

This afternoon Admiral Allen sent an email to all hands announcing the creation of a new law enforcement/security focused rating. This is a major step forward for both the Coast Guard's ability to sustain expertise in this increasing complex mission area, and for individual Coast Guard members who have sought to focus on law enforcement/security missions for a career but were not able to because there was no dedicated rating. In addition, this will finally provide a much needed active duty counterpart to the Reserve-only Port Security rating.

In May 2003, we (MCPOs Jeff Smith, George Ingraham, Skip Bowen) wrote a white paper recommending the creation of a law enforcement rating. A link to the paper is provided on the MCPOCG website <http://www.uscg.mil/comdt/mcpocg/> Spurred in part by that effort and a follow on study, the Advanced Law Enforcement Competency program (ALEC) was created. For a variety of reasons ALEC really never got off the ground. Even if ALEC had been able to deliver as designed, (higher level training and follow on assignments) it could never have completely met the Coast Guard's need because it never fully answered the question of how members could be fairly advanced.

Our 2006 unit visits to what are now Deployable Specialized Force units, (MSRT, MSSTs, TACLETs) revealed an even deeper concern that the law enforcement/security field had grown so complex that our personnel management system could not provide adequate support to units. The Coast Guard was expending a great deal of resources to train and equip personnel only to move them out of the law enforcement/security mission area upon advancement, or at the end of their tours.

The Law Enforcement, Tactical, and Security Group Occupation (LETSGO) study team led by RADM Tim Riker was stood up to recommend a way forward. For the past 15 months this team has been working extremely hard on this initiative. We would personally like to thank RADM Riker and his team of full and part time subject matter specialists from around the Coast Guard including the Personnel Command and the Maritime Law Enforcement Academy. We would not be where we are today without their dedicated and thoughtful efforts.

Personnel management within the enlisted ranks is accomplished through ratings. This rating is the critical personnel competency sustainment piece for the largest part of the workforce needed to complete future complex, high-end missions safely and effectively. Future work will provide a career path for the Coast Guard officers involved in the law enforcement/security community. LETSGO Phase III, the implementation team will move forward carefully... this rating can and will be created without doing harm to legacy missions, ratings, or personnel involved.

MCPO George Ingraham, MCPO Jeff Smith, MCPO Skip Bowen