

THE WAVE

The Captain's Corner

Establishing goals and measuring performance is critical for any organization to succeed. For goals and measures to be useful, they must be built using input from the customers, be linked to the organization's mission, and be used by managers to improve performance. Organizations that develop goals without customer input are shooting in the dark. Goals not linked to a unit's mission may be driving the wrong behavior. Moreover, performance information that is not used by management is nothing more than a wasted effort in collecting data.

The mission of the new NMC is to issue credentials to fully qualified mariners in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Simply put, that is our core purpose, the reason we exist. Our customers have told us that they want an effective program that prevents bad things from happening in the maritime environment, including accidents, security incidents, pollution, and delays in maritime commerce. Our customers have told us that they want an efficient program that produces credentials in a timely manner at low cost. And our customers have told us that they want a quality program that produces consistent results.

To ensure we accomplish our mission and satisfy our customers, I've established some broad performance goals for the National Maritime Center. These goals will help influence our outcomes, our products and services, and our activities. Our broad performance goals include:

Mission Outcomes

- Improve customer service
- Reduce marine casualties
- Reduce deaths and injuries resulting from vessel operations
- Reduce pollution resulting from vessel operations
- Increase credential application throughput
- Increase course oversight throughput
- Ensure compliance with approved course curriculum

Activities

- Reduce credential processing time
- Decrease active application inventory
- Ensure credential evaluation accuracy
- Reduce operating expenses

Mission readiness

- Ensure strong workplace climate
- Ensure sufficient staffing
- Ensure sufficient training
- Ensure sufficient support (infrastructure, funding,

equipment)

As we establish current performance baselines for these goals, we will develop annual performance targets for each of these goals. Our targets will be SMART targets; Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and within a stated Timeframe. Most importantly, they will measure progress to motivate, illuminate, communicate, and unleash the power of goals and measures.

David C. Stalfort
 Captain, U. S. Coast Guard
 Commanding Officer



Building Updates

This week's building update comes direct to you from GSA. "The pre-cast exterior wall panels are nearing completion. The concrete slabs for all 3 floors were poured the week of July 23rd, starting from top to bottom. Main lines for the sprinkler system are being installed. The Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) system is underway for the entire building, and the activity of installing interior wall framing for the 3rd floor has begun."

Staffing Updates

NMC-1 Supervisory Program Analyst
 GS 13/14, Closing: August 10th

NMC-5 Legal Instruments Examiner (PQE)
 GS 8/9, Closing: August 15th

See USA Jobs <http://www.usajobs.gov/>
 Search: Homeland Security, US Coast Guard

NMC staffing - 59% of full strength

OFCOs Signed

The much anticipated signing of the first two Operating Facility Change Orders (OFCO) is done. In ten days, the NMC will be divested of the NVDC, MSC and MSL, and the official move to West Virginia will also be effective upon occupancy of the new building. The next step is to submit an OFCO for the transition of the RECs to NMC responsibility, which is expected to include all 17 RECs in a single document.

The Clean Application

Help mariners help themselves to a better processing time! In an effort to encourage mariners to pay attention to the detail and accuracy of their applications, several RECs have begun posting the application time of “clean applications” along side the average waiting time. A clean application is one that has been filled out completely, correctly and has no issues of a security or medical variety.

From the Field Tracker

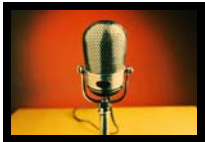
In a week’s time we have gone from a handful of questions to well over 50. As senior staff begins to sort through this robust response, we’d like to share with you the range of issues addressed. (See pages 3 - 5.)

Questions on restructuring and implementation may be sent to Christina.L.Nohre@uscg.mil.

We encourage questions from all REC Chiefs!

“Companies don’t need management stars or heroes to thrive. What they absolutely do need is an effective system for getting and implementing ideas from the people who do the work.”

~ Martin Edelston, CEO, Boardroom, Inc.



COMMENTS FROM THE RECs

Getting to Know You

“People cannot put a face or a name on a person at the NMC, or else they have not spoken with them, if even on the phone. I think a “live” teleconference with all the NMC people present and have the REC people sit in, or at least the department chiefs and team leaders, and it would go a long way for the lower ranking individuals working at the RECs to get to know and trust more.”

“Bring the SIP’s and ASIP’s in [to West Virginia] IN SMALL NUMBERS (vice all of them at once) and really show them our processes here. If the SIP’s and ASIP’s were to come in small groups and spend more than a cursory walk around the facility, and while they are here have a sit down with some of us, it may grease the skids in making the transition process go faster.”

“What’s their new security screening process (in WV)? Where challenges are they encountering? It would be great if we could work together instead of just throwing files ‘over the wall.’ We could create centers of excellence to share knowledge and improve together.”

