

Subj: 2023 Annual Report of CGNRC



U.S. COAST GUARD
NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL
RETIREE SERVICES PROGRAM (CG-1335)
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17 Aug 2023

MEMORANDUM

From: RADM Meredith Austin, USCG (Ret) *RCJ* Reply to: Robert Hinds
MCPO Lloyd Pierce, USCG (Ret) *for* Attn of: (202) 475-5451

To: CG-1M
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Subj: 2023 CG NATIONAL RETIREE COUNCIL MEETING

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

1. On behalf of your CG National Retiree Council (CGNRC), we want to thank you for hosting the annual meeting of the CGNRC on 9-10 Aug and provide you with this brief meeting summary.
2. RADM Jeff Hathaway, USCG (Ret), the incumbent CGNRC “Flag” Co-Chair, and MCPO Pierce, led this year’s meeting with Council members from 11 of the 19 Regional Retiree Councils, the CPOA, Annuitant-at-Large, and other participants. RADM Austin relieved RADM Hathaway as CGNRC Co-Chair following CCG/MCPOCG remarks on the final day and joined MCPO Pierce in leading discussions on Council priorities, planned action, and closing the meeting.
3. Meeting highlights:
 - The Council greatly appreciated the warm welcome and informative updates that RADM Laura Dickey (DCMS-DMR) and you provided. Your presentation of Public Service Awards to four deserving CG National Retiree Help Desk (NRHD) watch-standers highlighted the importance of the NRHD and recognition of retiree’s volunteer service and set the stage for an informative NRHD update.
 - Mr. Hudson of PPC provided a well received update. He addressed issues of importance to the CGNRC, including expected phone system modernization and VA compensation in Direct Access, past W-4 issues, and continued challenges in mailing 1099Rs. The Council got a heightened sense of the high volume of calls/e-mails received by PPC’s limited staff and understand PPC may soon leverage *GovDelivery* to push important, timely information to retirees, with plans to “beef up” phone lines during the next tax season. The Council will continue to support PPC’s modernization efforts and encourage retirees to use *DA Self-Service* and maintain current mailing/e-mail addresses in DA.
 - CAPT Shiro (Recruiting IMT) and CAPT Keffer (CGRC) detailed critical CG workforce shortages and recruiting goals, highlighted ongoing initiatives, and will be providing the Council a current list of Recruiting Liaisons. MCPO Blake (Recruiting IMT) distributed an exceptional array of recruiting leaflets, posters, and other resources. The Council will

Enclosure (1)

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continue to rally retirees in support of recruiting efforts. The Recruiting IMT/CGRC update was also well received.

- The CPOA update and legislative updates by MOAA and The Military Coalition were informative and well aligned with Council efforts to increase retiree awareness of the important work of these organizations and legislation affecting Veterans.
 - The VFW Survivor Assistance briefing was also highly informative and supported the Council's emerging focus on Retiree Casualty & Decedent Affairs.
 - CWO Longstreet (HSWL) highlighted significant progress in digitizing and transferring retiree Service Treatment Records (STRs) to the VA, decreased time to transfer STRs, and shared that retirees now have access to their digitized STRs. We will encourage retirees in possession of their original STRs to return them to CG Clinics/HSWL.
 - RADM Hathaway provided an update on the Retiree Mentoring initiative, highlighting his recently launched public-facing website/*memberplanet* platform which allows CG transitioning members to connect with retirees offering assistance as mentors and as needed to help navigate the return to civilian life. Bob Hinds, CG Retiree Services, verifies applicants as AD/Reserve members or Retirees prior to approving registration. This innovative, Service "first" platform, now with 100 members, will continue to be refined and leveraged in support of transitioning members/retirees.
 - The Council enjoys a strong partnership with DOL, having 18 Regional Retiree Councils (RRCs) sponsored by Bases, and we continue in partnering efforts with FC/TRACENs, now with one RRC sponsored by TRACEN Yorktown. DOL/FC provided updates and highlighted services/activities of interest to retirees (e. g. ID cards, legal, CGX, MWR).
 - CCG/MCPOCG updated the Council on strategic priorities/initiatives, underscoring critical workforce shortages and "existential threat" of not meeting recruiting goals. MCPOCG said the "#1 thing we need to do is change the narrative that serving in the military is not a good thing." The Council will carry this message to retirees and was encouraged by MCPOCG's commitment to help improve retiree access to CG units – where potential recruits can see first-hand that serving in the CG military is a **good thing**. CCG discussed her *Accountability and Transparency Review* which is about creating a workplace culture consistent with CG core values, awaiting recommendations by the study group. Following Q&A, CCG presented RADM Hathaway with a well-deserved Distinguished Public Service Award, followed by personal gifts from MCPO Pierce and Bob Hinds.
 - RRC updates/discussion highlighted the unique strengths, challenges, geography, and makeup of each RRC, all working hard to serve Retirees where they are and remain relevant, informative, and helpful. The Council will be working with Bob Hinds to better align CG Retiree Services Program, CI 1800.5H, policy with the needs of the RRCs.
 - The Council greatly appreciated the CPOA hosted lunch and NCGMA hosted social hour, with exceptional cuisine provided by CG "Flag" Mess Culinary Specialists. The Council also extends a big thank you to all the volunteers who stepped up to provide AV/Teams support and serve as escorts for Council members and other guests.
 - The meeting agenda, list of participants, and meeting surveys are enclosed – with surveys reflecting positive engagement/feedback among participants and a successful meeting.
4. We will submit the Council's Annual Report to you by 30 Sep and look forward to joining you for our annual meeting with CCG, MCPOCG, and DCMS to discuss the report, including Council priorities.

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Enclosures: (1) Meeting Agenda
(2) Meeting Participants
(3) Meeting Surveys