Information Systems Technician Force Notes

September, 2007

Points of Contact

IT Rating Force Master Chief:
ITCM Michael Gentry   (202) 475-5763

IT "A" School Chief
ITCM Robert Rock   (707) 765-7450

Subject Matter Specialist:
ITC Anthony Borders   (707) 765-7264

IT Detailer:
CWO Eric Thomas   (202) 493-1260

Official disclaimer: This newsletter is for the sole purpose of passing information to those within the Information Technician Rating. The material contained within is not for record purposes nor represents any Coast Guard official policy. Questions, comments, things of interest may be sent to: IT-RFMC "Michael.r.gentry@uscg.mil"

From your IT Rating Force MCPO

By ITCM Michael Gentry

Well it is time for the next set of IT Force notes. I have done some extensive traveling this summer to meet as many ITs as possible out in the field. I will discuss some of the issues units are having in the field and how they are being addressed. I hope everyone had a great summer I know I did and I am looking forward to the cool fall days. The summer heat in DC, well lets be nice and just say it is really HOT! So let's move on the issues.

First let us start in the Great White North Alaska; here are some of the issues that were brought up;

1) **Alaska units** receive the same amount of training funds that their counter parts in the lower 48 receive. The issue lies in the fact that it costs 3 times as much to send a person to a school as it does in the lower 48 (most of the money is used just to travel back and forth). I have been talking to personnel at HQ about this issue; I will pass more as I get more information.

2) There still seems to be a big issue with EON and NORTEL switches. Which will become King? Well it is more complicated than just dropping one brand for another. One reason is we have contracts with both that will run far into the future. So it looks like both will be around for years to come. The other issue seems to be favoritism over each switch. Meaning if you are from the East coast you dislike Nortel and think EON rules and vice versa for the West coast they love Nortel. This has to stop and I am working diligently with the "A" school chief and HQ to create a C school for EON. We did it for

Nortel and we want to do the same thing for EON. It will save the Coast Guard 100s of thousands of dollars each year if we accomplish this. The other issue lies in getting support for vessels on the West Coast with EON switches onboard (which most CG vessels currently have or are getting upgrading to it). If you are a vessel on the East Coast you are good to go all the tech support ashore is versed in EON. Not so on the West Coast, most techs are versed in Nortel and only have a small smattering of EON skills. So the issue came up in Alaska that a shore unit wanted to put in an EON switch ashore so they could give better support for the 110's they support with EON switches onboard. The switch was denied and a Nortel switch was installed. I am not favoring either side and looking at all angles at the moment. But Nortel switches are good for medium to large scale campuses, while EON is really good for small to medium scale campuses. So this is an ongoing issue that I am still working on. It also ruffles a lot of feathers when discussed but we are moving forward.

3) Pipeline training for personnel departing Alaska to the lower 48 or elsewhere. The issue came up that personnel were not getting orders issued far enough out to cover transfer and pipeline training coming from Alaska. I have discussed this with the detailer and that is being resolved.

4) From the Buoy tender round-up. The big issue there was with the staffing of the 225s with IT3's coming straight out of "A" School. I have talked with the detailer about this and he is working with me to over billet the 225's as much as a year out to cover the relieving IT3 that is reporting. I am also going to work with the program to try to get the billet upgraded to and IT2 or IT1. Reason for this being each 225 is also getting a SIPRNET suite installed. The work load for an apprentice IT3 is just overwhelming and needs to be addressed. We are still trying to get ITs on all 225s currently there are only 5 that have them and hopefully with all this new equipment being added all will have them soon.

　　From the **West Coast Units;**

1) CGC Bertholf – Lack of COMSEC training has been brought to my attention that could be disastrous for the ITs working on the Bertholf, SIPRNET, FSM and SCIF that is being installed. These COMSEC issues are not just centric to the Bertholf. As IT's we do not get any formal training on how to handle or deal with classified spaces or material. More and more we have to deal with classified systems and classified data. I am trying to work something out with the OS RFMC to possibly get our personnel some COMSEC training or find a NAVY C school for this. We will be acting as owner and operator of our equipment in the future and if we do not deal with our classified spaces/material correctly we are going to get into trouble. So I am looking to options for training at the moment.

