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COMDTINST 1540.2
13 MAY 2020

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1540.2

Subj: MILITARY TO MARINER VOLUNTARY CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

- Ref:
- (a) Coast Guard Voluntary Credentialing Program (VCP), COMDTINST 1540.10
 - (b) Performance, Training, and Education Manual, COMDTINST M1500.10 (series)
 - (c) Training Evaluation Policy, COMDTINST 1550.23 (series)
 - (d) Financial Resource Management Manual-Procedures (FRMM-P), COMDTINST M7100.4 (series)
 - (e) U.S. Coast Guard Competency Management System Manual, COMDTINST M5300.2 (series)

1. **PURPOSE.** This Instruction establishes Coast Guard’s Military to Mariner (M2M) Program policy for Program Managers, Rating Force Master Chief Petty Officers, Commands, Unit Training Officers, Education Services Officers, Designated Command Representatives, Voluntary Credentialing Program Manager, Training Managers, Training Centers and the Education and Training Quota Management Command (ETQC) to meet the demands of a dynamic work environment in accordance with References (a)-(e).
2. **ACTION.** All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy or assistant commandants, and chiefs of headquarters staff elements must comply with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release is authorized.
3. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.** None.
4. **BACKGROUND.** The M2M Program is a component of FORCECOM’s Voluntary Credentialing Program (VCP) supporting the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2015, Section 551, to establish professional credentialing equivalency programs and to pay expenses for military personnel to obtain credentials, improving post-service employment opportunities. M2M Program additionally supports requirements in Executive Order 13860. The M2M mandate is an effort to evaluate military training, qualifications, and experience and identify its applicability to merchant

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mariner credentialing requirements. It is intended to assist transitioning Service members to civilian employment in the maritime industry and support the national defense strategy.

5. DISCLAIMER. This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is intended to provide operational guidance for Coast Guard personnel and is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT.
 - a. There is limited impact to units as all units currently utilize the qualification systems to document performance. If a member utilizes the VCP's credentialing assistance request, a unit representative will evaluate the Service member's eligibility per Reference (a). Additionally, the member will be required to engage with the M2M Program for counseling prior to receiving credentialing assistance approval by the M2M Program and ETQC. This counseling should take approximately 15 minutes per applicant, with the number of applicants estimated to be less than 5% of the Coast Guard workforce.
 - b. No additional training will be provided for these tasks.
7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
 - a. The development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it have been thoroughly reviewed by the originating office in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Management, Commandant (CG-47). This Instruction is categorically excluded under current Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion DHS (CATEX) A3 from further environmental analysis in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 and the Environmental Planning (EP) Implementing Procedures (IP).
 - b. This Instruction will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment. All future specific actions resulting from the general policy in this Instruction must be individually evaluated for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions, Executive Order 12114, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) NEPA policy, Coast Guard Environmental Planning policy, and compliance with all other applicable environmental mandates.
8. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on CGPortal: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx> and Internet: <https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/directives>.
9. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the Directives clearance process, and it has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements, in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., NARA requirements, and Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.

10. DEFINITIONS.

- a. *National Maritime Center (NMC) Approved Course (or Program)*: means a training course or program approved by the Coast Guard in accordance with 46 CFR 10.402.
- b. *Credentialing Assistance (CA)*: IAW Reference (a), the payment of credentialing, certification, and licensing exam fees, maintenance fees, renewals, and membership dues (when applicable) by the Coast Guard for eligible Service members. CA is only offered in the pursuit of credentials listed on CG Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL), and may not be used to pay the expenses of a member to obtain professional credentials that are a prerequisite for appointment in the armed forces. All initial merchant mariner licenses require Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), which will be covered by CA as a standalone credential.
- c. *Maritime Portfolio*: a collection of content related to formal Coast Guard training courses, Watchstation Qualification Standards (WQS), Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS), or Job Qualification Requirements (JQR) that may meet the service or professional requirements for a merchant mariner credential.
- d. *Qualified Assessor*: as defined in 46 CFR 10.107, a Qualified Assessor (QA) is a person who is qualified to evaluate candidates for Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) endorsements to determine whether they have demonstrated the level of competence in the task for which the assessment is being made. Military members are not required to be evaluated and approved by the NMC as Qualified Assessors. Military assessors should only conduct assessments that are within their personal experience and are relevant to the vessel on which they are conducted. Refer to NVIC 19-14 and the NVIC for STCW endorsement sought for specific guidance on which military personnel may sign those assessments.
- e. *Stakeholder*: individuals who work collectively to ensure mission attainment by executing their roles and responsibilities within the mandates of programs and/or initiatives.

