

# TRIDENT NEWS



## MST Force Notes June 2008

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### [1\) Challenging a SWE question?](#)

I figure since so many of you just took the SWE and MSTCM Prekel wrote such a great explanation this would be a good way to start off my notes.

### **OK, I Challenged a Question from the SWE. Now What Happens?!?!**

MSTCM Frank Prekel  
Rating Training Master Chief  
Marine Science Technician School  
TRACEN Yorktown

The Service-Wide Exam is a nerve racking experience, as I have written before there isn't anyway one way to study for a test that covers everything that you have learned, done and have been exposed to since you entered the Coast Guard. And the discovery of a question that is less than perfect – or out-in-out wrong is a very frustrating and upsetting thing.

The Service-Wide Exam is written months in advance of the test date. The May SWE is written by December 15th of the year before, the October SWE is due on May 15th and the November SWE is filed on June 15th. It is very possible that a procedure, policy, regulation or law can change in the time between writing the test and when it is administered. Of course, there is the possibility that the exam writer made a mistake – granted, that this only happens in the rarest of situations ; ).

Bad and or wrong questions, revised procedures, new policies, modified regulations and/or updated laws are all reasons that the SWE could be less than perfect. And, while every effort is made to catch the changes often, they occur after the test has been sent to the Personnel Service Center (PSC -- Topeka, KS). And, once in awhile, the exam writer will miss something. This is why the question challenge process exists.

In the testing room you are giving an opportunity to complete a challenge sheet before leaving the test site. This rule is in place to protect the exact wording of the question from compromise. The challenge sheets are collected and bundled with the test, scrap paper and your answer sheet and sent to the PSC. At the PSC, the materials are separated. The tests and scrap paper are shredded and answer sheets are feed into a scanner and graded. This “dirty run” score represents the total number of questions you answered correctly and is posted to Direct Access – this is not your final score, the challenge questions have not been reviewed. A statistical analysis of the answered questions is created and it and the challenged question sheets are forwarded to the appropriate exam writer.

A pile of paper arrives on the exam writer's desk – the challenged questions from the MAY08 SWE arrived on 02JUN. The exam writers are given five working days to review and evaluate the challenges. The exam writer can do one of three things with the challenge ...

1 – Credit the question

The challenge has been won and the question will credited on all exams.

2 – Change the answer to the correct answer

If the correct answer is available in the list of possible answers, the answer key is corrected. This correction usually happens when a mistake was made when the answer key was created. Only those who choose the correct answer will be credited.

3 – Reject the challenge

After the challenge has been reviewed, reference verified and no other means can be found to support the challenge, it is rejected and nothing will be changed on the exam.

The changes are sent to PSC, the testing computer is updated and final “raw score” is published to Direct Access. The final raw score is used to calculate the final multiple (the number used to rank order everyone on the promotion list). Remember, the SWE exam only counts for 80 of 200 possible points for the final multiple. The calculation is based on the mean and standard deviation plus a bunch of statistical “hocus pocus” to determine the points earned from the exam. Further explanation of the “Final Multiple” would require an article of its own, to learn more take a look at the Coast Guard Personnel Manual (“[http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/cit/cim/directives/CIM/CIM\\_1000\\_6A.pdf#page=498](http://www.uscg.mil/ccs/cit/cim/directives/CIM/CIM_1000_6A.pdf#page=498)”).

Despite what is often said, the challenges are taken very seriously. Each challenged question is verified with the test and the answer on the answer key is checked against the database. The act of filling in the answer sheet (one of those red “bubble” – fill-in the dot – sheets) is a mind numbing process and it is easy to make a mistake.

After making sure that the test question and the answer on the answer sheet is correct, then the reference for the question is verified. As we all know pubs change rather regularly and if we don't keep an eye out for the changes we could be enforcing a law incorrectly. If the reference supports the answer then, its back to the text of the challenge, looking for clues as to why the challenge was made.

Many challenges are made because of variances in local policy or procedures and the SWE can only reflect the policy as presented by law, regulation and/or Commandant Policy. Running on the

assumption that the person challenging the question is right I have gone several hours searching for written policy that may support the challenger's position.

Another common type of challenge is one where the writer pontificates on "the right way to do" something despite what the written guidance says. Again, here is a time that the exam writer can only rely on law, regulation and/or Commandant Policy. The writer may be correct, but the exam writer can not change the existing documentation.

Test takers have used the challenge to complain that they don't think that the material being tested should be the responsibility of the rate. Again, these decisions are not amongst the exam writers responsibilities and this is not the way to win a challenge.