2) CGC Healy IT's would like similar assistance when they pull in from ESU Seattle as the rest of the ship receives from NESU Seattle. I discussed this issue with the ESU Seattle and it is already being addressed.

3) ESU Seattle would like more EON training in support of the units in there AOR. They also noted that most of the ITs in there outlying units are doing more telephony work than computer. The ESU is all about the cross training aspect but money for moving people around becomes critical and only so many people can be fully trained from outlying units. I will bring this issue up with HQ staff personnel.

　　So these were some of the major issues that came up during my travels. I actually have 4 pages of notes to keep me busy. Again I only had so much travel money to get around this year. I plan on hitting the Midwest and Florida next year; I may even squeeze in Honolulu if I have enough funds. Remember if you see something wrong or need something for training you don't have to wait for me to visit to spring it on me. Pop me an email we can work on it from that angle also. Remember you are my eyes and ears and if I don't hear anything I assume everything is going well.

　　　　I did mention SIPRNET above but let's go a little deeper on that subject. For some reason I am getting conflicting stories on who is responsible for SIPRNET? The answer we the ITs are responsible for SIPRNET. We have tier II response from TISCOM and this service is growing. I have heard from the OS RFMC several times that some ESU's ESD's are saying the OS's are responsible for maintaining

SIPRNET. Wrong we are responsible for maintaining it and will most likely also be come operators of the system in the future. That is why all IT's are required to hold a SECRET clearance and if you loose it you loose your rating designator, so make sure you keep your clearance current. If you are not maintaining your area of operation SIPRNET terminals, I would start getting involved as soon as possible. It belongs to us, lock stock and barrel. On a lighter note I also received a suggestion that we put some IT trivia in the force notes so if you have some good trivia or helpful information feel free to forward it to me and I will post in it the next set of force notes in December. Keep up the great work, our future looks bright with all the new technology coming onboard via Deepwater, R-21, AIS and so on. I have heard concerns that our rate will be going away? I don't see that I actually see us growing in the coming years. Well take care for now and I hope to see you soon.   MC ☺

IT SCHOOL INFORMATION

Training Center Petaluma IT School Instructor Opportunities In AY07 and Beyond…

IT School Instructors

Highly motivated individuals that want to work in a challenging and rewarding instructional environment. This position offers the opportunity to work with, instruct, and mentor, the future generations of Coast Guard Information Systems Technicians in "A" School and present more advanced curriculum in several "C" Schools. This is your chance to help shape the future of our rate. Work along side other highly motivated instructors using the latest and greatest tools, equipment, and systems in use around the Coast Guard today. Our classrooms and labs afford the staff and students hands on environments to practice what is taught and learned. Our training also provides an excellent environment for creative thinking and problem solving using real life scenarios shared from ITs in the field and fleet.

For more information, check out our website at:
http://cgweb.tcpet.uscg.mil/tcs/it/default.asp

If interested in this challenging assignment, contact:

IT1 Abigail Clark at
abigail.h.clark@uscg.mil

IT "A"School

ITA School Staff are now in line and instructing based on ALL of the new E-4 Quals. Here is a small update of how we are covering these items: Premise Distribution instructors are covering Shore Ties for both coasts. Students build each version as well as gain an understanding of the use and care/maintenance of Shore Tie Cable and Connectors. Both of our Telephone Systems Classes, (eOn/Nortel) now incorporate PA Systems. The eOn classroom integrates a Bogen Amplifier and Bogen TG4C Tone Generator in each student booth. Each student installs, configures and uses the public address and alarm functions in conjunction with the operation of their telephone system. The Nortel classroom integrates a Valcom Amplifier and Tone Generator in each student booth. Each student installs, configures and uses the public address and alarm functions in conjunction with the operation of their telephone system. The System Administration course is now online using a Windows Server 2003 Virtual Server environment. This allows one physical server to run software for three domain controllers, and two Exchange servers, simulating the Active Directory structure of the CGDN. This environment has successfully been running in three classrooms, and allows quick class resets for the instructors by virtue of being able to roll back the environment, so that all users/groups/computers are deleted with minimal instructor time. All of the new Windows Server 2003-based enlisted performance quals can be taught in this environment, and look and feel exactly like they do in the field. The IT School has also added WSUS/AV10 and Remedy servers, so that the support model in the field is reflected in the classroom.

