



December 22, 2008

Director's Message

Over the past several weeks, CPC staff has been attending numerous annual seminars in our field locations. It has been a pleasure talking with so many officers about the future direction of the Corps. CPC had the opportunity to attend the AOC Annual Safety Conference in Tampa, FL and the Fleet Administrative Management Seminar held in Seattle, WA. It was also great to see so many officers attend the All Hands meeting in Seattle, WA last week. It has been a long time since I have seen so many junior officers in one room. Overall, the feedback from officers has been positive. Officers are embracing the challenges within the fleet and program offices, mostly those assuming positions as XO's in our fleet. They are stepping up to the challenge and continuing to develop as effective managers and leaders.

Two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of attending BOTC 113 graduation with Admiral Bailey and the Acting NOAA Administrator, Dr. William Brennan. It was a great opportunity and honor to be part of the first BOTC graduation ceremony, which included two Mates in Training. After completing this four-month training program, the eleven commissioned officers and two Mates in Training are joining the fleet to continue their deck officer-training continuum. Congratulations to the following officers and wage mariners -- I wish you much success in the fleet!

ENS Jon D. Andvick, NOAA
ENS Christopher J. Briand, NOAA
ENS Lindsay H. Clovis, NOAA
AB Jodie Edmond
CB Jonathan Forgione
ENS Kurt S. Karpov, NOAA
ENS Marina Kosenko, NOAA
ENS Aaron D. Maggied, NOAA
ENS Heather L. Moe, NOAA
ENS Erik S. Norris, NOAA
ENS Russell D. Pate, NOAA
ENS Michael D. Robbie, NOAA
ENS Kyle A. Sanders, NOAA

When I assumed the duties of Director back in the late summer of 2007, I laid out 11

initiatives that CPC would address (Cyberflash dated September 6, 2007). Over the past year, CPC has been heavily involved in these activities and has made significant progress toward the execution of these initiatives.

1. **Defining the role (vision and mission) of the NOAA Corps and the framework for determining how decisions and activities affect this vision and mission.** The vision, mission, and guiding principles have been discussed with about 180 officers and have had numerous revisions. Statements were sent out in a vote six weeks ago with great feedback received. An overwhelming number of officers voted on their preferred statements. The selected mission, vision, and guiding principles will be vetted and discussed with the Lines, WFMO, and NOAA senior management, before moving to DOC for approval.
2. **Creating a CPC Workforce Management Team, which includes Line Office Liaison Officers.** The charter has been written and posted on CPC's website.
3. **Improving communications by using multiple means such as: Weekly Cyberflash with fewer items and links to updated website.** The Cyberflashes have been sent out on a more regular basis and contain pertinent items and links. In addition, a more user-friendly search option is available to look for items that were presented or posted in the weekly Cyberflashes, by subject.
4. **Travel to meet with officers and line office AAs/DAAs.** CPC staff have traveled to AOC; the XO Seminar; Fleet Administrative Management Seminar; CO Conference; also attended REFTRA, PSSO, BOTC MOC-P; MOC-A, and met with Seattle-area officers and supervisors over the past year.
5. **Monthly announced breakfasts, lunches, etc. with senior, junior, and retired officers.** Captains assigned to the DC area are meeting bi-monthly for breakfast/lunch to discuss leadership challenges of the Corps and OMAO. Two such meetings have occurred to date; more will be scheduled in the near future. The Director, NOAA Corps, has recently started a bi-monthly meeting with all officers assigned to the DC area.
6. **Quarterly teleconferences with officers in field offices.** Only one teleconference was held this year. A teleconference with Hawaii-based officers was held earlier this year. In the upcoming months, plans are to hold a teleconference with Woods Hole and Pascagoula officers.
7. **Enhancing the user friendliness of the CPC website.** Previously, the CPC and NOAA Corps websites were very confusing; it was hard to tell the difference between the NOAA Corps website and the CPC site. CPC and the NOAA Corps now have two separate sites. Recently, an updated CPC website was designed and

posted on-line, hopefully providing ease of use by officers in the field. The NOAA Corps site is being redesigned to support the recruiting effort and the link will be posted in the near future.

