
- Newly assigned PPC-RAS Assistant Branch Chief

Into the Future:

- PPC Workforce Requirements Determination underway, committed to completing ASAP
- DA multi-factor authentication will heighten security.
- Automate VA Compensation (AVAC) in DA. PPC currently receives VA files twice per week via MS ACCESS, which presents an unacceptable risk. The expected launch date of Jan 2028 for AVAC is unacceptable, and it should be a #1 CG priority.

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- RAPTOR (Rapid Response Prototype Team and Huge Innovation Cell) – Initiative to identify, adopt, and deliver advanced technology, improving human resources systems and streamlining asset maintenance.
- **Recommendation** – Retirees should await processing of their active VA compensation case before initiating a new case, otherwise their active case goes to the bottom of the list for processing. See action items.

Mr. Sean Plankey (Senior Advisor to DHS for the CG), **ADM Kevin Lunday** (Acting Commandant), **MCPOCG Phillip Waldron**

- Mr. Plankey – Dispel rumors. NO talk of eliminating any CG missions or Chain of Command. NO talk of reducing the CG civilian workforce.
- MCPOCG Waldron – Regarding FD-28, we understand “what” and “why.” “How” is what we need to build. FD-28 is not “just another change” for two reasons – NOT internally driven, executive mandate. CG allocated \$24.9B to make it happen. Record levels of recruiting, with no deficit at end of year. Important to “rely on our own” to help recruit, particularly in middle America. No more “challenging or cooler time to be in the CG”
- ADM Lunday – Retention is improving. Losses decreased from 14% to 10%. Exceed recruiting goal 4,200 by 1,000. Retirees are asked to tell your story and connect with CG recruiting and FD-28. Expected growth of 15,000 enlisted members (5,500 Reserve) will require increased capacity, including TRACEN Cape May. Vision – CG will be the leading federal agency in innovation and leading-edge technology.
 - Retired MCPOCG Vanderhaden reminded the Commandant/MCPOCG of the need to make Automation of VA Compensation (AVAC) a #1 priority, noting current MS ACCESS as a single point of failure of VA/CG data transfer.
 - The Commandant responded to a suggestion that CG Reservists be allowed to work both full-time and part-time, providing a more flexible workforce. “We are looking into that as part of the People Campaign.”

Meeting Wrap-Up

- Need to establish new CGNRC priorities. See action items.
- CGNRC and retiree community need to support FD-28, focusing on the *People Campaign* <https://www.uscg.mil/ForceDesign2028/People/>
- Promote awareness of CGNRC/RRCs, featuring in *The Long Blue Line*. Highlight one RRC in each issue of the LBL. See action items.
- Leverage retiree skills/experience. “What would it look like, how would we do it?” The Commandant is considering this initiative relative to the *People Campaign*.