

Commandant's LEAD Council – June 2012 – Unfiltered Field Input

1. **Inclusion Proficiency in OERs and Cross-Exposure Index:** Although inclusion is already encouraged in the Coast Guard, one area for improvement would be to evaluate members in this aptitude. Areas where the valuation of inclusion proficiency could be implemented include: Evaluation Forms; Officer Accessions, Evaluations, and Promotions Manual Section 6.A.3.b.; and Commandant's Guidance to Selection Boards and Panels. All of these documents must clearly state the importance of inclusion proficiency & work in harmony. As an example, within the OER there must be more emphasis on individuals to provide specific positive actions that support activities and initiatives that further the Coast Guard's Diversity Strategic Plan. Additionally, at the core of evaluating inclusion proficiency is a "Cross-Exposure Index," or CEI. CEI is a measure of an individual's proficiency at working together with groups other than those with which they identify. For example, the CEI would measure not how many women attended a women's leadership symposium, but rather how many men attended a women's leadership symposium, or how many African-Americans attended an Asian/Pacific Islander Conference, or how many male supervisors empowered a female to attend a women's leadership conference, etc. While it is extremely beneficial to increase and measure participation at diversity events, we should also capture the CEI, because this enhances a larger breadth of relationships and improves retention. This is not meant to "abandon" your own individual groups, but it *would* mean leveraging your experiences across multiple groups to achieve the highest possible level of leadership, professional development, performance and efficiency.
2. **Online leadership seminars:** The use of online leadership seminars is gaining in popularity. One such example is an online broadcast webinar called "LEADERCAST" which is broadcast into a room full of attendees and a local speaker is also in attendance. However, a bulk of the training is from leaders assembled in Atlanta and broadcast around the world. Has this type of leadership training ever been considered for the Coast Guard or could we use the same <http://www.chick-fil-leadercast.com>?
3. **Weight Standards Bias:** Rough separation data suggests there is a relationship between Maximum Allowable Weight (MAW) discharge and gender. It appears that based on the population sample females are discharged at a rate higher than would be expected. Specifically, during the time period of the data the expected number of discharges for females was N=48 and the actual number was N=79. Further, with respect to gender and race there appears to be a significant disparity between discharges for MAW within the African American female population and the expected discharges for MAW within the African American female population $N \leq 1$ and the actual number of MAW discharges N=8. A couple of simple hypotheses for these outcomes include: 1) males are more successful at meeting MAW probationary requirements and lose weight and/or body fat at a higher rate than females; 2) Females are less successful at meeting probationary requirements and do not lose weight and /or body fat as well as males; 3) females are unfairly discharged with respect to MAW requirements. At the very least it is requested that more information and data workable to hypothesis be developed. The data certainly appears to warrant more comprehensive analysis. (Data for discharges and gender/race were provided to a CG health promotion specialist for analysis.)