Yet another type of challenge that has begun to appear is the "I have never been taught ..." or "I don't do this" and should not be held responsible for the information. The MST rating is constantly changing, new regulations, and laws often transform our job and responsibilities. It is not unusual that an MST will find themselves working to learn and understand a topic that they are not working on directly. This is another no win challenge.

An ideal challenge would include the explanation of why none of the answers are correct and what publication supports their position. Bearing in mind, that the challenge is being made in the testing room, none of the needed references are available and, without a little research I is very hard to be very specific do your best. "2 months ago, in training given by the NPFC they told us..." This is a very helpful statement, and relatively easy to research. Bear in mind if there isn't any supporting documentation or the newsletter or the method of delineation is not an "official form" of policy distribution the challenge may not win. For example, if the policy change was announced in a multiyear old NAVIC or ALCOAST and the supporting laws and regulations have not been changed, then the correct answer is will come from current law and regulations.

Hope this article has helped, if you have SWE questions give me a call (757-856-2101) or if you prefer call Chief McCloud (757-856-2074). Please bear in mind neither Chief McCloud nor will discuss any specific test questions but, we have been known to help people find the correct reference.

*MSTCM Frank Prekel  
June 2, 2008*



## **2) Travels:**

I visited Sector Detroit, Marine Safety Unit Toledo, and Cleveland. I made two trips to Yorktown to meet with our newest MSTs. I have more trips coming up, and as always the MSTs out there continue to amaze me with the stuff you are doing.

## **3) From the Detailer**

Submitted by CWO Dodson.

Assignment year 2009 promises to be an exciting year for the MST rate. Master Chief Hooker recently began an initiative to identify legacy "m" positions at Sectors/MSUs filled by members other than MSTs (BMs, MKs, DCs & GMs). The Master Chief was very successful as he identified 87 positions that will be re-programmed to MST in AY09 and beyond.

Aside from these re-programmed positions, 44 new MST positions have been proposed to support the Tow Boat Initiative in AY09.

Lastly, 64 new MST positions have been proposed to support the OMNIBUS (LNG facility support) in AY09.

With all of these re-programmings & new billets, advancements could be at an all time high. So what does that mean to those of you who took the May 08 service wide or are preparing for the Nov 08 service wide? You should expect to advance and move to support these new positions. Specifically, PERSMAN Chap 4.C.3 states:

When a member advances and desires to remain in his or her current assignment, every effort will be made to retain the member until tour completion, unless Service needs dictate otherwise. If a member desires reassignment upon advancement, AOS will consider, on a case-by-case basis, the reassignment of the member based on the needs of the Service. Every effort will be made to minimize the number of transfers upon advancement, but personnel should not compete for advancement unless they are prepared to be transferred to fill any authorized vacant position in the next higher pay grade.

It's important to remember that we (the service) advance to vacancies. I've been very successful in the past in fleeting member's who advance into positions at the next higher pay grade (IE, MST2 makes MST1 and is fleeted into the vacating MST1 position). That has limited the number of members who have been short toured because of advancement. However, with the potential of 197 new MST positions coming on line in AY09, fleet ups may not be an option.

Take a minute to look at the position you currently occupy. If you're an MST2 in an MST3 position or an MST1 in an MST2 position, you'll be looked at as a candidate for these new positions. And if you've recently taken the service wide or are preparing to take the Nov service wide, remember - Prepare to advance & move to support these new initiatives.

Enlisted Personnel Management Assignment Year 2009 SITREP 1 was recently released. I hope all of you that are tour complete in AY09 read this SITREP, understand the deadlines and are preparing for the upcoming assignment year.

I wish you all the very best. If you're ever in Baltimore, feel free to stop by the Sector and introduce yourself. Hopefully we'll be able to discuss the success of your last assignment!

v/r  
CWO4 Bill Dodson  
Outgoing MST Assignment Officer

## **4) Is Prior Marine Safety Experience Critical to compete for MSSE?**

By: Larry P. Steinmetz, MSSE4  
MSS/PSS Specialty Force Manager

NO! I could end this article with that one word but that would be an unsatisfactory answer to a very critical question many Coast Guard members are asking. I hope to shed some light on my beliefs as the MSS Specialty Force Manager and why I so emphatically say 'No' to this question. First though, I would like to bring everyone up to speed as to where we are currently with regards to the MSS Warrant Specialty.