8. **Reviewing all NOAA Corps policies to ensure they are providing a consistent message.** After a detailed review of our current policies, a decision has been made by the Director, NOAA Corps, to move all policy back to the Directives. Over the past several years, CPC has been in the process of developing numerous manuals (Personnel, Pay, Awards, Uniform, etc) to address NOAA Corps policy. Due to the amount of resources and time involved with this task, the project has been suspended and all policies will be placed under one manual, the NOAA Corps Directives. Over the next year, all policies under development will be moved into the NOAA Corps Directives format.
9. **Implementing the NOAA Corps Leadership Development Framework.** DOC approved it in February 2008, and funding has been requested to support the development of officers.
10. **Creating a web-based suggestion system in the OPF on-line module that will allow officers to provide feedback concerning issues affecting them or the NOAA Corps.** Currently, the Service Report (SR) captures this information, but only once a year. By allowing officers to provide suggestions/comments at any time, we hope to be able to address issues in a timely manner versus simply once a year. This link will allow officers to submit questions/concerns on any topic (i.e., assignments, PCS orders, OERs, etc.) and have them go directly to a designated point of contact. The designated point of contact will have 72 hours in order to get a response back to the officer. All comments will be tracked in a database and posted per topic on a separate site for all officers to view. This site will allow the Commissioned Personnel Center to create a "sounding board" to generate a source of shared information with the entire NOAA Corps. The link will be rolled-out on 14 January, 2009. Lastly, now that there is a mechanism (i.e., OER, OPF on-line, constructive suggestions database) to capture all information gathered from the SR, the form is being evaluated to determine whether or not it should be required as part of the end-of-year package.
11. **Contacting officers to ask what CPC could do better or change to support officers now and in the future.** CPC has called about 60 officers, junior and senior, in various Line Offices and geographical locations for input on this initiative. A Cyberflash also went out asking for feedback, and CPC received numerous comments. In the future, this means of communication will be an on-going process as part of the OPF on-line feedback module.

Additionally, the following initiatives have been completed over the past year:

- General billet structure defined (Planning, Preparation, and Executive type billets)
- Guiding Principles for officers established
- Officer Training Plan developed
- Implemented professional qualifications for maritime officers (officers now eligible for Mates License after completion of A, B, and C school)
- Funding for 321 officers supported by NOAA
- New NC Recruiting Video and brochures developed
- Entry requirements changed for the NOAA Corps (pending DOC approval)
- Precept and Director's Guidance to the Board posted on the website
- Officer Corps Management Plan posted on website
- Increased Corps Strength Authorization to 379 (pending Fleet Plan, Aircraft Plan, and NC Workforce Plan to Congress)

This past week, Captain Raymond Slagle assumed the duties of Director, Commissioned Personnel Center. Over the past several weeks, we have worked closely together on the CPC initiatives underway. Captain Slagle comes to the Director's job with a vast understanding of NOAA, OMAO, and CPC gained while Chief of Staff, OMAO, over the past few years. I have full faith and confidence in his abilities to carry forward the initiatives currently in progress at CPC.

It has been a pleasure serving you. I thank you for all the great ideas and your commitment to the Corps. With honor, respect and commitment, I will move to my next assignment within the Office of Legislative Affairs before heading to the Aircraft Operations Center next summer.

Have a great holiday season. The next Cyberflash will come out after the New Year.



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

Announcements

Officers To Be Considered in the 2009 Promotion Boards

Please remember that the deadline to submit documents for inclusion in your Officer Personnel File (OPF) is January 15, 2009. There will be no extensions beyond that date. The best way to add documents to your OPF is through the OPF Online, by submitting image files or PDFs. CPC is currently processing all OPF additions and fixes for officers being considered for promotion. Requests submitted before December 22 should be reflected in the officer's OPF Online by January 2, 2009. Requests submitted after December 22, but before January 15, will be reflected in the officer's OPF Online by February 1, 2009. If you have any questions or concerns about your OPF, please contact CDR Mike Weaver, Acting Chief, OPMD.