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4. **Work Hour Equity**: There is a perception that civilian employee working hours are not accurately tracked and that some civilian employees may be taking advantage of this and working less than required. As a solution, could time clocks be required for all civilian employees at Coast Guard units?
5. **Review of Women in the Coast Guard study Recommendations Review**: A Women in the Coast Guard study was conducted in 1990 with various recommendations and data points to monitor. It is requested that the LEAD council review the 1990 recommendations and determine whether a current analysis of the recommendations is warranted. This study should be accessible and highlight current status from the 1990 recommendations and any improvements made over the past 20+ years. In particular, it is requested the LEAD council update the review on any units that cannot accommodate women due to berthing, head, privacy, or isolation issues and recommend future remedies.
6. **Auxiliary access to CAC controlled CG systems and AMLOC course mentoring module**: The AMLOC (Auxiliary Mid-Level Officer Course) is the leadership course right above AUXLAMs. Within that course, the coaching and mentoring module is the weakest portion, and could use some great improvement. There was also mention of an online portion available on the CG Portal, however Auxiliary members cannot access the Portal. Is there any knowledge of when if at all it and other training/resources for the Coast Guard can be accessed without a CAC card? Can the AMLOC be improved?
7. **Auxiliary Qualifications/positions**: At the Flotilla level much dissatisfaction erupts from the time and complexity imposed by the District in completing many of the normal certifications necessary to initiate or continue the Flotilla's duties. It usually takes weeks and months to receive approval of certifications for Vessel Examiner, Instructor, facility and numerous other approvals such as educational achievements leading to AuxOp. These activities are certified based on forms completion not on personal examination by the District. Little of substance is resolved in the current process, just more delays. Frequently there are disapprovals based not on the facts but on the completion of details on the forms. Resolution of these could be accomplished at the Division level by Division officers minimizing the time between completion of the requirements and approval. The time needed to correct errors or inconsistencies would be resolved in hours and days with explanations and corrections coming quickly. Getting these certifications completed quickly would improve the process and morale. Shortening the time between completion of the tasks and the rewards is a tenet of reinforcing good work. It is requested that the LEAD Council investigate the qualification process involving the District role. Should the Council find that the Division is not an authentic operator to execute these tasks, it would be more efficient to flatten the organization with the Flotilla dealing directly with the District eliminating two levels of hierarchy.
8. **Auxiliary Command Climate/Trust & Receipts**: An increasing number of bureaucratic actions which are demonstrations of lack of trust of subordinates have been observed. For example, in the 5th District, Southern Region, members are now required to submit

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receipts with all vouchers; there is no longer an “under \$25” exemption, nor is a statement in lieu of receipt authorized. In addition, members must submit the completed patrol order and the Form 7030 to “prove that we were actually on patrol.” Members were told that this is due to someone, someplace, submitting false vouchers. This appears to be an across the Auxiliary action generated by the finance center. It is poor leadership to paint all members of an organization with the same brush. When one causes a problem, take appropriate action against that person; do not assume that all the others cannot be trusted.

9. **LAMS Requirement for Auxiliary Members**: As LAMS is a requirement for the active duty, it should also be one for the Auxiliary. The lessons learned are applicable in the Auxiliary, in the family, in the workplace, and in other volunteer organizations. Also as many of the active duty members that the Auxiliary work with have had the course it would be good for the Auxiliarists to have the language and the same knowledge base of this leadership course as their active duty counterparts.
10. **DEOMI's Diversity Assessment**: The DEOMI Diversity Assessment would be a good tool for CG units/members to use.
11. **Auxiliary Training/Qualification Issues**: Currently, an Auxiliarist has to be a member for only one year to be eligible to run for elected office. One year is NOT enough time to learn about the Auxiliary and become an effective leader. It is suggested changing the minimum time requirement to run for elected office to three years. Currently, there are no leadership training requirements to become a Flotilla or Division Staff Officer. Flotilla Leadership Course (FLC) should be a prerequisite for any appointed position. If this is implemented, the FLC needs to be offered once per quarter so that members will have ample opportunity to attend. After completing the FLC, a suggestion would be to add situational role playing for problem solving to FLC and a quiz/test. Currently, if you can stay awake, you "pass" the course. Just because you are in the room doesn't mean you learned anything.
12. **LDAC Establishment**: It appears that at higher levels the LDAC structure has been established, however these higher levels of LDACs are not reaching down to the field level commands to provide guidance on LDAC establishment.
13. **Temporary Separation with Obligated Service**: Currently members are not allowed to participate in the Temporary Separation policy if they have obligated service. Temporary Separation should be adjusted to allow members with obligated service to leave, but be required to come back. This would allow members more flexibility on when to leave the service in order to start families or pursue other opportunities.
14. **Career Intent Survey**: It seems that we currently conduct exit surveys sporadically to determine why people leave. As an alternative, it is recommended that we conduct career intent surveys potentially six months prior to reenlistment for enlisted members and/or promotion points for officers. This would allow us to have a picture of what was going on before we lose good people and know what is going right to already keep good people.