As many have seen by email, message board, or in the media, the Marine Safety inspections and investigations program is currently suffering from a historic lack of experience, training, and customer relations with our industry partners. There are many well-documented reasons for this decline; a decline from days past when we were clearly recognized as the world's

leader in marine safety. The Commandant has made it a high priority to right our marine safety ship and a massive effort is currently underway to tackle ALL of the many challenges we face to regain this respect; a respect that can only be earned by, first, recognizing what the true challenges are and, second, meeting these challenges head on. One important challenge that has already been successfully met is the recent realignment of the Marine Safety Specialist (MSS) into separate specialties: Marine Safety Specialist Deck (MSSD) and Marine Safety Specialist Engineering (MSSE).

The very day I reported in to my job, July 1, 2005, as the first MSS Specialty Force Manager, the message was released to the field with the results of the CWO appointment board that had been held in April 2005. This was the first board where enlisted members specifically had to compete for a marine safety specialty, MSS, instead of their legacy specialties (BOSN, ENG, MAT, and WEPS) if they wanted to be in marine safety.

With the establishment of the MSS specialty in 2005, the process of how we selected marine safety Warrant Officers dramatically changed. Prior to June 1, 2005, the enlisted ratings competed for selection to their respective CWO specialties (BOSN, ENG, MAT, WEPS). Upon successful selection for CWO some were given the choice of staying in their legacy program or taking an assignment in Marine Safety. This assignment process and the numbers of people newly assigned each year to Marine Safety were determined by the Marine Safety warrant Assignment Officer (AO). The AO based this decision each year on the approved retirement letters on file, vacancies created by CWOs selected for Lieutenant, CWOs going to OCS, etc. This process closely matched the Marine Safety need by supplying the program with the necessary legacy enlisted experience to replace that which was leaving.

Beginning with selection year 2005 (appointments beginning 01 June 2006) all of the enlisted feeder ratings competed directly on the newly created MSS CWO Eligibility list for Marine Safety vacancies. During the 2005 and 2006 appointment boards, the process of having seven enlisted ratings compete for promotion to one CWO specialty failed to provide the rating diversity necessary to maintain the requisite blend of engineering and deck expertise. In short, engineers were not being selected in adequate numbers to replace those lost through retirement and/or CWO to LT causing a projected, complete inversion of deck and engineering experience of the specialty by 2009. The pre-MSS ratio was 65% engineering and 35% deck.

Long story, short, I convinced many within our program that the way the MSS specialty was designed would have long term disastrous effects in our ability to carry out our marine safety inspections and investigations mission. I routed a decision memo that eventually landed on the Commandant's desk. I briefed him on my five-step proposal and he approved all aspects of the memo. The most important proposal was to separate the MSS specialty into two different specialties: MSSD and MSSE.

Okay, I think we are all caught up now so back to the question... "Is Prior Marine Safety Experience Critical to Compete for MSSE"? As I have already answered; no it is not! In fact, the definition found in the Personnel Manual, Article 1.D.13.1, for a MSSE includes the following excerpt, "**Prior enlisted experience in the marine safety program is not a prerequisite for selection to MSSE.**" As the Force Manager for the MSS specialty, I would rather have an engineer that had multiple tours underway on Coast Guard cutters mixed in with shore duty assignments at units such as a small boat station. This type of assignment history lays a very solid foundation for gaining technical engineering expertise as well as the interface with industry one finds while stationed at a small boat unit. Technical experience and customer relations, two of our problem areas right now, are much more easily gained with this type of assignment history.

Oh, but "what about the marine safety "experience" being gained by an engineer assigned to a marine safety unit" and how could that "not be anything but an asset when making MSSE"? Short answer...Enlisted Engineers in marine safety billets, especially E-6 and below, are learning to be Marine Science Technicians (MSTs); not engineers. They are not honing their technical expertise in machinery plants (diesel, gas, steam, etc.) or in hull repairs (welding, NDT, fiberglass, wood, etc.). They are not learning the challenges of keeping a plant running to meet a critical mission; how to manage underway watches and routines when short-handed; the technical aspects of machinery, electricity, hydraulics, good engineering practices, etc. Finally, an engineer straight out of A school brings very little to our program but a brief brush with what being an engineer means only to be followed for the next four years with what it REALLY means to be an MST.

As a natural growth of being an MST, they gain a great understanding of the marine safety program, how to interpret and enforce the legal instruments governing marine safety, and are in fact, THE marine safety enlisted rating. They leverage this knowledge of the program further when they make MSSD. On the other hand, MSSEs are expected to bring the technical engineering expertise to the table; marine safety knowledge will follow in due time.

