



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
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SECNAVINST 1730.10  
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SECNAV INSTRUCTION 1730.10

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: CHAPLAIN ADVISEMENT AND LIAISON

Ref: (a) Title 14, United States Code  
(b) The Merchant Marine Act of 1936  
(c) SECNAVINST 1730.7D  
(d) DoD Directive 1304.19 of June 11, 2004  
(e) SECNAVINST 3006.2  
(f) SECNAVINST 5720.44B  
(g) OPNAVINST 1730.1D  
(h) Convention (I) For the Amelioration of the Condition of The Wounded And Sick in Armed Forces in The Field of August 1949  
(i) DoD Directive 2311.01E of May 9, 2006  
(j) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990  
(k) SECNAVINST 1730.9  
(l) DoD Instruction 1000.1 of January 30, 1974

1. Purpose. The Chaplain Corps' four core capabilities are to facilitate the religious requirements of authorized personnel, to provide faith-specific ministries, to care for all, and to advise commands. This instruction provides policy on the role of chaplains as advisors to commands and their derivative tasks as command liaisons.

2. Applicability and Scope. This instruction applies throughout the Department of the Navy, including the Coast Guard when operating as a service in the Navy under reference (a) and to chaplains serving with the Merchant Marine pursuant to reference (b).

3. Policy

a. Advisement and Liaison. Consistent with reference (c), the chaplain advises the command in three distinct ways. The chaplain strengthens the chain of command and assists in the development of leadership by providing advice to leaders at all levels (essential advice). The chaplain serves as the principal advisor to the commander for all matters regarding the Command

Religious Program (CRP) (executive advice). The chaplain serves as an advisor to the commander regarding the impact of religious and humanitarian matters on military operations (external advice). The nature of each type of advice drives concomitant liaison work.

b. Essential Advice. As qualified religious ministry professionals, chaplains render advice throughout the chain of command. Chaplains provide commanders a unique perspective on moral and ethical decision-making. They advise on issues of right and wrong. They foster a climate of fairness, trust and accountability. When requested, they provide faith-based counseling, mentoring and spiritual direction based on theologically derived truths. They also deliver relational counseling which is based on the trust gained through a shared experience of military service and characterized by confidentiality and mutual respect. This relational counseling is designed to develop and strengthen core values and personal responsibility in people whether or not they profess a particular faith perspective.

c. Essential Liaison. In their capacity as advisors to authorized personnel, chaplains work in concert with peers and fellow professionals, including, among others, medical personnel, attorneys, social workers, and mental health professionals. This work often requires chaplains to represent the interests of one party to another, as in the case of making or receiving referrals or when advocating for the needs of authorized personnel. In this role, chaplains can be viewed as both arbiters and advocates.

d. Executive Advice. Chaplains advise commanders on all issues regarding the impact of religion on military operations when the impact is upon the command itself. Chaplains are the primary advisors to commanders regarding the organization and execution of the CRP and the delivery of the Chaplain Corps' four core capabilities within their commands. In this capacity, chaplains provide advice and assistance to commanders in the discharge of their responsibility to provide for the free exercise of religion per reference (d). Chaplains advise commanders on matters of morale, morals, spiritual well-being and ethics within the command. Chaplains further advise on the operation and administration of chapels, ministries, programs, and units dedicated to religious ministry. Chaplains also advise commanders on the religious aspects of humanitarian

assistance support missions as governed by reference (e) and community relations projects as governed by reference (f).

e. Executive Liaison. An effective CRP requires collaboration and interaction on the part of chaplains. Chaplains interact with local leaders in order to advise commanders regarding the use of contract religious ministry professionals, resources available to the command from without and local civic or humanitarian needs which members of the command may be authorized to meet. It is sometimes necessary for chaplains to interact with key leaders outside the command when it is the intention of the commander to engage in humanitarian assistance support missions or community relations projects.

f. External Advice. Per reference (g), all tasks falling within the confines of external advice must be undertaken subject to the approval of the commander and in accordance with all applicable instructions. The chaplain is a valuable advisor on the religious and humanitarian aspects of command operations and, in coordination with other specialists, may speak to the religious and humanitarian status of the command's Area of Responsibility (AOR). The scope, content, and delivery of this advice is shaped, in part, by the assignment, grade, experience, and expertise of the chaplain. Consistent with the previous categories of advice and liaison and with the principles of reference (h), the chaplains' activities in this category are always to be directed toward the amelioration of suffering and the direct pursuit of humanitarian goals. Under circumstances in which the Laws of Armed Conflict apply and when the subject of advisement has a religious or humanitarian impact on the command's military mission relative to the indigenous population or adversary, the scope and provision of a chaplain's advisement shall be governed as follows.