Pictures Wanted

As always, please don't forget we are updating and improving the "hallowed halls" of the Bauer building IT School wing to display somewhat of a visual history of the rate. Please, fellow ITs, send us any old class photos or legacy pictures to create a more meaningful/colorful/interesting hallway. These can be electronic or paper photos

Please email pictures to IT1 Erick Benson.

ISM

The Information Systems Management (ISM) "C" School at Training Center Petaluma has been updated to reflect the computer migration changes currently sweeping the Coast Guard. The changes included upgrading the classroom environment and course materials to incorporate the new Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Operating System. The curriculum developers at Petaluma worked feverishly to create new labs, job aids, student guides and practical exercises to help you be successful in your job. The ISM Course is a four-week self-paced course where designated system administrators will learn the skills required for the administration of a local unit's computer systems. Training encompasses the areas of installation, configuration, implementation, cutter connectivity, tiered administration, DMT, maintenance and troubleshooting of the Coast Guard's Server 2003 and Windows XP Workstation Operating Systems.

The remaining FY07 Information Systems Management Server 2003 course convening's are:

- 4 September 2007

To attend class, go to TQC's Web site at **http://www.uscg.mil/hq/tqc/Index.shtm** and submit a Training Request. The ISM Course Code is 500863.

We look forward to seeing you.

Advanced Nortel "C"

Could you use more training on that NORTEL PBX at your unit?   IT School, at Training Center Petaluma, currently has a "C" school course that will help you increase your knowledge on the NORTEL telephone switches. The course is called Meridian Voice Processing System. Don't let the name fool you. It covers much more than Meridian Voice Mail. The instructors like to call it NORTEL Option 11C Advanced.

In just three weeks, you will learn how to be more efficient at programming and have a much better understanding of how the switch works to provide a multitude of services. The course covers:

Adding both analog and digital phones
Adding and using telephone features
Creating multiple trunk routes. E&M, COT, DID and T1
How to wire trunks IAW the Planning and Installation Guide
Working in the Customer Data Block
Installing, setup and use of Meridian Mail
Installing, setup and use of CallPilot
Using Application Builder
Basic Alternate Routing (BARS).

You will also learn to migrate the voice mail programs and how to complete backups and restore the databases. Sound interesting?
Go to **http://www.uscg.mil/hq/tqc/Index.shtm** and submit your Short Term Training Request.

The course code is 501768
Hope to see you in class.

Shore Tie Instructional Video - Online

As of 1 Jan 2007 you have access to our Shore Tie Instructional Video ONLINE! Use the following link from any CGSWIII: **http://cgweb.tcpet.uscg.mil**>Schools>IT CGWeb page. New features include a play, pause, fast forward and rewind buttons to make this instructional aid more user friendly. Please keep in mind that this video was created for consistency in training, best practices (tinning of wires) may be more appropriate in the fleet.

From the Detailer

Assignment Year 2008 (AY2008) has kicked off with the release of ALCGENL 067/07 (AY2008 SITREP 1). I encourage each of you (whether tour complete or not) to read this message, as it contains a lot of information you'll find useful. The published timeline is as follows:

01 Jun – 31 Aug:	PAL maintenance – validation of units' PALs; Members are welcome encouraged to call me.
18 Jun – 31 Aug:	Commands are invited to visit CGPC and speak w/ both Assignment Officers and our Central Assignment Coordinator (CAC) supervisors during this time; Requests must be received 2 weeks in advance - unit POCs can schedule a visit thru YN3 Nicholas Winship at (202) 493-1251.
28 Sep:	AY2008 Shopping List is published.
29 Sep – 13 Oct:	Commands validate the AY2008 Shopping List against expected vacancies.
02 Nov:	E-resumes due.
03 Nov – 31 Mar 08:	Slating of members & issuance of orders.