Our program needs MSSEs that have a very solid engineering background. Learning how to apply these skills to the marine safety program once becoming an MSSE is no doubt challenging. However, the far greater challenge than learning how to apply laws, regulations, and international agreements to the job is to truly be an engineering expert the day you put on the boards. The Marine Safety program can teach you to be a machinery inspector (MI) but, without the deck plate experience

gained only from sea duty and work in the small boat communities, it defies the odds that we can teach you to be an expert. Our subject matter experts (SMI) are not people who merely earn a qual at the entry level; they are people who bring their life experiences and Coast Guard technical training and expertise to the table. When they have coupled this expertise with marine safety experience; they truly become a much needed asset to marine safety and the Coast Guard. This is what industry and Congress have noted as lacking from our current program and what Admiral Allen and many others are dedicated to changing. As long as I am the MSS Specialty Force Manager, I will fight to ensure that we step up to the challenge, not meet lower expectations.

## **5) MST A School Corner**

Submitted by MSTCS Sorge

Greetings from the staff at MST "A" School. First, I'd like to thank MST1 Studie and MST1 Shipperley for their dedication and hard work while assigned to the "A" School staff. MST1 Studie is transferring to Sector San Francisco. MST1 Shipperley is taking time off to care for her newborn baby boy. Both of them have been a great asset to the school. Their knowledge and leadership will be missed. I wish both of them the best of luck in their futures.

The staff is gearing up for the increased student throughput for FY09. It has grown from 190 to 290 students. This number is a combination of both active duty and reserve. We will have 3 "A" School classes onboard at any given time. We are getting the third classroom ready throughout the next couple of months.

I'd like to get feedback from the field on the quality of recent MST "A" School graduates. If you have any comments, please let me know.

Enjoy your summer.

MSTCS Randy Sorge  
MST "A" School Chief

## **6) MST Non-Resident Information**

Submitted by MSTC McLoud, the MST1 and MST2 course writer in Yorktown.

### **NEW MST COURSE WRITER**

Hello all. My name is MSTC Kimberly McLoud and on June 1st I relieved MSTCS Sammons as the nonresident MST Course Writer. I am happy to be here and am eager to take on my new responsibilities. Please bear with me, as with all new jobs, there will be a bit of a learning curve on my part.

I came from District Eight in New Orleans where I was a Situation Duty Officer in the Command Center – which, in short, keeps the District Staff, Atlantic Area, and Headquarters apprised of significant Marine Safety activities happening in the District AOR. I have been in the Coast Guard for 16 years. My first tour out of A School was at MSO Chicago as a Boarding Officer, Facility Inspector, and Pollution Investigator. I then went on to the Atlantic Strike Team, where I eventually qualified as a Response Supervisor. After five years with the AST, I decided to leave my active duty life in the Coast Guard and went to work for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines as a Crises Management Specialist; I did, however stay in the Reserves. While in the Reserves I spent a year at MSO Providence implementing the new MTSA regulations and a year at REC New Orleans examining applications for Coast Guard licenses, documents, and STCW certificates. At that point I realized that I had spent two of the past four years on Active Duty and decided to integrate back into the Regular Coast Guard, which landed me in the District Command Center. I feel I have had a well rounded and colorful career, and am looking forward to adding a new line to my resume.

Once again, I am happy to be here and am ready to get to work. Please fill free to give me a call (or e-mail) if you have any questions or constructive comments. If I don't have the right answer for you, I will find it.

## 7) About the Weather

MSTCM Frank Prekel  
*Rating Training Master Chief*  
*Marine Science Technician School*  
*TRACEN Yorktown*

After nearly 13 years, weather has returned to the world of work of the Marine Science Technician.

In the past, The MST weather curriculum was driven by the need to provide a multi-altitude and destination flight briefing to aviators and to provide a complete synoptic observation every three hours. In those days, we focused on upper level isobaric analyses to report what was going to happen to the surface weather in the next 12, 24, 36 hours and to tell pilots where to watch for icing or clear-air-turbulences.

Today MSTs need practical weather to support of our missions and responsibilities when responding to events within the port. MSTs don't need the hard science that is meteorology we need the practical, direct and specific science of weather.

The access to weather data and competed analyses is easier now than ever before. In the day, we depended upon manually analyzed data that was transmitted by a wet-fax. A special communication connection and special fax paper – that had to dry before the printout was useful. And, any color enhancement to speed interpretation and presentation had to be done by hand by the recipient.

Today, with the internet and a moderate amount of knowledge, world class materials are available and, everything is already colored, too.

The scope of the new weather curriculum is limited to weather issues and effects within the continental United States. The material does not dive into the differences between the southern and northern hemispheres. Nor do we discuss the differences between weather forecasts and issues outside the mid-latitudes.

