

MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS (MFH) AND BURIAL AT SEA REQUESTS

A. COMDTCOGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-WP// 301907Z DEC 99, ALCOAST

244/99

B. COMDTCOGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-WP// 201607Z APR 01, ALCOAST

177/01

C. COMDTCOGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-W// 052110Z JUN 01, ALCOAST

255/01

D. RESERVE POLICY MANUAL, COMDTINST M1001.28

1. THE INTENT OF THIS IS TO REEMPHASIZE THE KEY ASPECTS OF REFERENCES (A-C), AND EXPLAIN FIELD UNIT AND ISC ST. LOUIS (ISC STL) RESPONSIBILITIES IN CARRYING OUT MFH IN THE WESTERN RIVERS AOR. UNDER THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT (NDAA) OF 2000, THE COAST GUARD IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE MFH FOR OUR VETERANS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH EACH UNIT TO COORDINATE SUPPORT FOR THESE EVENTS. SINCE THE WESTERN RIVERS AOR IS SO LARGE, NO UNIT CAN BE EXEMPTED WITHOUT IMPACTING OUR ABILITY TO MEET THIS RESPONSIBILITY.

2. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ESTIMATED IN ITS INITIAL 1999 REPORT TO CONGRESS THAT ONE QUARTER OF THE NATIONS 26 MILLION VETERANS ALIVE WERE OVER THE AGE OF 65 AND PROJECTED AN INCREASE IN VETERAN DEATHS FROM 537,000 IN 1997 TO 620,000 IN 2008. SINCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NDAA 2000, MORE THAN 876,008 REQUESTS FOR MFH HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY THE MILITARY OF WHICH 4,292 WERE SUPPORTED BY CG UNITS. DURING CY 2006, 109,298 REQUESTS FOR MFH WERE RECEIVED AND ACTED UPON, WITH CG UNITS SUPPORTING 827. TO DATE FOR CY 2007, OVER 111,145 REQUESTS FOR HONORS BY THE MILITARY HAVE BEEN COMPLETED WITH THE CG SUPPORTING 488 REQUESTS.

3. THE ISC STL DECEDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER (DAO) WILL, UPON RECEIPT OF A REQUEST FOR MFH, LOCATE THE NEAREST CG UNIT AND PARENT COMMAND AND TASK THEM WITH PROVIDING MFH. UNITS SHOULD WORK WITH THEIR PARENT COMMAND TO WORK OUT POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES IF THEY ARE UNABLE TO PERFORM THE MFH DUE TO OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS. IF A UNIT IS UNABLE TO PERFORM MFH,

CONTACT THE ISC STL DAO IMMEDIATELY. UNITS MUST ALSO PREPARE AND FORWARD A MEMO TO ISC STL EXPLAINING WHY MFH COULD NOT BE CONDUCTED. ISC STL STRIVES TO DISTRIBUTE TASKING AS FAIRLY AS POSSIBLE. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME UNITS WILL BE TASKED MORE THAN OTHERS DUE TO THEIR LOCATION AND POPULATION OF VETERANS.

4. THE MFH CEREMONY SHALL, AT A MINIMUM, INCLUDE FOLDING AND PRESENTATION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG AND PLAYING TAPS. AT LEAST TWO UNIFORMED MILITARY MEMBERS SHALL PERFORM THE CEREMONY. ONE OF THE UNIFORMED MILITARY MEMBERS MUST BE FROM THE COAST GUARD AND PRESENT THE FLAG TO THE FAMILY MEMBER OR OTHER DESIGNATED PERSON.

5. IAW REF D, RESERVISTS ARE AUTHORIZED TO PERFORM MFH IN A VOLUNTARY STATUS HOWEVER THEY MAY NOT PERFORM HONORS AS PART OF A SCHEDULED IDT, RMP, OR ADT PERIOD. HONORS MAY BE PERFORMED AS PART OF ADOT BUT THE \$50.00 STIPEND AND RETIREMENT POINT CANNOT BE AWARDED.

6. UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS CURRENTLY NO CENTRAL CG FUNDING AVAILABLE TO COVER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH DUTY PERFORMED FOR THE MFH DETAIL. IF DUE TO LOCATION AND DISTANCE THE MFH TEAM ASSIGNED WILL BE REQUIRED TO REMAIN OVERNIGHT, CONTACT THE ISC STL DAO ASAP. ISC STL WILL PROVIDE A TONO AND ACCOUNTING DATA TO DEFRAY ASSOCIATED COSTS FOR LODGING AND MEALS. IN SOME CASES THIS MAY BE AFTER THE FACT.

7. IAW REF (A), ALL UNITS SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED A FUNERAL HONORS SUPPORT KIT THAT CONTAINS INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLAG FOLDING AND PRESENTATION TO THE FAMILY MEMBERS AT THE FUNERAL AND AN UDIO COMPACT DISC (CD) OF TAPS TO PLAY AT THE FUNERAL. VIDEOTAPES WERE ALSO INCLUDED DEMONSTRATING PROPER PROTOCOL FOR THE ENTIRE CEREMONY INCLUDING BOTH CASKETED AND CREMATED REMAINS. THEY ALSO DESCRIBE PROCEDURES FOR TWO PERSON DETAILS WHEN AUGMENTED WITH AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS (VFW, ETC.). UNITS THAT REQUIRE EITHER A REPLACEMENT TAPS CD OR TRAINING VIDEOTAPES CAN ORDER THEM ONLINE AT HYPERLINK <http://WWW.MFHCMDRS.OSD.MIL> WWW.MFHCMDRS.OSD.MIL.