Common Reasons Why OERs Are Returned

1) ***Receiving "NO" in Box 5f* *(Evaluations)*.** All officers should be receiving an actual rating in Box 5f. "Evaluation" of their OER's. Several OER's have been coming through CPC with the box marked "Not Observed." While many officers may not be responsible for generating various reports, "Evaluations" includes a specific statement pertaining to the Reported-On Officer's ability to meet his/her own Officer Evaluation System responsibilities (i.e., submit informative OER feedback to Supervisor, submit feedback in a timely manner, etc.).

2) ***OER's Contain Restricted Comments*.** As per the instructions outlined on Page 6 of NOAA Form 56-6A (Rev07-07), several items shall not be mentioned in an officer's OER. Some of the most common restrictive comments include: referring to Reported-On Officer by their first name, stating psychological or medical conditions, mentioning performance outside a rating period, and any reference to a third party by name. Officers should ensure that their supervisors are aware of these restrictions.

3) ***Lack Substantive Comments in Box 10 (Potential).** *Officers need to be aware that specific statements regarding their potential to assume greater leadership roles and responsibilities is critical to Boards. It is also highly recommended that officers speak to their supervisors about including a statement regarding future promotability (especially if they'll be coming before a Board). Significant space is provided in this section to cover aspects about an officer that might not have been captured earlier in the OER. NOTE: Officers that capitalize on this section have a greater opportunity of distinguishing themselves from their peers. In a "best qualified/ up-or-out system", this is a section that should receive special attention.

4) ***Missing Signatures*.** Self-explanatory. OER's need to contain all original signatures.

Officers are also reminded of the following points when it comes to framing OER comments: 1) How well was the task done?; 2) Was it captured as a concise accomplishment?; 3) What was the demonstrated impact?; and 4) What were the results of the accomplishment. Many OER's do a good job at capturing the first two points, but

rarely touch upon the impacts or results to the platform, program, line office, or organization. An OER that reflects specific measurements and/or metrics with regards to an officer's performance is really going to stand out when it comes to making important personnel management decisions (i.e., promotions, assignments, and career development). If you should have any questions regarding OER's, please contact CDR John Caskey at 301-713-7748 or john.caskey@noaa.gov

Approved Retirements/Resignations/Separations

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

CAPT John W. Humphrey, Jr.	January 1, 2009
LTJG Phoebe A. Woodworth	January 1, 2009
CAPT Stephen A. Kozak	April 1, 2009
CAPT Emily B. Christman	June 1, 2009
CDR James D. Rathbun	June 1, 2009
CAPT Sean R. White	July 1, 2009
CAPT Steven R. Barnum	January 1, 2010

On the Horizon

January 4-21, 2009	B School, Session A (includes travel dates)
January 5-9, 2009	Small Boat Training: Inspection and Troubleshooting, Seattle, WA
January 9, 2009	January 9th - Pacific Section ACO Dining In, NAVSTA Everett, WA
January 14-February 6, 2009	B School, Session B (includes travel dates)
January 16, 2009	Cutoff for Document Submission (Promotion Boards)
February 1-4, 2009	ROA Mid-Winter Conference
February 24-27, 2009	Small Boat Program Training: Inspection and Troubleshooting, Mississippi
March 2-5, 2009	Promotion Boards
March 2, 2009	D-School

Please see CPC website for additional information:

Assignments: <http://www.corpscpc.noaa.gov/careermgmt/assignments.html>

Evaluations: <http://www.corpscpc.noaa.gov/careermgmt/evaluation.html>

Training: <http://www.corpscpc.noaa.gov/careermgmt/training.html>

Uniforms & Awards: <http://www.corpscpc.noaa.gov/perservices/awards.html>