

The Captain's Corner

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As you know, the RECs will transition to centralized operations by the end of 2008. Several RECs have already begun their transition, including New Orleans, Juneau, and Anchorage. REC Baltimore begins their transition today. My goal is to ensure that these transitions are completed with minimal disruption to operations. To do this, everyone involved must be familiar how the RECs and the NMC will function in the future. Further, everyone must be familiar with how the transition will be accomplished.

As you can imagine, there are many issues that need to be worked out between the NMC and each REC. This includes broad mission-related issues like the future functions of the REC, as well as support-related details such as civilian timecard approvals and government vehicles. Many of the questions that have been asked by the NMC and REC staffs focus on these issues.

To prepare for the Baltimore transition, the staffs at NMC and REC Baltimore have been meeting to develop a transition plan. My intent is to use the Baltimore transition to work through the details and develop a detailed "REC Transition Book" for each of the RECs to use. As each REC prepares for their transition, we will use the transition book as our guide and we will update this as we learn lessons from the previous transition.

We will be sending "draft 1" of this transition book to each REC in September. Let me summarize. As the transition date approaches, each REC will begin preparations using checklists in the transition book. A team from the REC will travel to the NMC to see the centralized operations and discuss planning details. Before the start of the transition, a team from the NMC will travel to the REC to discuss the transition with the Sector Command cadre and the entire REC staff. Then the NMC/REC staffs will progress through the transition book, completing the various tasks in the checklists. After the transition has started, a team from the NMC will visit the REC again to work through any outstanding issues.

The active involvement of everyone is needed in order to succeed. This is an all-hands evolution requiring the thoughts, ideas, and suggestions of everyone. Collectively among all of the REC and NMC employees we have many, many years of experience and we must capitalize on this. Our success depends on detailed planning, coordination, and cooperation among all of us. I thank each of you in advance for your help and I look forward to our transition.



Building Updates

As you can see from the photo, the roof installation is well underway. Additionally, interior wall framing and utility installation continues to progress on all three floors. For previous building updates, please visit:
<http://www.gsa-projects.com/ProjectDetails.aspx?id=14> .

Building Community Partnerships

In order to demonstrate a strong commitment to Martinsburg and local communities, the National Maritime Center is coordinating several donation initiatives. Reservist CW03 Elizabeth Blackford and Administrative Assistant Karen Quigley are working with the Red Cross to set up a blood donation schedule, which will begin after the move to the new Martinsburg facility. Additionally, they are establishing an office recycling effort that will include donating old computers to local schools in need.

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

**We encourage questions from
ALL REC & NMC Employees!**

Staffing Updates

NMC-1 Marine Transportation Specialist
(Planning Team Leader)
GS-13, Closing: September 13th

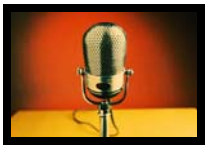
NMC-1 Marine Transportation Specialist
(Planning Team)
GS-12, Closing: September 14th

NMC-5 Marine Transportation Specialist
(Help Desk Supervisor)
GS-12, Closing: September 13th

NMC-4 Quality Assurance Specialist
GS-9, Closing: September 13th

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

NMC staffing 60% of full strength



INQUIRY FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Major Milestones

The National Maritime Center senior staff is working to develop greater transparency of operations. This process is challenging not only in terms of the sheer volume of information available, but also in maintaining clarity in communications. The Major Milestones document is a great case in point. While senior staff wants to share the process of how decisions are being made, there is a fear that this planning document may be misinterpreted as a finalized document. Again, many policies and procedures are being established as the new leadership stands up, and it is difficult to judge if sharing these planning documents will add to the confusion or help resolve it. Here is where your input will help decipher the policy moving forward. As an organization, how best do we maintain clarity while keeping employees well informed about evolving processes?

Corporate Knowledge Debate Continues

The breadth of corporate knowledge at the RECs and NMC combined could span the ages. The challenge is attempting to do some degree of justice to capturing that knowledge and sharing it across the organization. At this point, we're all looking for answers. There is no 100% solution, yet we cannot allow that to dissuade us from trying to create a plan address this critical need. Are you, as an individual, willing to take action? Would you mentor others in the organization who have less experience? This effort has to come within the organization ~ it cannot be forced. In the past few months I have heard from employees across the country who care deeply about the mariners and making this organization the very best it can be. What senior leadership wants to know is what kind of action is behind that intention.