Below are the “working lesson objectives” for the previously promised weather materials that, due to personal and professional problems and complications, are arriving far later than originally promised. The final objectives will vary slightly but in only becoming more specific and precise. Work is underway on a self-paced written course that is being done on a “as space and time are available” basis as other as other training matters are being addressed.

The readings noted below are from ...

Weather for the Mariner

by William J. Kotsch, Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired),  
published 1983 by the Naval Institute Press  
(ISBN: 0-87021-756-9).

Also of value for reference and much less in price are ...

Golden Book of Weather,

by Paul Lehr, R. will Burnett and Harry McNaught ),  
published 2001 by the Golden Guides from St. Martin's Press  
(ISBN: 9-78158-238-1596)

and the

Weather Spotters Guide,

by Phillip Clark,  
published 2006, Osborn Spotters Guides from EDC Publishing  
(ISBN: 9-78079-451-3658).

All three books very good, but Weather for the Mariner blurs the lines between “practical Weather” and “the science of meteorology”, the book is a very good read and is entertaining at times but like any college professor the Admiral can get very long in the tooth about the topics that interest him.

The other two books are written in straight forward manner with multiple color drawings. These books cover everything an MST needs to know about weather with the exception of the purely CG issues about heavy weather, hurricanes and the policy that govern the service's role during such events.

### **Weather for the MST Outline**

## Unit 1 -- Climate and Seasons

Reading from Weather for the Mariner

- **Climate** – pages 48-49
- **Seasons** – pages 34 to 37

Lesson Objectives

- ❖ **LIST** the climatic zones present on the Northern Hemisphere.
- ❖ **IDENTIFY** the extents of the climatic zones present on the Northern Hemisphere.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the characteristics of the climatic zones present on the Northern Hemisphere.
- ❖ **STATE** the characteristics of the seasons that effect North America.
- ❖ **STATE** the cause of the seasons that effect North America.

## Unit 2 -- Air Masses

Reading from Weather for the Mariner

- pages 101 to 119
- Chapter 6

Lesson Objectives

- ❖ **LIST** the air masses that effect the Northern Hemisphere.
- ❖ **IDENTIFY** the source regions for the air masses that effect the Northern Hemisphere.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the characteristics of the air masses that effect the Northern Hemisphere.

## Unit 3 -- Air and Clouds

Reading from Weather for the Mariner

- pages 107 to 110

Lesson Objectives

- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the behavior of air in the atmosphere.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the effect on a parcel of air as it rises in the atmosphere.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the behavior of a parcel of warm air in the atmosphere.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the behavior of a parcel of cold air in the atmosphere.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the effect on a parcel of air as it encounters an inversion.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the behavior exhibited by a parcel of air that is described as being “*stable*”.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the behavior exhibited by a parcel of air that is described as being “*unstable*”.
- ❖ **STATE** the type of clouds created in stable air.
- ❖ **STATE** the type of clouds created in unstable air.

## Unit 4 -- Fronts

Reading from Weather for the Mariner

- Chapter 7

Lesson Objectives

- ❖ **STATE** the reason for the depiction of fronts on a weather map.
- ❖ **IDENTIFY** the symbol used to identify the following types of fronts:
  - Cold Front
  - Warm Front
  - Occluded Front
  - Stationary Front
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the vertical structure of the following types of fronts:



- Cold Front
  - Warm Front
  - Occluded Front
  - Stationary Front
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the weather that may be along the following types of fronts:
- Cold Front
  - Warm Front
  - Occluded Front
  - Stationary Front

## Unit 5 -- Pressure Centers

*Reading from Weather for the Mariner*

- Chapter 5

*Lesson Objectives*

- ❖ **STATE** the reason for the depiction of pressure centers on a weather map.
- ❖ **IDENTIFY** the symbol used to depict the following pressure centers:
- High
  - Low
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the air flow associated with the following pressure centers:
- High
  - Low
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the weather associated with the following pressure centers:
- High
  - Low

## Unit 6 -- Major Phenomenon

*Lesson Objectives*

- ❖ **DESCRIBE** what happens when an air mass undergoes orographic lifting.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the weather associated with lake effect snow.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the weather associated with land/sea breezes.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** what happens to local weather when a cyclonic wave forms.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the events that lead to the formation of a thunderstorm.
- ❖ **DESCRIBE** the nature of the weather associated with a hurricane.

## Unit 7 -- Data Sources

*Lesson Objective*

- ❖ Using commonly available sources of weather data, **DETERMINE** the effects of current and forecasted weather during a response operation.

