



COMDTINST 1650.37
01 DEC 2021

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 1650.37

Subj: EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AWARDS

- Ref: (a) Recognition Programs Manual, COMDTINST M1650.26 (series)
 (b) Coast Guard External Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5700.13 (series)
 (c) Coast Guard Military Medals and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25 (series)
 (d) Coast Guard Civilian Awards Manual, COMDTINST M12451.1 (series)

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction establishes policy and provides guidance for administering the Coast Guard’s External Affairs Awards Program in conjunction with References (a) through (c). The External Affairs Awards Program consists of the John J. Jaskot Governmental Affairs Officer of the Year Award, Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award, Commander Jim Simpson Award, and Public Service Awards.
2. ACTION. All Coast Guard unit Commanders, Commanding Officers, Officers-In-Charge, Deputy/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. 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.
5. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
 - a. Commandant (CG-092) reviewed the development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it, and determined that this policy falls under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion A3. No further environmental analysis is necessary in accordance with the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION

- b. This Instruction will not result in any substantial change to existing environmental conditions or violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws relating to the protection of the environment. It is the responsibility of the action proponent to evaluate all future specific actions resulting from this policy for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), other applicable environmental mandates, and the U.S. Coast Guard Environmental Planning Policy, COMDTINST 5090.1 (series).
6. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following web sites. Internet: <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/directives>, and CGPortal: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
7. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. Records created as a result of this Instruction, regardless of format or media, must be managed in accordance with the records retention schedules located on the Records Resource Center CGPortal site: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/cg61/CG611/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
8. JOHN J. JASKOT GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS OFFICER OF THE YEAR AWARD. The Office of Congressional and Governmental Affairs, Commandant (CG-0921), is the sponsor and administrator of this award program. Prescriptive competition guidance is announced annually.
 - a. This award is named in honor of the late Commander John J. (J.J.) Jaskot (1954-2020) who set the standard for representing the Coast Guard to the U.S. Congress. After his retirement in 1996, he remained active in the Congressional Affairs Alumni network serving as a good friend and mentor to countless personnel assigned to Coast Guard Congressional Affairs.
 - b. Background. The Coast Guard employs full-time and collateral-duty Government Affairs Officers (GAO) at the Area, District, Force Readiness Command, and unit level. In some cases, the GAO may also be the Public Affairs Officer (PAO) or the External Affairs Officer (EAO). GAOs are responsible for assisting senior leadership with overseeing and coordinating outreach within their areas of responsibility (AOR), keeping Members of Congress and staff informed of the Coast Guard's activities, and providing an established link if they have questions or concerns. GAOs are critical to advancing the Commandant's Strategic Intent by executing congressional engagements, developing professional relationships, and building trust with Members of Congress and their state/district staff in their AORs.
 - c. Judging. A judging panel comprised of Commandant (CG-0921) personnel will evaluate the nominations and provide its recommendations to the Chief of Commandant (CG-0921) for final approval. Civilian nominees will undergo suitability vetting in accordance with policy outlined in Reference (d). The GAO Award recipient will be announced at the annual Commandant (CG-092) External Affairs Conference.