As stated above, the AY2008 Shopping List is not due for release to until the 28th of Sep. Until that time, the billets you're seeing within Direct Access now are wildly inaccurate. Please wait until the 28th of Sep to start "looking" at next summer's projected vacancies.

The following is a sneak peak of cutter positions that I'm currently forecasting.

***** Keep in mind – the below listing is incredibly premature at this point in time. There will likely be a number of additions/deletions to it, as it doesn't take into account any potential fleet-ups that may occur, changes to the CWO cut/predictor, etc. *****

Anticipated Cutter Vacancies

00012428	IT1	CGC CHASE	San Diego, CA
00030383	IT1	CGC GALLATIN	Charleston, SC
00036084	IT1	CGC MELLON	Seattle, WA
00029848	IT1	CGC RUSH	Honolulu, HI
00012410	IT2	CGC CHASE	San Diego, CA
00041472	IT2	CGC DECISIVE	Pascagoula, MS
00009320	IT2	CGC DEPENDABLE	Cape May, NJ
00024068	IT2	CGC FORWARD	Portsmouth, VA
00001996	IT2	CGC HAMILTON	San Diego, CA
00031117	IT2	CGC HARRIET LANE	Portsmouth, VA
00007364	IT2	CGC JARVIS	Honolulu, HI

00040339	IT2	CGC MOHAWK	Key West, FL
00016808	IT2	CGC NORTHLAND	Portsmouth, VA
00019201	IT2	CGC POLAR SEA	Seattle, WA
00039139	IT2	CGC SHERMAN	Alameda, CA
00034679	IT2	CGC SPENCER	Boston, MA
00008708	IT2	CGC TAHOMA	Portsmouth, NH
00002758	IT2	CGC TAMPA	Portsmouth, VA
00034583	IT2	CGC THETIS	Key West, FL
00001107	IT2	CGC VIGILANT	Port Canaveral, FL

If you plan on seeking an extension, please list your current position as the #1 choice on your e-resume, annotate your desire for an extension in the Comments section – and obtain a favorable endorsement to this action from your command. I won't normally honor extensions greater than 1 year, and it's unlikely I'll honor an extension request if you're completing your first tour of IT duty after A-school. Career diversity is paramount throughout our careers; especially early on in them.

Lastly, please ensure your supervisors/commands are informing me of your career intentions. AOs aren't informed when a member intends to RELAD. Failure to keep me informed of expected vacancies often results in gapped positions.

By CWO Eric Thomas,
via e-mail.

From your Subject Mater Specialist

Greetings from Training Center Petaluma, by now you all have seen the ALCOAST regarding our new Enlisted Performance Quals (EPQ's). As you prepare for the May 2008 Service Wide Exam please start using this new set of EPQ's as your study guide. I've had quite a few e-mails about gaining access to the DHS National Security Systems Handbook 4300B. TISCOM has kindly offered to "host" the publication at the following web address (CGWEB only) http://cgweb.cgia.uscg.mil/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=70&Itemid=63 ---- Another alternative is to sign up at the following web address https://dhsonline.dhs.gov/portal/jhtml/community.jhtml using your alternate e-mail address of uscg.dhs.gov. Hopefully everyone knew that we had DHS e-mail addresses. Here's an example of mine - Borders, Anthony ITC [Anthony.R.Borders@uscg.dhs.gov]. This is the ONLINE portal for all of the DHS documentation and references. Let me know if you have any trouble with either of these links.

I recently visited ISC Honolulu and Air Station Barbers Point with the EPME folks and some of the other Subj. Matter Specialists (SMS) for Career Development Day. We gave training on Service Wide Exam study habits, defined the different learning types, gave examples of how to "break down" you're course material into quick study material and discussed general career guidance. We received some

excellent feedback from the field and wanted to offer up additional visits to your locations throughout the Coast Guard. If you would like me, the EPME folks or one of the other rated SMS's to visit your unit please drop me an e-mail and we'll see what we can do for you. As always please continue to ask questions, I'm available via e-mail or phone and if you're in Petaluma feel free to drop by my office. Have fun out there.