Take Advantage of Existing Expertise

“Ask for input before/during drafting of new policies and procedures. . . The field has hundreds of years of collective experience dealing w/ mariners and applying/interpreting regulations. Yet HQ (or NMC) drafts and publishes policies and procedures that the REC or the mariner is unable to understand/execute. If there are laws/regulations/\$\$ constraints tell us that up front, so we don’t tell you the solution is a BMW when the budget is a Chevy. If we know it is a Chevy we can suggest how to build the best Chevy.”

FROM THE FIELD TRACKER: QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Regulations...

1. When will the re-write of 46CFR, parts 10, 12, 13, 15 & 16 be complete?
2. What is the current status of the regulation re-write project and when will field units get to review and make comment?
3. When will the USCG implement STCW training & assessment programs for:
 - a. Master 500/1600
 - b. Master/Mate Towing
 - c. All licensed engineers
 - d. Master/Mate less than 200 GRT making international voyages?
4. What is the status of draft Medical NVIC?
5. With the complexity of the regulations, the difficulty in changing the regulations, and the significant time required to change regulations, how can the R&C project be successful in the short-term? Consistency is a critical goal to achieve for project success. However, consistency is highly dependent on simplification of the rules.
6. What can be done to speed up regulation changes?
7. Can the agency obtain temporary relief outside the normal regulation approval process for more flexibility?
8. Is there any other agency that has been successful in significant regulation change to benchmark from?

Technology...

9. When will mariners be able to make application on-line?
10. Is the "Turbo-Tax" concept seriously being considered? If yes, when will testing or development begin?
11. When will REC exam rooms be automated to include on-line testing? Has initial development started?
12. How much money does MMLD cost the MLD program / CG annually? Are we getting good return for the investment being made?
13. Is MMLD the database platform for the future, and is it capable of meeting the future needs of the program?
14. Will CG investigators and special agents have read-only access into MMLD?
15. Will MMLD be linked to MISLE to view IO shop case info?
16. In the future, will mariners pay through MMLD instead of pay.gov for one stop shopping? If not, will there be links in MMLD to the pay.gov system for mariners?
17. Will MMLD incorporate the capability to send out mass e-news articles to mariners who want to participate?
18. Will MMLD initiate renewal deadline notices?
19. Will MMLD provide application status via cell phone text queries?
20. When will data updates from MMLD to homeport be real time, instead of once daily?

FROM THE FIELD TRACKER: QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

21. When will data updates for background checks from RECs to SSEB be real time, instead of once daily?
22. Will MMLD incorporate functionality for course oversight?
23. What is the status of imaging records?
24. When will NMC/RECs start imaging records?
25. When will user fee data from pay.gov be piped into MMLD w/o user interaction?

Project Related...

26. Are the R&C project plans available for viewing? What document(s) do project managers presently use to steer the project day-to-day?
27. Is the R&C project on schedule?
28. The R&C project started in May '05, what is the completion date?
29. What constitutes completion of the R&C project?
30. How much funding did the R&C project receive and how much has been spent?
31. Is the funding for the R&C project adequate or is additional funding needed?
32. Lately, discussions have indicated a lack of funding for the project. Is this true?

Staffing...

33. Two plus years into the project, are staffing levels still considered adequate for the workload?
34. When the R&C project started, it was estimated that the program would retain 30% of its experienced personnel, has the program been effective in retaining experienced personnel?
35. One of the major reasons for increased cycle time is delays in the security screening process. Is the SSEB staffing appropriate for the workload?
36. When will all applications (100%) be screened by the MEB staff and is the MEB staffed adequately to handle this workload increase?
37. What are some of the lessons learned from the SSEB contract work stoppage? Is this a recipe for disaster?

Processing...

38. When will NMC-5 incorporate assembly line application processing?
39. The program goal is one-week application cycle time by March 2009, is this realistic? Are there intermediate goals?
40. Has the cycle time improved for the transitioned RECs?
41. What is the backlog at the NMC-5?
42. On the cube surge report, is the backlog for NMC-5 the sum totals for NMC and the transitioned RECs?
43. What is the backlog for the SSEB?
44. What is the backlog for the MEB?

FROM THE FIELD TRACKER: QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

45. Has there been a cost benefit analysis done on of the price of mailing documents vs. implementing an electronic solution?
46. To provide West Virginia with more time to ramp up, could you allow them to take over renewals while RECs continue to do applications and upgrades?
47. Once we've fingerprinted an individual, we've established his identity. What is the necessity of re-fingerprinting?
48. How best can we gauge our workload when renewals could now bring in any number of mariners on a daily basis? Could RECs serve specific regions?
49. What's the official direction regarding applications? Do we perform a cursory look through to keep those who are obviously ineligible from slowing down the system?

Miscellaneous...

50. Industry has asked for additional RECs. Is this being considered? If yes, when and where?
51. What's the role of the iTeam and how long will they be involved in the project?
52. What's the role of the MMS and how long will they be involved in the project?
53. Are future space requirements and physical layouts for RECs being developed?
54. What's the status of the remaining PMG contractors?
55. Will West Virginia being taking applications via mail? Why or why not?
56. Why aren't recipients of monetary awards (no mention of amounts) made public?