- d. Eligibility. Only active duty, civilian, reserve, and Auxiliary members assigned to GAO responsibilities are eligible.
 - e. Criteria. Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
 - (1) Excelled in executing GAO responsibilities during a given calendar year (special consideration may be given to difficult circumstances such as a politically challenging environment or natural disaster);
 - (2) Maintain excellent communication with the Office of Congressional and Governmental Affairs, keeping it apprised of congressional engagements, issues, and working relationships;
 - (3) Taken initiative/used innovative ways to maximize opportunities to disseminate information to stakeholders or to build support for Coast Guard operations or reputation.
9. PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARDS. The Office of Public Affairs, Commandant (CG-0922), is the sponsor and administrator of this award program. Prescriptive competition guidance is announced annually.
- a. Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award. The Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award is named in honor of the renowned author and Coast Guard journalist. The award recognizes the achievement of individuals whose efforts and published works have helped raise the visibility of the Coast Guard.
 - (1) Judging. Commandant (CG-0922) selects a judging panel to evaluate Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award entries. The judging panel will provide its recommendations to Commandant (CG-0922) for final approval. Civilian nominees will undergo suitability vetting in accordance with policy outlined in Reference (d). Chief Journalist Alex Haley Award recipients will be announced following final approval from Commandant (CG-0922).
 - (2) Eligibility. This competition is open to Coast Guard active duty, reserve, civilian, and Auxiliary members. Members of other military services are not eligible to compete. Government contract employees, and products where content is produced by government contractors, are not eligible to compete.
 - (a) Coast Guard public affairs specialists may compete in all categories. Public affairs specialists are defined as active duty, reserve, Auxiliarists, and civilian members filling a full-time public affairs position.
 - (b) Individual Coast Guard active duty, reserve, civilian, and Auxiliary members, not filling a full-time public affairs position, will compete separately from full-time public affairs professionals.

b. Commander Jim Simpson Award. The Commander Jim Simpson Award is named in honor of the late public affairs officer who is best known for his efforts to raise the Coast Guard's visibility through the news media. The award recognizes a unit's excellence in its entire public affairs program.

(1) Judging. Commandant (CG-0922) selects a judging panel to evaluate Commander Jim Simpson Award entries. The judging panel will provide its recommendations to Commandant (CG-0922) for final approval. Commander Jim Simpson Award recipients will be announced following final approval from Commandant (CG-0922).

(2) Eligibility. The Commander Jim Simpson Award recognizes Coast Guard active duty, reserve, and civilian members assigned to Coast Guard units. Eligibility is not restricted to public affairs specialists or full-time public affairs officers. Members of other military services are not authorized to compete in any category.

(a) Public affairs offices may compete for the Coast Guard Public Affairs Office of the Year award category of the Commander Jim Simpson Awards. Public affairs offices are those teams of public affairs professionals who are assigned to Coast Guard Area or District command cadre. District public affairs detachments are not eligible for this award.

(b) All other Coast Guard units, including training centers, may compete in the Outstanding Unit Achievement in Coast Guard Public Affairs award category of the Commander Jim Simpson Awards within their respective category.

10. PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS. The Office of External Outreach and Heritage, Commandant (CG-0923), is the sponsor of the Coast Guard's Public Service Awards program.

a. Background. Public service awards recognize private citizens, groups, or organizations for helping the Coast Guard carry out its missions. Any Coast Guard member can nominate an individual or organization for a Public Service Award through his or her chain of command. The level of award should be determined by the extent of the contribution, not necessarily by the stature of the awardee. For concerns about what level is appropriate, contact your District public affairs office.

b. Eligibility. The awards may be given to people or organizations not directly affiliated with the Coast Guard. A nominee who was eligible at the time of an action remains eligible if later affiliated with the Coast Guard. Military and civilian personnel of the Coast Guard are not eligible. Actions eligible for Coast Guard Reserve, Coast Guard Auxiliary, DHS, DoD or other service medals and awards are not eligible for public service awards. Reservists and Auxiliarists are eligible when it is clearly demonstrated that no other award is appropriate. Those having a profit-making tie to the Coast Guard are not eligible unless their actions are clearly beyond the scope of that relationship and not performed merely in self-interest. Individuals already awarded the Gold or Silver

Lifesaving Medal for the same act are ineligible. A letter of appreciation may recognize modest contributions.