By ITC Anthony Borders
Anthony.R.Borders@uscg.mil
Information Systems Technician Subject Matter Specialist
USCG Training Center Petaluma
Course & Exam Development (CED)
599 Tomales Road
Petaluma, CA 94952
707-765-7264

Headquarters Support Command General Message Repository
(The above link is your one stop shopping for all General Messages)

Messages you should take a look at

- ALCGENL 129/07 - ENLISTED ADV MSG
- ALCGENL 109/07 – NOV 2007 SWE Exam
- ALCGENL 108/07 – Detailer Telephone Numbers
- ALCGENL 104/07 – NOV 2007 SWE PDE Verification
- ALCGENL 097/07 – ACET Results
- ALCGENL 096/07 – MAY 2006 Revised Cuts
- ALCOAST 374/07 – IT EPQ Revision and Cancellation of PQGS/EOCT
- ALCGPERSCOM 028/07 011410Z JUN 07 – 07 CWO Appointment list

Links

- **Commandant's Intent Action Orders (CIAO)**
- **TRACEN Petaluma**
- **Performance Qualifications:**
- **Advanced Education:**
- **SWE Status Results & Advancement Information:**
- **IT Detailer Information Page:**
- **Help Desk Documents at TISCOM:**
- **Integrated Deepwater Program:**
- **CG Central:**
- **On-Line Enlisted Billet Manual INTRANET page:**
- **Sealift Command:**
- **Thrift Savings Plan:**

Competencies:

For those that may not be familiar with the term competency, it is a code that is assigned to a member that has acquired a specific skill. A competency code can be assigned by graduating from an approved course or through on the job training (OJT). Tracking of competencies is mandatory so please use extreme measures to ensure your competencies are accurate in Direct-Access. If you find that you are missing any competencies, let your CPO or YN know so they can enter the competency in Direct-Access. I cannot over emphasize the importance that competencies play in everything from funding for "C" schools, to ensuring units get the right number of quotas for specific schools and also assisting the detailers in the assignment process. Not to mention, if there is another national disaster (like 9-11 or Hurricane Katrina) accurate competencies will enable CG leaders to send qualified personnel from all over the CG to assist in minimal time. Not just send people, but the right (qualified) people. So in short, if you have attended any "C" schools or have been working on a equipment or specialized skill for a few years then there is a good chance that you have earned a competency that is listed in the competency dictionary. You may learn more about competencies and what competency codes are available by clicking on the links below:

COMPETENCY DICTIONARY
http://www.uscg.mil/HQ/PSC/DA/COMPETENCYDICTIONARY.XLS

- ## CG Competency Management Sys Manual COMDT 5300.2
http://cgcentral.uscg.mil/uscg_docs/portal/MyCG/EDITORIAL/bvimport/cg61/CIM_5300_2.pdf

Note the ITCM retirement in 12/2008 does not count special assignment billet

Retirements/Separations					
2007/2008	ITCM	ITCS	ITC	IT1	Totals
January 2008					
February 2008			1	1	2
March 2008					
April 2008					
May 2008					
June 2008				1	1
July 2008					
August 2008					
September2008					
October		1		2	3
November			1		1
December 2008	1				
Total 2007	1	1	2	4	8

Reserve IT Force Strength		
Jan, '07	Authorized Billets Authorized	Billet Vacancy
ITCM	1	0
ITCS	2	1
ITC	8	0
IT1	24	0
IT2	30	8
IT3	19	0
Totals	**84**	**9**

"Remember that a retirement is not a guarantee for advancement. Changes in the Allowance List and out of rate personnel may effect actual promotion requirements."

ITCM Michael R. Gentry
IT Rating Force Master Chief
COMDT CG-481

☺