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15. **Paternity Leave:** Maternity leave is currently listed as convalescent leave to recover from birth, but instead should be considered more bonding time with a new child and adjusting to a new lifestyle. As such the six weeks should be paternity leave and available to both members. This also makes the family a Service concern not just a female issue and allows intra-service couples to better manage both careers with the coming of a new baby.
16. **Weight Standards:** It is currently unclear as to the reasoning behind having weight standards. It appears standards are obviously not health related as they allow people to be what is considered overweight by health standards. They also are not really appearance based as it does not matter how you look in uniform, just what the scale says. A better indication of good performance, improved stamina and ability to get mission accomplished is health. Twice a year many of our shipmates take unhealthy extreme measures to stay within standards. Some of these members are physically fit, but not within the right numbers. It would be helpful for the weight standards reason for existing to be better defined and explained to the greater Coast Guard.
17. **Inadequate use of Reserves:** It is difficult for Active Duty members to manage Reservists that come in once a month during weekends when the Active Duty are typically not in the office. Often Reservists are given not important projects and or minimal tasking but GMT. There were some positive outcomes to complete Reserve Force integration, but also some negatives in that the Reserves are not all utilized to their full potential. Would it be possible to track Reserve civilian sector specialties and/or evaluate the success of Reserve integration vs having independent Reserve units?
18. **The Current Assignment Process for afloat billets does not allow women the same opportunities as men due to limited berthing/rack assignments:** During a regular transfer process a female has to narrow choices to billets open according to rank/rate (same as males,) and then has to ensure that the billet will allow adequate berthing for her to apply for the assignment. This drastically reduces the billet choices while completing a shopping list. Once the assignment process commences, a female in the same transfer priority would then be left with what racks need females filled, as opposed to what berthing rooms can be emptied to fill females with. By assigning all females first within their respected priority, it would allow more females billets that would not normally be available / harder to receive (i.e. Patrol Boats, 65's and off season afloat assignments.) This will help keep females in the operational ratings (Boatswains Mates and Machinery Technicians) as well as Food Services Technicians well rounded and experienced in all aspects as well as providing more leadership experiences for lower ranking females. Currently in the fleet, of the 41 WPB-110's only 5 (12%) of them are mix gender crews, and of the 73 WPB-87's only 36 (49%) of them are mix gender crews, making only 35% of the Patrol Boats offering room for females with the current assignment process.
19. **The Coast Guard lacks any Post Partum Guidance, awareness or policies to help members recover:** Providing Command Awareness training would allow senior leadership the tools that they need to help members when experiencing this dramatic

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recovery, as well as warning signs of things to look for to help early detect this. Also, having a medical staff that is knowledgeable in Post Partum Depression would help members know the warning signs and actions to take when they see those warning signs before the birth of their child. Due to the fact that Post Partum Depression is a difficult illness to deal with as a Coast Guard member, and with no clear guidance on actions to take and who to speak with, this process becomes harder for the member to resolve issue and for commands to provide guidance and assistance. All hands are trained for Suicide Prevention Annually, however most do not have any awareness or knowledge on the illness besides the things they hear or the tragic news they watch. The “Pregnancy in the Coast Guard Manual” COMDINST 1000.9 offers the advice for premature termination or stillbirth that it shall be “Treated with a Command Climate of concerned leadership. This will be essential in helping service members impacted by the traumatic event. The unique circumstances of each situation dictate that the decision concerning when a particular service member is physically and emotionally ready to return to a duty status will be made on a case by case basis.” Having guidance for Post Partum Depression would provide commands a starting point to assist the member in receiving the help they need.

