



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER, NAVY INSTALLATIONS COMMAND
716 SICARD STREET, SE, SUITE 1000
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD, DC 20374-5140

CNICINST 5730.1
N00J
1 Mar 2012

CNIC INSTRUCTION 5730.1

From: Commander, Navy Installations Command

Subj: PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CONGRESSIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE
INQUIRIES

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 5730.5J
(b) SECNAVINST 5700.9E

Encl: (1) Sample Congressional Interim Response
(2) Sample Congressional Response

1. Purpose. To issue procedures, policies, and responsibilities for handling congressional and legislative inquiries for Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) and its subordinate activities in accordance with references (a) and (b).

2. Background. Congress regularly requests information from CNIC and its subordinate commands. The inquiries can relate to routine military matters and command operations, or they can stem from the unique concerns of constituents. Regardless of the subject matter, this instruction aims to facilitate timely, accurate responses to all congressional and legislative inquiries.

3. Policy

a. CNIC personnel at all levels (headquarters, region, and installation) will extend every courtesy to members of Congress, congressional committees and subcommittees, and their representatives. This same courtesy shall extend to all government officials, whether at the Federal, state, or local level.

b. Responses to congressional inquiries will be accurate, complete, and expeditious. They will also reflect a spirit of courtesy and helpfulness.

c. CNIC personnel at all levels will keep CNIC Headquarters (HQ) Flag Staff (CNIC N00) informed, via the chain of command, of all command matters relating to Congress. Notification should occur as quickly as practicable, but not later than 48 hours after a CNIC, region, or installation member or employee receives the inquiry.

d. CNIC leadership will coordinate all congressional communications, as appropriate, with the applicable Assistant Secretary of the Navy; the General Counsel; the Judge Advocate General; Chief of Naval Operations (CNO); Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA); or the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller), Appropriations Matters Office (FMBE); to ensure consistency with Navy policy. In accordance with reference (a), all communications with congressional offices located in the National Capital Region must be coordinated with OLA or FMBE.

e. CNIC will be the release authority on inquiries concerning Navy policy and any correspondence in which CNIC would act as a representative for the Secretary of the Navy or CNO.

f. Under no circumstances may any CNIC command delegate signature authority for outgoing congressional correspondence below the installation commanding officer level.

g. Unusual circumstances may require an oral or email reply to a congressional inquiry. In such cases, CNIC and subordinate commands will observe the same procedures required of written congressional inquiries to the extent feasible. For example, anyone lacking authority to sign a congressional reply should obtain the requisite authorization before responding.

h. In cases where a final reply to a congressional inquiry cannot occur by the assigned date, the responder will issue an interim reply within five working days of receipt of the inquiry. Interim replies will provide as much responsive information as possible, including the reason why additional time is required

and the anticipated date of the final response. See enclosure (1).

i. CNIC and subordinate commands shall keep members of Congress, as well as state and local elected officials, informed of matters having a significant impact on their respective constituencies. The notification must occur in advance when possible. However, in accordance with reference (b), no information regarding contract awards is releasable prior to public announcement.

4. Responsibilities

a. CNIC HQ N00 is responsible for:

(1) Coordinating all congressional communications and legislative affairs for the CNIC enterprise.

(2) Informing appropriate higher authority of congressional inquiries, requests, contacts, meetings, or briefings.

(3) Identifying the appropriate signature release authority for congressional responses.

(4) Ensuring incoming queries are fully researched, appropriate responses are formulated, and necessary coordination with OLA, FMBE, or other designated authority, is obtained.

(5) Coordinating a legal review of interim and final congressional responses with either the Force Judge Advocate or Office of General Counsel.

(6) Advising OLA expeditiously, via telephone or email, when a Member of Congress or a staff member visits a Naval installation unannounced, for other than investigative purposes, such as a tour of the facilities.

(7) Ensuring all congressional questions involving appropriations, military construction, or budget matters are referred to FMBE for resolution.

b. Region Commanders (REGCOMs) and Installation Commanding Officers (COs) are responsible for:

(1) Notifying CNIC HQ N00 promptly when any member of the command receives an inquiry, oral or written, from Congress.

(2) Referring all incoming inquiries, including oral inquiries, whether received directly or indirectly, immediately to CNIC HQ N00 via the CNO HQWeb Tasker System (Taskers).

(3) Taking action on congressional inquiries as directed by CNIC HQ N00.

(4) Providing an interim response within five working days of receipt of an inquiry when a final response cannot be submitted by the assigned date.

(5) Advising CNIC expeditiously, via telephone or email, when a Member of Congress or a staff member visits a Naval installation unannounced, for other than investigative purposes, such as a tour of the facilities.

(6) Ensuring all congressional questions involving appropriations, military construction, or budget matters are referred to FMBE for resolution.

5. Action

a. CNIC HQ N00 will assign specific CNIC commands, activities, and departments to provide input for, or respond to, congressional inquiries.

b. REGCOMs and Installation COs will:

(1) Respond to congressional inquiries assigned to them within 10 working days of receipt of the inquiry unless another time is specified by the tasking authority. (See enclosure (2) for a sample response.)

(2) Ensure widest dissemination of this policy within their respective commands.


W. D. FRENCH
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy

CNICINST 5730.1
1 Mar 2012

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SAMPLE CONGRESSIONAL INTERIM RESPONSE

October 31, 2011

The Honorable ()
(United States Senate) (House of Representatives)
Washington, DC (20510)

Dear (Senator or [Mr., Mrs., or Ms.]) (Last Name):

This is an interim response to your correspondence of (April 2, 2007) (Use "recent" letter if response is not timely) on behalf of your constituent, (Full Name), concerning (Subject).

We are currently gathering information necessary to provide you a substantive response to address your inquiry. The issue(s) addressed in your letter raised several questions concerning (Subject). You can expect our final reply by (date).

If you should need any further assistance regarding this matter, please contact (Action Officer, E-mail address, and Phone Number).

Sincerely,

Full Name
[Title/Position] (Not required when
replicated on letterhead)

SAMPLE CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSE

October 31, 2011

The Honorable (Full Name)
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services or Committee on Defense, Committee on
Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of (July 31, 2007), concerning (Subject), I am responding for the person who the congressional letter is addressed.

(Response).

Again, I appreciate your taking the time to share your thoughts on this issue. If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

W. D. FRENCH
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy
(Title/Position not required
when replicated on letterhead)

NOTE: This type of response should be signed by the OPO, Division Director or otherwise directed by the Tasking Authority. Should not be signed by someone with "By direction" authority.

Enclosure (if applicable)

Note: If a Senator or Congressman/woman uses letterhead paper that lists him/her as Chairperson, the response should be in the above format. Otherwise address should be:

The Honorable (Full Name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable ()
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator (Last Name):

Dear Mr., Mrs., Ms.(Last Name):

A similar letter has been sent to Chairman (). As always, if I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Copy to:
The Honorable ()