



May 23, 2008

## Director's Message

Due to the shortage of experienced NOAA Corps deck officers within our fleet, RADM Bailey plans to implement a new augmentation policy to help alleviate this situation. The augmentation will allow OMAO to staff the platforms effectively and efficiently. Official notification of this policy will be made within the next few weeks.

The gap in experienced qualified deck officers is causing a variety of staffing problems. Due to this situation, an officer relief pool is required to maintain fleet operations. Therefore, officers recently assigned to shore duty will serve in the relief pool as necessary. Upon being relieved of sea duty for a shore assignment, officers are expected to augment at sea for up to 30 days per year. This policy applies to all officers in their first two years of a shore assignment. It will also provide a means for officers to maintain their deck qualifications. The policy will be included in the officer's forthcoming assignment letter, and it will be the responsibility of the officer to work with his/her supervisor to schedule the augmentation for optimal continuity of the shore unit's operations.

The Marine Centers are currently developing the augmentation plans which will be released in the next few weeks. Should you have any questions about this policy, please contact LCDR Caskey, Chief, Officer Career Management Division, at 301-713-7748.

Have a great holiday weekend.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. B. Kearse".

CAPT William B. Kearse, NOAA  
Director, Commissioned Personnel Center

## Announcements

### NOAA Corps Insignia Purchases

The NOAA Corps Web Store is open for business! NOAA Corps officers may now purchase their insignia on-line by accessing the following site address: [www.cutteragent.com/noaa.html](http://www.cutteragent.com/noaa.html). This is a new site and a new process for

Corps Officers to acquire insignia. If there are any functionality issues with the website please email Rob Green at [rob@cutteragent.com](mailto:rob@cutteragent.com) and copy the email to the DC Area ACO Insignia Custodian, LT Nicole Manning, at [nicole.manning@noaa.gov](mailto:nicole.manning@noaa.gov).

### Update to CPC's Assignments Website

An updated Billet List along with approved BOTC-112 and May OAB assignments has been posted and can be viewed on the following link:

<http://www.noacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/assignments.html>

If you should have any questions regarding the information, please feel free to contact LCDR John T. Caskey at 301-713-7748 or [john.caskey@noaa.gov](mailto:john.caskey@noaa.gov)

### The Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) for Merchant Mariners (note new date)

All credentialed U.S. merchant mariners must obtain a TWIC (no later than April 15, 2009). This includes all persons holding a Coast Guard-issued merchant mariner's license, merchant mariner's document (MMD), Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Certificate, or certificate of registry (COR). With the implementation of TWIC, the Coast Guard MMD would primarily serve as proof of the bearer's professional qualifications. The Coast Guard has drafted a supplementary proposed rule (published in the same Federal Register edition as the TWIC final rule) that proposes to combine the elements of all four current merchant mariner professional credentials into one certificate called the Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC). The Coast Guard and TSA are streamlining the process for the two credentials to reduce costs, duplication of effort, and processing time for mariners. If the MMC proposed rulemaking is finalized as currently written, the Coast Guard would begin issuing the MMC in September of 2008 and would phase in the replacement of mariner's current credentials over a period of five years. Mariners would be issued their credential in the form of an MMC at the time they renew their current credential, or when applying for a new credential. The proposed rulemaking would not affect the validity of a mariner's current credential.

The fee for TWIC will be \$132.50 and it is valid for five years. Workers with current, comparable background checks will pay a reduced fee of \$105.25. If workers are eligible to pay the lower price, their TWIC will expire 5 years from the date of the comparable credential (additional information is provided in the next question). The cost of a replacement TWIC, if the original is lost, stolen or damaged is \$60.

The following website will help address questions regarding the TWIC program:

[http://www.tsa.gov/what\\_we\\_do/layers/twic/index.shtm](http://www.tsa.gov/what_we_do/layers/twic/index.shtm)

## Approved Retirements

The following officers have approved retirements. Be sure to thank them for their service to NOAA and nation and wish them the best the next time you see these officers!

LCDR Stephen J. Thumm	July 1, 2008
CDR Thomas E. Strong	July 1, 2008
CAPT Stephen A. Kozak	January 1, 2009
CAPT John W. Humphrey, Jr.	January 1, 2009
CAPT Sean R. White	July 1, 2009

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## On the Horizon

January-May, 2008	Billet Review
June 5, 2008	Aviation Selection and O-5 OAB (moved up one day)
June 9, 2008	BOTC 112 Graduation
July 10, 2008	O-4 OAB
July 31, 2008	End of OER Reporting Period for O-1s and O-2s
August 4, 2008	Start of BOTC 113
October 6-31, 2008	REFTRA 65

**Please see NOAA Corps website for additional information:**

Assignments:

<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/assignments.html>

Evaluations:

<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/evaluation.html>

Training:

<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/careermgmt/training.html>

Uniforms & Awards:

<http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/cpc/perservices/awards.html>