8. DURING FY 2003, ISC STL AND EACH MILITARY BRANCH WITHIN THE STATE OF MISSOURI CONDUCTED FIELD TESTING OF A CEREMONIAL BUGLE TO REPLACE THE TAPS CD AND BOOM BOX. TESTING WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL AND USE OF THE BUGLE HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED NATIONWIDE. UNITS DESIRING TO PURCHASE THE BUGLE FOR THEIR UNIT MAY ORDER THEM THROUGH WWW.CEREMONIALBUGLE.COM. THE CURRENT PRICE PER BUGLE IS \$525 INCLUDING SHIPPING AND HANDLING. IN SOME CASES, ISC STL MAY BE ABLE TO ORDER THE BUGLE AND TRANSFER TO THE RECEIVING UNITS PROPERTY LIST. THE ISC STL DAO CAN PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE OR INFORMATION AS NEEDED.

9. TYPICALLY, MOST REQUESTS FOR MFH COME FROM FUNERAL HOMES, NATIONAL CEMETERIES OR FAMILY MEMBERS ON EXTREMELY SHORT NOTICE. IF YOUR UNIT IS CONTACTED DIRECTLY, YOU MAY MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO PROVIDE THE SERVICES AS REQUESTED OR DIRECT THE CALLER TO THE ISC STL DAO. IN CASES OF DIRECT CONTACT, NOTIFY THE ISC STL DAO ASAP. THE DAO WILL VERIFY ENTITLEMENT TO MFH AND WILL WORK WITH THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR AND THE UNIT TO OBTAIN THE DATA NEEDED TO ENTER THE INFORMATION INTO A NATIONAL DATA BASE THAT IS USED TO TRACK COSTS AND PROVIDE A REQUIRED REPORT TO CONGRESS. UPON COMPLETION OF A MFH DETAIL, THE UNIT SHALL PROVIDE THE DAO WITH THE FOLLOWING

DATA:

A. SSN

B. DATE OF REQUEST FOR FUNERAL HONORS

C. FUNERAL LOCATION

D. STATUS OF DECEASED (ACTIVE DUTY, RETIRED, RESERVE, VETERAN, ETC.)

E. RANK OF DECEASED

F. PARENT SERVICE/COMPONENT OF DECEASED

G. FLAG FOLDING AND PRESENTATION, COMPLETED OR NOT, AND BY WHOM

(MILITARY, VOLUNTEER SERVICE ORGANIZATION (VSO), OTHER). IF NOT, EXPLAIN WHY FOLDING AND PRESENTATION WAS NOT COMPLETED.

H. TAPS COMPLETED AND BY WHOM (BUGLER - MILITARY, VSO, OTHER,

RECORDING OR CEREMONIAL BUGLE)

I. FIRING PARTY AND BY WHOM (MILITARY, VSO, OTHER)

J. NUMBER OF MILITARY DETAIL MEMBERS AND WHOM (ACTIVE, RESERVE, NATIONAL GUARD, ETC.)

K. NUMBER OF VSO DETAIL MEMBERS AND WHOM (THE AMERICAN LEGION, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS, VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA , MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, ETC.)

L. NUMBER OF OTHER AUTHORIZED PROVIDER DETAIL MEMBERS AND WHOM (ROTC, CONTRACT BUGLER, RETIREES, ETC.)

M. TIME EXPENDED FOR DETAIL, PER INDIVIDUAL, TO ACCOMPLISH MFH (ROUND TO NEAREST HOUR)

10. FOLLOW THE GUIDANCE AVAILABLE IN REF (C) FOR REQUESTS FOR BURIALS AT SEA.

11. DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS TO THE ISC STL DAO, CWO DAN BRINEGAR AT (314) 269-2321, FAX (314) 269-2745 OR DANIEL.V.BRINEGAR@USCG.MIL.

12. I WANT TO PERSONALLY THANK ALL THE COMMANDS AND CREWS WHO HAVE RESPONDED, OFTEN ON EXTREMELY SHORT NOTICE, AND PROVIDED EXEMPLARY HONORS. I KNOW THIS DUTY IS YET ANOTHER MISSION ON TOP OF YOUR ALREADY DEMANDING SCHEDULE. IT'S HEARTENING TO KNOW THAT THE UNITS IN THE WESTERN RIVERS WILL STEP FORWARD TO HONOR A FALLEN SHIPMATE. WE HAVE RECEIVED COUNTLESS LETTERS FROM FAMILIES PRAISING YOUR EFFORTS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO THIS VERY IMPORTANT PROGRAM. RELEASED BY CAPT GEORGE J. STEPHANOS, USCG.