



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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SECNAVINST 5420.169J
ASN (M&RA)
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SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5420.169J

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY RETIRED ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

1. Purpose. To revise the instruction to clarify the scope, responsibilities and procedures for the conduct of the Department of the Navy's Retired Activities program. This instruction is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.
2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 5420.169H.
3. Background. By tradition and law, retired Navy and Marine Corps personnel are individuals with a continuing military status. They, as well as their family members and survivors, are entitled to certain rights, benefits, and privileges, and are subject to responsibilities arising from these entitlements. Retirees are also subject to recall to active duty at the discretion of the President. In discharging these responsibilities, retirees, as part of the total force, are capable of making meaningful contributions to the missions of the active forces. Therefore, their continuing participation as Navy-Marine Corps team members should be encouraged and supported. In order for retirees to make an effective contribution, they should be kept informed on changing programs and policies. The Department of the Navy's Retired Activities Program provides an avenue to ensure that the relationship between retirees and the Navy and Marine Corps is reinforced and mutually beneficial.
4. Concept. The Retired Activities Program consists of four principal elements: (1) the Secretary of the Navy's Retiree Council (SECNAV RC); (2) Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days; (3) Retired Activities Offices (RAOs)/Retiree Liaison Offices (RLOs) and (4) the Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis official retiree newsletters. The responsibilities associated with these functions and offices are as follows:

a. Retiree Council (RC). The RC is established to consider issues of significant importance to retired military personnel and their family members, to facilitate interaction between Department of the Navy leadership and the Navy-Marine Corps retired community, and to facilitate participation in other aspects of the Retired Activities Program. In accomplishing these objectives, the Council may review the effectiveness of current programs and policies affecting retirees. The Council may make recommendations concerning improvements to benefits, privileges, other assistance to retirees, quality of life and morale aspects of the retired community, and any other matters relating to retired personnel. Members of the RC are strongly encouraged to make themselves available to assist host commands located in their geographic area to plan and conduct Retiree Seminars/Appreciation Days as described in paragraph 4b. They are also encouraged to volunteer in local RAOs and RLOs. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Military Personnel Policy) (DASN(MPP)) will serve as the Executive Director of the RC.

(1) Composition. The RC will be composed of 24 members; 12 officers and 12 enlisted personnel. Included in this number should be one member representing retirees and their family members who reside overseas in the Western Pacific region (excluding Hawaii) and a second representing those living in Europe. The Navy will provide a total of 17 Council members (8 officers and 8 enlisted personnel, plus one Co-Chair), while the Marine Corps will provide 7 Council members (3 officers and 3 enlisted personnel, plus one Co-Chair).

(a) The Council will have two Co-Chairs, one of whom will be a retired flag officer or general officer (three-star equivalent). The other Co-Chair will be a retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy or a retired Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, if possible. (A retired E-9, who, while on active duty, filled a billet (as Sergeant Major or Master Chief) that dealt with personnel and/or manpower issues at the Service Headquarters level, may be selected in lieu of a former Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps or Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, when necessary). At all times, one Co-Chair will represent the Navy, while the other represents the Marine Corps. Co-chairs serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director and are generally appointed for terms of 3 consecutive years.

(b) The Council should reflect, to the greatest possible extent, the diverse makeup of the retired community. It should include representatives of the following categories from both the Navy and Marine Corps: regular retired personnel, members of the Fleet Reserve, and retired Reservists.

It is also highly desirable to have as RC members female and minority retirees and retirees receiving VA disability pay.

(c) All RC members serve at the pleasure of the Executive Director and are subject to annual reappointment. Members' terms of service will generally not exceed 3 consecutive years, but may be extended upon approval by the RC Co-Chairs or, in the case of term extension for the Co-Chairs, by the Retiree Council Executive Director.

(2) Vacancies and Appointments

(a) At the conclusion of the annual meeting of the RC, the Co-Chairs and the Executive Director will review the membership of the Council to determine the number and type(s) of vacancies anticipated to occur in the Council during the following year. The requirements will be passed to the Naval Personnel Command (NAVPERSCOM) and Deputy Commandant, Manpower and Reserve Affairs at Headquarters, Marine Corps (specifically, the Separation and Retirement Branch, Code MMSR) with a request for each to solicit nominations from the respective retired communities. NAVPERSCOM and MMSR will screen applications and recommend a slate of nominees to the DASN (MPP). The DASN (MPP) makes the final selections for appointment, with the concurrence of the RC Co-Chairs. As general guidelines, the following criteria will be used when considering selection of new members to serve on the Council:

(1) Involvement in a volunteer capacity with the local retired community (especially in an RAO or RLO);

(2) Subject-matter expertise in areas of concern to the retired community (e.g., medical, compensation, transition, veterans benefits);

(3) Regional balance to ensure as many areas of the United States are represented as possible;

(4) Age balance to ensure that all phases of retirement are represented;

(5) Willingness and ability to travel within their geographic area and to other locations if necessary.

(b) Retirees selected for membership on the Council will be notified of their selection by appointment letter signed by the Executive Director. The names of the Council members, including the new appointees, will be published in Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis and as soon as possible before or during the year in which they begin service. Those nominees who

are not selected will be notified by NAVPERSCOM and MMSR of their non-selection.

(3) Administration

(a) DASN(MPP) will serve as the Executive Director to the Council and will provide necessary coordination, guidance, and administrative support to the RC.

