



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Maritime
Administration**

MANUAL OF ORDERS

MARITIME ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

REVOKES

NO. 820-1

EFFECTIVE DATE

December 11, 2006

SUBJECT

HONORARY APPOINTMENTS IN THE USMS

Section 1. Background: The United States Maritime Service (USMS) is a voluntary organization for the training of citizens of the United States to serve on merchant marine vessels of the United States and to perform functions to assist the United States merchant marine. Further to 46 U.S.C. §51701, which establishes the USMS, the Maritime Administration may confer honorary appointments upon those distinguished individuals not in the service of the USMS who have made outstanding contributions to the United States Merchant Marine and/or the American maritime industry.

Section 2. Purpose: This order establishes the policy, responsibilities and procedures relating to the Maritime Administrator's authority to confer honorary appointments in the USMS.

Section 3. Policy and Responsibilities:

3.01 Honorary appointments will be limited in number and based on significant achievement and/or contribution to the maritime industry.

3.02 The Maritime Administrator shall be responsible for developing or processing nominations for honorary appointment.

3.03 Any nomination for an honorary appointment shall be referred through the office of the Maritime Administrator to be considered by an advisory board as prescribed in section 5 of this order.

3.04 Any employee named to the advisory board shall apply the criteria and standard of review as set out in this order.

Section 4. Rank Conferred: To avoid confusion with the rank structure employed in the USMS, any recipient of an honorary appointment in the USMS will receive the title of "Honorary Commodore."

Section 5. Reviewing and Approving Authorities:

5.01 The Maritime Administrator will establish and appoint a three-person advisory board to review nominations for honorary appointment and to make recommendations thereon to the Maritime Administrator.

5.02 The advisory board members will be chosen on an ad hoc basis by the Maritime Administrator and shall consist of no fewer than two career Senior Executive

Service employees. The third member may be a GS-15 employee at the Office Director level or higher or a Senior Executive Service employee. The Special Assistant to the Maritime Administrator will serve as a non-voting recording secretary for the advisory committee.

5.03 The advisory board will meet at least once to review each nomination for honorary appointment and will prepare written recommendations to be submitted to the Maritime Administrator. Recommendation memoranda will include justification for the recommendations made and will indicate whether such recommendations are unanimous without specifying how each member voted.

5.04 In reviewing any nomination for honorary appointment, the advisory board shall consider and discuss the nature, significance and duration of the nominee's contribution to the maritime industry.

5.05 The criterion for selection is outstanding contribution to the United States Merchant Marine and/or the American maritime industry. The scope and breadth of single accomplishments will be considered in conjunction with their degree of positive significance to the maritime capabilities of the United States. Numerous lesser contributions extending consistently over a protracted period or a lifetime may be equivalent to a single, momentous contribution. When weighing contributions for the purpose of award, the collective significance and duration of contributions should be assessed such that the aggregate resulted in important improvements to the capability and reputation of the United States merchant marine and/or maritime industry. Award should not be made for trivial or sporadic contributions.

5.06 Upon receiving the recommendation of the advisory board, the Maritime Administrator will decide whether to adopt the recommendation of the advisory board. The Maritime Administrator retains the ultimate discretion to award an honorary appointment notwithstanding the recommendation or unanimity of the advisory board.

5.07 The advisory board's deliberations and recommendations shall be confidential. Any records will be maintained by the Special Assistant to the Maritime Administrator for not less than one year after the board's recommendation is submitted to the Maritime Administrator. Longer retention for the purpose of award consistency will be in the discretion of the Maritime Administrator.

Section 6. Nomination Procedures:

6.01 In order to be considered by the advisory board, the nomination must be submitted in written form to the office of the Maritime Administrator.

6.02 At a minimum, the nomination should set out the nominee's name and current address, as well as current place of employment, if applicable, and should describe the long-term and significant contribution to the maritime industry upon which the nomination is based.

Section 7. Award – Form and Presentation:

7.01 Upon approval by the Maritime Administrator or his designee of an honorary appointment in the USMS, a certificate conferring the rank of Honorary Commodore will be prepared in the form prescribed by the Maritime Administrator.

7.02 The certificate to be presented shall clearly demonstrate the HONORARY nature of appointment in the USMS.

7.03 The Maritime Administrator or his designee shall notify the recipient in writing and will arrange, if possible, for a presentation of the award in person.

7.04 Upon presenting the award, the Maritime Administrator or his designee will provide the recipient with a formal letter of appreciation which also outlines the limitations on use, as provided in section 8.01 herein, and in the form prescribed by appendix A.

Section 8. Limitation on Use:

8.01 The honorary appointment is meant to recognize significant contributions to the maritime industry as described above. However, such an appointment does not amount to a commission in or appointment to the USMS and is not to be accompanied by any privilege associated with service in the USMS or any Armed Service of the United States.

8.02 For the reasons stated in 8.01, no recipient of an honorary appointment in the USMS will be entitled to:

- 1 wear the uniform or insignia of the USMS;
- 2 hold or present identification bearing the conferred honorary rank;
- 3 use the conferred honorary rank in written or oral communication, in correspondence, on business cards, or in other documents, absent an explicit statement that the title is HONORARY.

8.03 A recipient of any honorary appointment in the USMS shall not hold himself out as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces under any circumstance or in order to gain any benefit normally conferred upon members of the Armed Forces of the United States or the USMS.

Section 9: Relationship to Prior Honorary Ranks

9.01 In the past the Maritime Administration has occasionally conferred honorary appointments in the USMS upon individuals who have made outstanding

contributions to the Maritime Administration, the merchant marine and/or the maritime industry.

9.02 Prior recipients of such appointments shall continue to hold the honorary rank previously conferred, such as Honorary Rear Admiral.

9.03 All prior recipients of an honorary appointment are governed by the limitations on use as set out in section 8 herein.



Sean T. Connaughton
Maritime Administrator

SAMPLE LETTER TO AWARDEE

The United States Maritime Administration is proud to confer on you the rank of "Honorary Commodore." Your selection for this award is a reflection of your outstanding contribution to the maritime enterprise of the United States. Your contribution is significant and has improved the Nation's sea-going strength and reputation.

Historically, the rank of Commodore has been held by the Merchant Marine officer in command of a convoy or the senior captain of a line of merchant vessels. Those who have attained the rank have stood out among their peers by way of accomplishment, experience, and judgment, demonstrated in the face of adversity over many years. You have met the highest expectations upon an officer of that rank.

The intent of this award is to honor you and your contributions. As an honorary award, this does not confer other benefits or a place within the rank structure of the United States Maritime Service. For this reason, honorees are requested to refrain from using the title of "Commodore" in appellation or written form, whether for the purpose of identification or otherwise without clear reference that the rank is "Honorary." Use of uniforms, rank insignia, or other forms of military style identification is not authorized based on this award.

Thank you for your invaluable contribution to the maritime service of the United States.