If you have any questions or concerns about the new weather material give me a call (757-856-2101).

*MSTCM Frank Prekel*  
June 2, 2008



## **8) Attention Oil Samplers**

Submitted by LT Latarsha McQueen from the office of CG-5332

Here is a source for some additional training for shippers of HazMat (oil samples). Unit would only need to pay Peridium, no registration or course fees.



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Office of Hazardous  
Materials Enforcement  
Western Region

3401 Centrelake Dr., Ste.550B  
Ontario, CA 91761  
909 937-3279

**Pipeline and Hazardous  
Materials Safety Administration**

Greetings,

You are cordially invited to attend the 2008 Multimodal Hazmat Transportation Training Seminar June 24 & 25 in Las Vegas, NV. This training will enhance your knowledge of how hazardous materials can travel safely in transportation and the seminar is free to the public. Everyone involved in preparing or transporting hazardous materials should attend. Attendance at the last training seminar exceeded 500 participants. Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

Please note that most transportation incidents involving hazardous materials are the result of human error, and training is the best means of preventing these incidents. Training can heighten employee safety, increase employee skills and reduce incidents and accidents.

This Multimodal Training Seminar is designed to offer many breakout sessions that fully comply with federal training requirements. Some of the sessions include:

- How to Use the HMR
- Federal/State Inspection Programs
- Legal and Regulatory Developments
- Training Requirements
- Package Selection, Marking and Labeling Requirements

You will also get an opportunity to speak with federal regulators and receive updated information on current issues. Federal officials from Washington, DC and regional areas will be on hand to address your questions concerning issues you may want to discuss, but you must be present to ask.

We look forward to your attendance and participation at the Multimodal Hazmat Transportation Training Seminar. For registration and additional breakout information sessions offered, please refer to our website: <http://hazmat.dot.gov/training/training.htm> or call this office at (909) 937-7222.

Billy C. Hines, Jr.  
Acting Chief, Western Region

This link will provides some additional dates (they are coming to Boston in August) and some additional courses.

<http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/portal/site/PHMSA/menuitem.7c371785a639f2e55cf2031050248a0c/?vgnextoid=e95d08ae2db83110VgnVCM1000009ed07898RCRD&vgnnextchannel=e95d08ae2db83110VgnVCM1000009ed07898RCRD&vgnnextfmt=print>

## **9) The NUMBERS: (as of May 2008)**

**Regular:**

<b>RANK</b>	<b>Allowed</b>	<b>Onboard</b>	<b>Delta</b>
<b>MSTCM</b>	8	10	2
<b>MSTCS</b>	21	21	0
<b>MSTC</b>	136	140	+4
<b>MST1</b>	250	254	+4
<b>MST2</b>	294	290	-4
<b>MST3</b>	347	377	+30
<b>Total</b>	<b>1056</b>	<b>1092</b>	<b>+36</b>

**Reserve: As of 30APR2008**

<b>RANK</b>	<b>Allowed</b>	<b>Onboard</b>	<b>Delta</b>
<b>MSTCM</b>	6	9	3
<b>MSTCS</b>	12	16	4
<b>MSTC</b>	68	65	-3
<b>MST1</b>	177	90	-87
<b>MST2</b>	238	205	-33
<b>MST3</b>	146	179	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>-83</b>

**Retirements (As of May 2008):**

Retirement	MSTC	05/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	07/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	07/01/2008
Retirement	MST1	08/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	08/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	08/01/2008

Retirement	MSTC	08/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	09/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	09/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	09/01/2008
Retirement	MST1	10/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	10/01/2008
Retirement	MSTCM	10/01/2008
Retirement	MST1	11/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	11/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	11/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	12/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	12/01/2008
Retirement	MSTCS	12/01/2008
Retirement	MSTCM	12/01/2008
Retirement	MSTC	06/01/2009

*\*Note: 2 of the MSTCM retirements are members out of rate so no advancements within the MST Rating will occur upon their retirement; the 05/01/2009 is in rating.*

These are active Duty retirements only. I know of no one whom tracks future retirements for Reservists (trust me though I have been asking PSC and RPM).

## 10) Unit Profile

Submitted by MST2 Sienna Allison

Greetings from

**The National Response Center**

Report Oil Spills, Chemical Releases, & Maritime Security Incidents to  
1(800) 424-8802 or [www.nrc.uscg.mil](http://www.nrc.uscg.mil)

The National Response Center (NRC) is one of the many unique duty stations that the Coast Guard has to offer. The NRC was created in 1971, when the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA) mandated the development of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP).