“How a company deals with mistakes suggests how well it will bring out the best ideas and talents of its people, and how effectively it will respond to change. When employees know that mistakes won't lead to retribution, it creates an atmosphere in which people are willing to come up with ideas and suggest changes. This is important to a company's long-term success.”
~Bill Gates

Transitioning RECs

To date, NMC has absorbed the full evaluation workload of RECs New Orleans, Anchorage and Juneau. REC Baltimore joined those ranks on 4 Sep. As part of the transitioning process, the NMC-1 staff briefed REC Baltimore senior staff (John Cassady (SIP), LTJG Agnew (outgoing ASIP), and LT Mark Palmer (new ASIP)) on Wednesday, 22 August. During our meeting we discussed application handling, ready for evaluation check off sheets, mailing procedures, and archiving mariner records. In addition, it gave the REC Baltimore staff a perfect opportunity to see the NMC credentialing process step by step and afforded them a chance to ask questions.

The following Wednesday, 29 August, CAPT Stalfort and parts of the NMC-1 and NMC-4 staffs visited with REC Baltimore and their Sector leadership to again discuss the transitioning process. During that session, we were able to answer questions from the REC and clarify our respective roles in the transitioning process.

Judging from all our process improvements we've already made with REC Baltimore, we recognize we need to bring the already-transitioned RECs up to date. We are planning to meet with REC New Orleans staff in the October/November timeframe to discuss transition processes and will probably then have a conference call with RECs Anchorage and Juneau to close any loops there, too.

Process-wise, we feel confident that most details are covered for the transitioning RECs but we recognize the larger portion, and probably more difficult portion of the transition is the administrative support of the RECs. To that end, we have started to develop a comprehensive "Transition Book" with the aim of getting that finalized by November. Covered in this book are topics such as REC Functions, Sector Functions, Process Changes, Course Oversight, Records Management, Support Functions and Formal Relief.

Some future process issues we have yet to resolve and will need your assistance:

- (1) Merchant Academies: I hope to gather the five RECs out here for a few days in September/October timeframe to specifically discuss how we will handle the seven merchant academies.
- (2) Schools and other "bulk processing" customers.
- (3) Local limited licenses and pilotage: Clearly defining the roles between the TRECs and NMC.

We will need your help in developing an all-inclusive list so we don't miss any crucial details. At the end of this article is the Table of Contents for the Transition Book. Please review it and tell me what you think is missing and should be included. In the meantime, all five NMC Divisions are working diligently to flesh out the details for this transition book.

Additionally, I hope to get a "Transition Guide" out to all of the RECs by mid-September. This guide, in PowerPoint format, will serve as an overall guide for the transitioning process suitable for use at the REC level but also serve as a guide for Industry and Sector use.

Our end goal throughout this entire process is to make it as easy as possible for the TRECs to do their jobs in assisting the Mariners. There are still many details to cover and we want to identify them all now so we can address them completely. The REC Baltimore transition is the perfect opportunity to set the stage for how the remaining REC transitions will be conducted.

TRANSITION BOOK TOPICS

Overview

REC Functions

- + Mission
- + Customer Service Standards
- + Performance Measures
 - Application Quality
 - Stage 1 Cycle Time
 - Inventory
 - Customer Satisfaction
- + REC Relocation

Sector (Host/Tenant) Functions

- + Training
- + Emergency Procedures
- + Urinalysis/Weigh-In (Military)
- + IO Responsibilities

Process Changes

- + Application Processing Checklist
- + Application Mailing Preparation
- + Pilotage and Local Limited Licenses
- + Academies and Schools
- + Appeals Process

Course Oversight

Records Management

Formal Relief

Support Functions

- + Postal Services
- + Financial Management
 - Small Purchases
 - Contracting
 - FPD Access
 - Reconciliation
 - TONOs
- + IT Support
- + Government Vehicles Management
- + Leases/Real Property Management
 - Inventory
 - 1149s
 - Property Custodians
- + Personnel Management
 - Evaluations (Military and Civilian)
 - Timekeeping
 - Personnel Actions
 - Performance Awards
 - Morale
 - Personnel Files
 - Education Support Functions
 - Travel
 - CAC Cards

Q&A Response Too Slow

There has been a great discussion spurred by last week's inquiry about capturing corporate knowledge. One comment referred to the Q&A spreadsheet that was promised several weeks ago to track the progress of responses. The Q&A response **has** been too slow. Instead of the intermediate steps of publishing the questions with assigned point of contact, the division heads just delved into answering the questions. (Bravo division heads!!) The drawback of this ambitious and immediate effort is that all the responses (over 150) need to be consolidated and approved to ensure no mixed or misleading messages are sent out to employees. Right now, approximately 49% of the questions are answered and awaiting approval. What we'll do this week is publish the list of questions, which expands every week, along with the categorization and point of contact. The baseline data is also "under approval" because so much has changed that, again, we want to be sure only the latest most relevant information gets distributed. Thanks so much for your continued patience with this