(1) Per reference (i), all members of the Department of Defense are required to "comply with the law of war during all armed conflicts, however such conflicts are characterized, and in all other military operations." Per article 1063 of reference (j), chaplains shall be permitted to perform only duties that will not jeopardize the non-combatant status ascribed to them by reference (h). Therefore, advice and liaison activities during conflicts or operations are strictly limited to those approved by the commander and authorized by reference (h).

(2) In accordance with reference (g), the chaplain may advise the commander on the religious considerations in building and maintaining coalitions, the religious considerations of humanitarian assistance support, and the benevolent expression of religion within the AOR.

(3) The chaplain may not advise the commander on the identification of targets, the use of religion as a weapon by the command or the use of religion for psychological operations or military intelligence. Chaplains may not advise or participate in target approval of any kind.

(4) Chaplains, and religious program specialists or chaplain's assistants when accompanying a chaplain, are prohibited from contributing information about the adversary to their respective command's combat decision making process. This does not preclude chaplains from warning anyone in their proximity of immediate danger.

g. External Liaison. Under circumstances in which the Laws of Armed Conflict apply, chaplains may serve as command liaisons with key local leaders as follows.

(1) When assigned to a combat area during a period of armed conflict, chaplains shall be permitted to perform only such duties as are related to religious service and the administration of religious units or establishments, consistent with article 1063 of reference (j), and specifically to protect their non-combatant status.

(2) When authorized and directed by the commander, chaplains may serve as a point of contact and liaison for local civilian and military leaders, institutions, and organizations only to the extent that those contacts relate to the religious or humanitarian purposes approved by the commander.

(3) Under circumstances in which the Laws of Armed Conflict apply, chaplains may convey information related to their religious and humanitarian purpose to or from key leaders subject to the express approval and limitations of the commander. The exchange of such information must be pursuant to the religious/humanitarian mission of the chaplaincy giving specific consideration to preserving the chaplain's non-combatant status.

h. Restrictions. The chaplains' unique value as a command liaison is protected as follows:

(1) Commanders will safeguard the chaplain's ability to offer confidential communication to those with whom the chaplain is engaged in accordance with reference (k).

(2) Commanders will not employ the chaplain in such a way as to serve or even give the appearance that the chaplain is being employed as an intelligence operative.

(3) Commanders will not compel a chaplain to act in a way that is inconsistent with the tenets of the chaplain's faith as substantiated by the chaplain's ecclesiastical endorsing agent.

(4) In the interest of protecting the chaplains' non-combatant status, commanders will not compel or otherwise require chaplains to remove, replace, or conceal either their staff corps insignia or their Geneva Conventions insignia in accordance with reference (l).

(5) Per reference (h), the chaplain must abstain from all hostile acts and any act, either direct or indirect, that would be harmful to the adversary.

#### 4. Responsibilities

a. The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) shall exercise oversight to ensure compliance with this instruction and shall implement the policies in this instruction throughout the Navy. The CNO shall initiate action with the Commandant of the Coast Guard and the Administrator of the Maritime Administration to implement this policy when Navy chaplains provide religious ministry to those agencies.


b. The Commandant of the Marine Corps shall issue orders to implement this instruction throughout the Marine Corps.

c. Commanders shall identify and validate their requirements for chaplain advisement and liaison at the tactical, operational and strategic levels. Commanders shall not assign duties to chaplains inconsistent with their roles as

set forth above, nor will they assign chaplains duties that might compromise the chaplains' noncombatant status.

d. The Chief of Navy Chaplains shall coordinate the training and certification of chaplains for advisement and liaison.

5. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, shall be managed in accordance with Secretary of the Navy Manual 5210.1.



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