20. **Operational females often struggle with the “correct” time to have a child, whether at a small boat station or a cutter, there is no “right” time to become pregnant. More frequent than not, women are looked down upon for becoming pregnant no matter what unit they are assigned to:** In 1918 the first women were enlisted into the Coast Guard, however since the beginning of time women have been having children. COMDINST 1000.9 Chapter 7 Section B states that a member shall, “Plan her pregnancy to allow her to meet both her military and family obligations.” However at most units, a woman in an operational rating (Boatswains Mate or Machinery Technician), is looked down upon for becoming pregnant and is often titled with “getting pregnant to get out of working/qualifications/underway etc.” Whether that member is assigned to a sea going cutter or a small boat station there is often negativity towards that member. This may seem hard to believe, however hearing from eight women, from eight different units (most of which were small boat stations as well) they all have mentioned about hard times with the Command/Crew during their pregnancies. COMDINST 1000.9 (the Coast Guard Pregnancy Manual) Chapter 7 section B also states that the Commanding Officer / Officer in Charge’s are responsible for providing informal counseling including worldwide assignment, and member’s responsibilities, military entitlements to maternity care while on active duty, and the limited medical benefits to the service member if that members is separated from the Coast Guard. From my experience this counseling is not happening. Counseling should be formal and be documented by command for the members protection, that way all pregnant members will know their rights, entitlements and responsibilities. Besides from the member receiving an informal counseling, the Command and Crew should receive an informal counseling as well, to help all hands understand what a woman will experience in 9 months of carrying a child, as well as the 42 days of Maternity leave she is eligible for. Sensitivity training by the Command would help crews to understand that pregnancy is not a shameful thing, nor is it an excuse to get out of working. I am unable to list the amount of times I heard phrases such as “Must be nice to go home every night/have every weekend off,” “Must be nice to not

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have to do anything just because you are pregnant,” “I wish I could be pregnant and not have to do anything too,” not only said to myself, but to other members as well. Having a Zero Tolerance Policy for negativity for pregnant members would help change this.

21. **Having one Woman Afloat Coordinator for the entire Coast Guard keeps that member busy year round and may not allow her to have enough time throughout the assignment process to speak with every female who needs guidance, nor can she travel with the AO Road shows to speak directly to members:** With Roughly 14% (approximately 4,439) of the Coast Guard being made up of women, and 15% (approximately 698) of the Enlisted women being underway there needs to exist better coordination between members and the Women's Afloat Coordinator. By adding an extra billet for the Women's Afloat Coordinator, it would allow all members to have more time to contact and receive Career Counseling. Also, by having two Coordinators they would be able to travel on the Assignment Road Shows and be able to actually sit down and speak with women who have questions about going afloat, going ashore or the assignment process in general.

22. **By using Sea Time for advancement requirements and added bonus' for overall scores on the SWE, it does not factor in women who have had children and recovered, therefore losing a year of sea time alone, compared to her male counterparts:** When a member becomes pregnant while in an afloat billet, she is removed from her billet and placed ashore for the safety of herself and her unborn child. However while she is ashore for her pregnancy/recovery she loses almost a year of sea time that her male counter parts are receiving. A year of sea time when taking the service wide is a lot of affect on placement on an advancement list, as well as equal advancement opportunities and experience. As a male, if you miss a patrol, your sea time/pay stops after 29 days of the cutter being at sea and you not being aboard. So hypothetically, you could receive two months of sea time while your cutter is in port, have your cutter leave for a two month patrol while you stay behind to care for your family, your sea time would stop at the 29th day, and 31 days later the boat pulls back into homeport for a 2 month inport, which your sea time would start back up again. So during that time period a male member received 5 months of Sea Time, compared to a pregnant female who would miss a patrol, and would receive no sea time. With the understanding for safety of why a pregnant female cannot be on a cutter, why should women have sea time held against them for advancement if they cannot receive it simply for having a family?