(b) The Council will be convened by the DASN(MPP) at least once annually.

(c) The RC Co-Chairs shall establish the procedure for meetings, and may appoint an Executive and/or other subcommittees as necessary.

(d) Individual members of the Council will be invited to the Washington, DC area on the occasion of each annual meeting. Members will be issued Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) orders by their respective Service for the period encompassing attendance at the annual meeting, including completion of travel to and from the Washington, DC area. Acceptance of these ADSW orders by the Council member is voluntary; however, refusal or inability to accept such orders can preclude further service as a Council member.

(e) The final report of the RC annual meeting will be submitted to the Secretary of the Navy. The RC may submit additional reports when necessary to accomplish its objectives. An example would be separate reports to the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) addressing items not requiring legislative action or policy changes at the Departmental level.

b. Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days. To ensure that there is wide dissemination of information and policies of concern to the retired Navy and Marine Corps communities, the CNO and CMC will ensure that Retiree Seminars for retired Navy and Marine Corps personnel are conducted in locations where there are substantial numbers of military retirees living near a Navy or Marine Corps installation.

(1) RC members are strongly encouraged to participate to the maximum extent possible in seminars held within their geographic area and at other locations when feasible. RC members may provide assistance in planning the event, as well as participating in the seminar activities, such as being a guest speaker.

(2) RC members may request funding for participation in seminars from NAVPERSCOM/MMSR, or costs may be borne by the host

command. Such costs may include travel and per diem for RC members who are invited to participate as speakers.

c. Retired Activities Offices (RAOs)/Retired Liaison Offices (RLOs). RAOs and RLOs serve as a link between local retirees and the military community, as well as other governmental agencies that provide assistance to retirees. RAOs are often located on Navy and Marine Corps installations and are staffed, in most cases, with retiree volunteers who will assist other retirees, their family members, and survivors directly, or guide them to organizations to ensure they receive services and benefits to which they are entitled. RLOs may be established at major Navy/Marine Corps medical treatment facilities (MTFs) at the invitation of the MTF commanding officer. The purpose of the RLO is to provide general information and referral information to retirees and their family members and to act as a liaison between MTF personnel, the MTF commanding officer and the retiree and his or her family members. Retired personnel must agree, in writing, to serve without compensation from the United States before beginning to serve in a RAO or RLO. Navy and Marine Corps shall issue guidelines regarding the operation of RAOs and RLOs, and maintain and periodically issue a listing of these offices in the retiree newsletters Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis.

d. Support of Independent Retired Activities Efforts. Interested retirees in areas of the U.S. or foreign countries, which are geographically isolated from Navy and Marine Corps commands or installations, but which have sizeable retired populations, may organize independent retiree activities coordination offices. RAOs and these independent retired activities coordination points may share a similar mission and operate in a similar manner. However, due to conditions of isolation and special circumstance, the duties, responsibilities and activities of these independent groups may vary. Selection of activities to be pursued and any fund-raising to support those activities shall be the full responsibility of the membership. The Department of the Navy will neither endorse nor monitor the activities of these groups, or provide direct operational support, funding, training or oversight, but will provide the same general types of support offered other individual retirees and patriotic organizations upon request. Individuals who perform or who benefit from independent retiree assistance functions may use the RC as a conduit for presentation of their policy-related concerns for consideration by the Secretary.

e. Retiree Newsletters (Shift Colors/Semper Fidelis). The Navy and Marine Corps will publish periodic newsletters that inform the retiree community about privileges, benefits, entitlements and changes in laws and regulations that affect them. The newsletters are automatically mailed to retirees and

survivors of retirees. Retired Reservists not yet in receipt of retired pay may request to get on the mailing list of Shift Colors or Semper Fidelis.

5. Action

a. The CNO and CMC will ensure that their Services' Headquarters:

(1) Solicit applications to fill vacant positions on the RC, submit nominations to DASN (MPP) for membership on the RC for those vacancies, and notify those nominees who were not selected for RC membership of their non-selection.

(2) Provide appropriate personnel, funding and logistical support for the preparation of the annual RC meeting in Washington, DC, upon request by the RC Executive Director, or the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs).

(3) Establish RAOs at Navy and Marine Corps installations with sizeable retired communities located nearby.

(4) Assist individuals performing independent retired activities coordination functions by providing information, handbooks, guides, forms, and publications upon request.

(5) Ensure that Retiree Seminars/Retiree Appreciation Days are conducted annually within appropriate demographic areas and that timely notification and publicity are accomplished by listing locations and dates in appropriate editions of Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis.

(6) Issue specific information and guidance on the operations of RAOs and RLOs, to include formalized training if necessary.

(7) Publish and ensure distribution of the official retiree newsletter to all retirees and annuitants (Shift Colors for the Navy and Semper Fidelis for the Marine Corps).

(8) List all members of the RC and their contact information periodically in the retiree newsletters Shift Colors and Semper Fidelis.

b. Navy/Marine Corps Regions and overseas Department of the Navy installations are responsible for ensuring that local area commanders are provided with administrative, budgetary, financial and logistics support for RAOs within their area of responsibility, and for ensuring funding availability to support Retiree Seminars.

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c. The success of the Retired Activities Program will depend not only on those directly involved, but also upon those in responsible positions whose sphere of influence includes the retiree community. Those in such positions of responsibility and leadership are expected to lend their personal attention and support to the program.



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