11. REQUIREMENTS. Stakeholders involved in the M2M Program must comply with this Instruction and the Coast Guard's Voluntary Credentialing Program standards.

12. RESPONSIBILITIES. This Instruction establishes roles and responsibilities for stakeholders who manage training and qualification requirements and execution that are integrated into maritime portfolios.

a. M2M Coordinator must:

- (1) Execute policy and prescribed procedures IAW Reference (a).
- (2) Represent the Coast Guard M2M voluntary credentialing interest throughout the Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, and the military departments.
- (3) Represent the Coast Guard and maintain liaison with appropriate federal and state agencies, organizations, Department of Labor, Department of Veteran Affairs, Maritime Administration, and similar M2M equities.

- (4) Develop and maintain maritime portfolios for all Coast Guard mariner training and qualification programs.
 - (5) Serve as the Coast Guard's singular source for submitting approval requests and any necessary updates to the NMC for evaluation.
 - (6) Serve as the Coast Guard's source for tracking the validity of NMC Approved Courses and ensuring they are submitted in a timely manner for renewal every five years.
 - (7) Serve as the integrator for stakeholder requirements, changes, and issues related to the content of maritime portfolios.
 - (8) Communicate performance support and maritime portfolio approvals with FORCECOM Training equities to establish M2M Program identification on "A" and "C" school curriculum outlines.
 - (9) Develop and maintain performance support tools for the workforce interested in merchant mariner credentials.
 - (10) Evaluate the Coast Guard's M2M Program and provide internal and external reports of program effectiveness.
 - (11) Counsel members on M2M Program resources and provide ETQC CA eligibility adjudications.
- b. FORCECOM Training Managers (TM) must:
- (1) Initiate communications with M2M Coordinator if Coast Guard delivered training courses identified within the maritime portfolios change content (Terminal Performance Objectives (TPO), Enabling Objectives (EO) or time designated toward topics) or is removed. This includes accessions, Class A and C school courses.
 - (2) Ensure curriculum outlines include M2M maritime portfolio identification as NMC Approved Courses during normal FORCECOM review cycles.
- c. Coast Guard Training Centers (TRACEN) must (as directed by FORCECOM Training Division):
- (1) Identify relevant M2M maritime portfolio completion information to all students.
 - (2) Provide course completion certificates for successful completion of training or courses that are NMC Approved Courses and NMC Course Approval memorandums for specific course sections via training school houses.
 - (3) Provide the following documentation required for NMC course approval to M2M Coordinator for submission to NMC:
 - (a) Curriculum Outline(s)

- (b) Tasks, TPOs, EOs, Evaluation Correlation Document(s)
 - (c) Instructor Guide(s)
 - (d) Student Guide(s)
 - (e) Exam(s) and/or performance criteria checklist(s)
 - (f) Evaluations, Levels 1-3
- (4) Upon NMC course approval, TRACEN must update formal training curriculum outlines.
- (5) Notify M2M Coordinator of pending changes for any NMC Approved Course.
- d. Education and Training Quota Management Command (ETQC) must:
- (1) Notify M2M Coordinator of all merchant mariner credential seeking applicants prior to adjudicating (approve/disapprove) CA Requests.
 - (2) Execute CA procedures IAW Reference (a).
 - (3) Enter earned credentials into Direct Access (DA) after they are provided by the member.
 - (4) Provide credentialing data to the M2M Coordinator upon request.
- e. Program Managers (PM) must:
- (1) Identify workforce performance requirements.
 - (2) Identify which workforce requirements through WQS, PQS and JQR are relevant to M2M maritime portfolios.
 - (3) Establish and define competency designations or qualification completion documentation process for positions that fall within program IAW Reference (e).
 - (4) Liaise with M2M Program for changes or additions of new performance requirements that are related to mariner training and experience.
 - (5) Provide M2M Coordinator WQS, PQS and JQR documents for maritime portfolio submittals.
 - (6) Communicate new capabilities of platforms, equipment or technology as it relates to performance requirements within a maritime portfolio.
- f. Rating Force Master Chief Petty Officers (RFMC) must:
- (1) Identify rating performance requirements.
 - (2) Liaise with M2M Program for changes or additions of new performance requirements that are related to mariner training and experience.