The NRC is a national asset serving as the sole federal point of contact for reporting all oil, chemical, radiological, etiological and biological discharges into the environment anywhere in the US and its territories. Operating both the Americas Waterway Watch and the Federal Railroad Administration hotlines, the NRC also acts as the communications and operations center for the National Response Team (NRT).

As an integral part of National Response System, watch standers are available to take reports of incidents 24 hour a day, 7

days a week.

The NRC is located on the second deck of the Coast Guard Headquarters Building (CGHQ), in Washington, D.C. It is staffed by a civilian Director, 2 Officers, 11 Enlisted MST's, and 8 civilian contractors. The job of the MST's is to serve as NRC duty officers. Most come directly from class 'A' school, but there are billets available for a MSTC and MST1.

Even though the center is housed in CGHQ, it differs from most CG units since it receives a bulk of its funding from the 16 federal agencies that make up the NRT. With that being said, members stationed here also have the added benefit of being able to travel and attend many federal and state conferences on behalf of the NRC.

"When we have our booth set up at the conferences, we are not promoting the CG; we are there on behalf of the NRT and are just trying to encourage the public and private sectors to report to us by educating and informing them of our missions." Said the NRC's Senior Watch Officer, MSTC Jeff Brown.

Along with having the unique experience of being stationed at the NRC, members also get to enjoy everything that working and living in the DC metropolitan area has to offer. Washington is home to professional basketball, baseball, hockey and soccer teams. There is no shortage of famous sights and free attractions, including the Smithsonian Museums and the National Zoo. While living in the Washington, DC area, it is difficult to find a weekend that isn't complete with a parade, festival or celebration of some kind.

**Housing:** The cost of living can be high and personnel stationed at the NRC live on the economy. Usually, members elect to live outside Washington, D.C. in either the Virginia or Maryland suburbs, where rent is cheaper. In addition, Coast Guard personnel are authorized to apply for Army housing at both Ft. Meade in Central Maryland and Ft. Belvoir in Northern Virginia

**Education:** There is no shortage of educational opportunities in the area. The DC area is home to over 17 four year universities, such as Georgetown University, and numerous two year and technical colleges that offer a variety of degree paths. In addition, personnel are encouraged to seek additional training when available

**Facilities:** The CGHQ's building is equipped with a gym, child day care center, chapel, lactation room, an exchange, MWR resources, and a medical and dental clinic, just to name a few. There are also excellent commissaries, exchanges, and medical facilities on the numerous DOD facilities located in the Washington/Baltimore metropolitan area

**Weather:** Living in the DC area gives you the opportunity to experience four distinct seasons. Summer tends to be hot and humid with daily high temperatures in the high 80s° to mid 90s. Spring and fall are mild with high temperatures in the 60s. Winter brings cool temperatures and occasional snowfall. Average highs tend to be in the 40s and

## 11) Final Notes:

In the very near future you will see an ALGENL Msg go out inviting interested and qualified members the opportunity to lateral to the MST rating. This is the result of an initiative several of the RFMCs and I have been working on over the last year. The goal was to make sure the work members are performing on a day-to-day basis was in line with their respective ratings. We identified billets that were performing Facility Inspections, Pollution Investigations, and Port State Control as their primary duties. We were able to get 87 billets reprogrammed to MST, so our hope is to have 87 qualified individuals who are interested in lateraling to MST to fill these jobs (many of those that will be qualified are probably assigned to those 87 billets). I want to assure you that this will have no negative impact on MST advancements. I also want to assure you that those selected will be fully qualified to perform the duties expected of the pay grade they are selected to lateral at (example: A BM1 who laterals will be qualified to perform the duties expected of an MST1). I have approved many (many, many) laterals and oftentimes the packages I see from these individuals have more "M" qualifications and more time at Sectors, MSU, MSD, and MSOs than I do.

Another initiative I've been a part of is the Law Enforcement, Tactical, and Security Group Occupation (LETSGO) Study that was stood up by the Chief of Staff in April 2007. The purpose of the workgroup was to analyze and make recommendations regarding human resource requirements and the appropriate workforce structure necessary to execute Coast Guard Law Enforcement and Security missions (not MTSA facility security) in current and projected operational environments. In other words, does the

Coast Guard need an LE rating? In my next Force Notes I will address the Chief of Staff's decision to approve the LETSGO workgroup recommendation to create an active duty/reserve "Law Enforcement and Security" rating.