23. **While the Coast Guard Policy requires one member afloat, and one member ashore when married member to member, it does not offer guidance for members who would be required to stand duty, while their spouse is underway. This proves to be difficult while raising children:** COMDTINST M1000.8 1.A.7 states that “The Coast Guard does not assign members married to Coast Guard members to simultaneous shipboard duty unless they volunteer for it and acknowledge in writing their awareness they potentially may lose their BAH.” With a member to member marriage and one member afloat, that leaves the member ashore responsible for the household (i.e. children.) However it seems that when assigned to an ashore unit that requires standing duty, that member often struggles with the raising of their children due to a requirement

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to stand duty as a “temporary single parent” causing unnecessary stress on households with trying to find and afford over night child care, or having to send the child off to be raised by family members/close friends. Having a clear policy to protect the shore based members would give commands guidance for these types of situations that happen frequently.

24. **Due to the low number of women in the Coast Guard, it does not allow much interaction for the junior ranking to see senior ranking female members and the accomplishments they have made:** Due to the low amount of women in the Coast Guard, there seems to be a hard time finding senior females (officer and enlisted) for women to look up to. It is proposed that a Women's Symposium for Sectors and Districts, which allows all types of women on Active and Reserve to meet to discuss common issues and find resolutions. It is recommended that this is completed without uniforms so that junior personnel will be encouraged to speak with senior personnel with no fear of rank becoming an issue, as well as speaking their minds (since junior personnel rarely speak up in front of senior personnel.) This will allow the senior personnel to listen and understand what is going on inside of the fleet, as well as allowing the junior personnel to meet and possibly find a mentor to assist them with questions and provide guidance.
25. **Junior Enlisted Leadership opportunities:** Junior Enlisted Leadership opportunities outside of LAMS are few and far between. Is Coast Guard leadership looking at developing additional formal leadership training?
26. **Timelines for HQ Guidance:** Policies, directives, Commandant Instructions, etc. take too long at headquarters and don't go out to the fleet/field in a manner that makes it easy for everyone to be updated on new policies. In addition, those that do exist are hard to find or based on emails, old message traffic, or word of mouth. This makes working in the field extremely difficult.
27. **Formal Coast Guard Training:** There seems to be a lack of formal training at all levels, ranks, rates, and jobs within the Coast Guard. Formal training needed for qualification, certification, and expertise has been pushed aside as money grows tight and missions continue to be added to the service. In the last 10 years, a focus on security has made other legacy missions suffer.
28. **Sector Staffing Model:** Release the Sector Staffing Model or throw it away. We can't continue to tell people that they have to live by a document that hasn't been approved, signed, or promulgated.
29. **Work Life Stigma:** One of the challenges with Work Life programs is the stigma that is associated with a member asking for help, whether it is related to financial problems, issues with relationships or other life challenges. It is especially problematic if these requests involve issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault, and mental health. Rather than focusing on someone's need for help, assisting them, and trying to restore them back to a productive and healthy state, some supervisors/leaders

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assume that the member is now "damaged goods" and look for the quickest way to either pass "the problem" on to someone else, or otherwise get rid of the member (e.g., discharge.) This is not exclusively an active duty phenomenon; anecdotal evidence suggests many civilian employees don't "trust" the system to get help either. While a smaller part of our culture now than it used to be, the fear of retribution and/or "career fear" still exists in the Coast Guard. Does the LEAD Council have any thoughts/suggestions on how we can change this culture and better serve our members?

30. **Children of LGB Couples:** Laws will have to change for partners of LGB to have equal rights as a dependant/spouse, but there is a concern, currently, about a partner's ability to get medical care for shared children within the military medical system. Last week a Coast Guard member and her partner were turned away from DEERS at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Bethesda when they tried to enter the partner as a parent. The Coast Guard member was then told by patient admin that she would have to have a power of attorney drafted to make care of child official. How many parents need to carry around power of attorney for their own children? This particular couple has adoption paperwork decreeing that they are both officially parents. They further have birth certificates issued by the state of Maryland listing both the Coast Guard member and the partner. Can something be done to ensure children get medical care and member does not have to operate as a single parent when it comes to medical issues?