- (3) Communicate changes in rated workforce, based on occupational analysis, that impact access to NMC Approved Courses in maritime portfolios.
 - (4) Review and update competency definitions IAW Reference (e).
 - (5) Disseminate M2M Program specific information to rated personnel related to credential process, approved maritime portfolios and the benefits of credentials for professionalism.
- g. Commanding Officers (CO) or Officers In Charge (OIC) must:
- (1) Ensure personnel receive performance support to meet organizational, operations, and mission requirements.
 - (2) Disseminate M2M Program information related to training and qualification opportunities available or unit directed for personnel.
 - (3) Monitor QA signoff process for personnel pursuing competencies, qualifications and STCW tasks.
 - (4) Award competencies and qualifications earned by members and ensure appropriate documentation is entered in Service member's record.
 - (5) Certify that all information submitted on forms and qualifications is accurate and correct based on actual achievement of the member and authorized IAW References (a) and (e).
- h. Unit Training Officers (TO)/ Education Services Officers (ESO)/ Designated Command Representatives:
- (1) Familiarize eligible Service members with all aspects of Reference (a).
 - (2) Assist active duty and selected reserve personnel with completing CA Request IAW Reference (a).
- i. Member must:
- (1) Review and become familiar with M2M Program policy and procedures applicable to maritime portfolios.
 - (2) If a VCP participant, member must review and become familiar with VCP policy and procedures applicable to CA and submit a CA Request.
 - (3) Submit a complete merchant mariner credential application package to NMC as required in 46 CFR Parts 10, 11, 12, and 13 as appropriate. Checklists for specific credential endorsements can be found on the NMC website to assist with application preparation. Upon approval, complete CA process IAW Reference (a).

13. POLICY.

- a. M2M Program is established within the Coast Guard's Voluntary Credentialing Program to meet the specific mariner credentialing requirements of the NDAA and Executive Order 13860 to enhance professionalism of the workforce. Stakeholders must participate and communicate workforce requirements with M2M Program to establish, maintain and update maritime portfolios supporting voluntary merchant mariner credentialing.
- b. Stakeholders: PMs, RFMCs, Commands, Unit TOs, ESOs, Designated Command Representatives, members, VCP, TMs, TRACENs, and ETQC must adhere to the roles and responsibilities identified in Section 12.a-i of this Instruction.
- c. Nothing in this Instruction pre-empts the authority of Unit COs and OICs to procure training as identified by the Unit Training Board, as outlined in Reference (b) and subject to appropriations limitations which prevent the use of operating funds to contract for training provided by FORCECOM enterprise. IAW Reference (d), AFC-30 funds can fund travel, per diem, and tuition for formal training intended for field execution of training that is not approved nor funded through the class convening schedule for Coast Guard Class A and C resident and exportable training courses. AFC-56 funds must not be used for non-formal training courses.

14. FUNDING. M2M Program must comply with the Coast Guard's Voluntary Credentialing Program policy. M2M Program must comply with the National Maritime Center's credentialing fee policies. M2M Program will not fund mandated credential requirements or training opportunities in support of completing full requirements for merchant mariner credentials.

15. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

16. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Submit change requests to: CGM2M@uscg.mil; ATTN: Military to Mariner Program (FC-CI) Policy.

B. K. PENOYER /s/
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Commander, Force Readiness Command