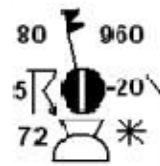
Last but not least, this goes out to all our reserves; the SWE is coming quick and you only have until 01 July get everything complete. For you MST3s this will probably be the last SWE that the MST2 EOCT test will be waived. For you MST2s we are still running off a supplemental list so advance now while the opportunity is there.

## **12) Old School MST:**

### ***OLD SCHOOL WEATHER KNOWLEDGE***

*For more information: MSTC Jeff Estes Air Station Kodiak*

**"There's no such thing  
as bad weather, only  
different kinds of  
good weather."  
John Ruskin 1819 - 1900**



Easy...which kills more people every year?

- a) Lightning
- b) Floods
- c) Tornadoes
- d) Hurricanes

Hard...Which type of cloud produces lightning?

- a) Altostratus
- b) Cumulonimbus
- c) Cirrocumulus
- d) Nimbus

### **Answers from previous Notes:**

*Why is the Sky blue?*

**Easy, Hard Question:** The long answer has to do with the "electromagnetic spectrum." References listed below. The answer I was looking for was looking for was **Rayleigh scattering**.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rayleigh\\_scattering](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rayleigh_scattering)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electromagnetic\\_spectrum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electromagnetic_spectrum)

The lack of sunlight produces darkness and the color black. At night, the sky will be black. The color that is in the sky at night is due to city lights and other manmade lights that can light up clouds and the horizon.

During cloudy skies the color of the sky will be a white color or a shade of gray. The thicker the clouds the grayer it will be. Light is made up on the colors of the rainbow. When the colors are put together it produces white. This is why clouds are often white.

When the skies are partly cloudy you will see both the colors white and blue in the sky. The white is from the reflection of the visible light off the clouds. The sky is blue because it is the blue light that is reflected or scattered best by the air. This scattering produces blue light coming from all directions, thus the sky will appear blue.

You have probably seen a rainbow. In that case all the colors are shown like light going through a prism. The colors are ROYGBIV (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet). Raindrops in the air act like prism. Raindrops are much bigger than cloud drops and the raindrops are often making it all the way to the ground while the clouds are higher up. The huge number of raindrops each act like a prism and when all put together produce the rainbow. The sun needs to be near the horizon and rain falling on the opposite side of the sky from where the sun is in order to see a rainbow. It is these conditions that produce the rainbow effect.

At times the sky will appear red and orange. This can occur when there is dust in the sky. It can also occur when the sun is close to the horizon. When the sun is close to the horizon the sunlight must travel through a greater distance of the atmosphere and this gives enough time for the red light to scatter out. Dust can make the sky appear red since the color of the dust itself is a reddish color and red light is scattered off the dust especially as the sun gets closer to the horizon. Sunlight near the horizon will also make nearby clouds a shade of red, orange and violet.

At other times these colors below can be seen:

Green: A storm with hail and very heavy rain can scatter greens, red and purples to make the storm look very threatening

White: The sky can be white even with no clouds during the day at times there is smog or smoke in the air

Shades of gray: In partly cloudy conditions or with developing thunderstorms, different portions of the clouds will be different shades of white, gray or black. Where the sun is directly shining on a cloud will be bright white. The shadowed portions of clouds will appear as shades of gray. Very thick clouds can appear black on the shaded side.

Each time you are outside, look at the colors in the sky and think about what is causing the colors.

### **13) Points of Contact:**

Most of these names and numbers are already known, but just in case I am going to add points of contact (that pertain to MST) as part of my Force Notes. Also if there is a hyperlink that is also included:

**MST RFMC:**

MSTCM R. Shane Hooker (202)372-1342

[CG Central: My Workspace](#) > [Career Management](#) > [Enlisted](#) > [My Ratings](#) > Marine Science Technician (MST)

[MST Rating](#)

**MST Detailer:** MSSD3 W. "Bill" Dodson (202)493-1281  
[http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgPC/epm/epm-2/AO\\_Pages/mstao.html](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgPC/epm/epm-2/AO_Pages/mstao.html)

**MST Rating Training/ SWE Writer:** MSTCM Frank Prekel (757)856-2101

**MST1 and 2 Course Writer:** MSTC Kim McLoud (757)856-2074  
<http://www.uscg.mil/tcyorktown/mSchools/MST/courses.shtm>

**MST "A" School Chief:** MSTCS Randy Sorge (757)856-2045

**MST "A" Assistant School Chief:** MSTC Tony McDade (757)856-2083

[MST "A" School Link](#)

**MST Hub Manager:** MSTC Joseph Dentry (612)752-1871

<http://www.msthub.com/>