- c. Award Format. A citation is required for the two senior awards and is optional for the others. The two senior awards also include a medal set; the other three levels include a lapel pin. Each award includes a two-sided folder with signed certificate. Light blue matting, 11”X14”, one-inch wide, is used to frame the certificate. All directorates and field units are responsible for maintaining supplies.
- d. Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award (DPSA). This is the highest public recognition (other than the Gold and Silver Life-Saving Medals) that the Commandant of the Coast Guard may award.
 - (1) Award: Signed Distinguished Public Service Award Certificate, Form CG-4769; Distinguished Public Service Award Citation, Form CG-4769A; medal set.
 - (2) Signed by: Three- or four-star flag officers.
 - (3) Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
 - (a) Extraordinary heroism in advancing the Coast Guard’s mission;
 - (b) Exceptional coordination and/or cooperation in matters pertaining to the Coast Guard’s responsibilities;
 - (c) Personal and direct contribution to the Coast Guard that had a direct bearing on the accomplishment of the Coast Guard’s responsibilities to those it serves.
- e. Coast Guard Meritorious Public Service Award (MPSA). This is the second-highest award of this series, and should be used for substantial contributions that do not meet the criteria of a DPSA.
 - (1) Award: Signed Public Service Commendation Certificate, Form CG-4770; Public Service Commendation Citation, Form CG-4770A; medal set.
 - (2) Signed by: Any flag or SES equivalent.
 - (3) Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
 - (a) Unusual courage in advancing a Coast Guard mission;
 - (b) Substantial contribution to the Coast Guard that produced tangible results that measurably improved, expedited, or clarified administrative procedures, scientific progress, work methods, manufacturing techniques, personnel problems,

community relations activities, or public information. The activity does not have to directly affect an overall Coast Guard mission;

- (c) Specific individual accomplishments that provide unique benefits to the public.
- f. Coast Guard Public Service Commendation. This award is intended primarily to recognize personal and beneficial contributions to the Coast Guard's responsibilities. The activity does not have to directly affect an overall Coast Guard mission.
 - (1) Award: Signed Public Service Commendation Certificate, Form CG-4771; optional Public Service Commendation Citation, Form CG-4771A; a lapel pin.
 - (2) Signed by: Any flag or SES equivalent.
 - (3) Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one or more of the following:
 - (a) Courage or initiative in advancing one or more Coast Guard missions;
 - (b) Beneficial contribution that may have affected the Coast Guard in only one mission area or a limited geographical area.
- c. Coast Guard Certificate of Merit. This award recognizes significant endeavors by private individuals and groups.
 - (1) Award: Signed Certificate of Merit, Form CG-4772; optional Certificate of Merit Citation (Stationary), Form CG-4772A; a lapel pin.
 - (2) Signed by: Any Headquarters office chief, commanding officer, officer-in-charge, or anyone authorized to sign the next highest award.
 - (3) Criteria: Nominee must have accomplished one of the following:
 - (a) Displayed initiative in advancing one or more of the Coast Guard's missions;
 - (b) Significant effort that resulted in the completion of a project, program, contract, or other effort that is so significantly beneficial to one or more of the Coast Guard's missions and/or statutory responsibilities as to require a tangible expression of appreciation. This effort may be limited geographically.
- h. Coast Guard Certificate of Appreciation.
 - (1) Award: Signed Certificate of Appreciation, Form CG-4773; Certificate of Appreciation Citation, Form CG-4773A; a lapel pin.

- (2) Signed by: Any Headquarters office chief, commanding officer, officer-in-charge, or anyone authorized to sign the next highest award.
- (3) Criteria: Nominee must have exhibited public-spirited efforts that benefit Coast Guard personnel or missions.

i. Procedures.

- (1) Distinguished Public Service Awards will normally be signed by the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS), Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO), or Area Commanders. DPSAs to be signed by DCMS and DCO must be routed through the requesting office's chain of command. Once approved, the requesting office will provide the citation text and signature-ready certificate to DCMS or DCO three weeks prior to the award's presentation. Atlantic and Pacific Area units and staffs will prepare DPSAs for their Area Commander's signature, obtaining approval through their chain of command. DCMS, DCO, and Area Commanders will maintain their own stock of supplies including folders, mats, certificate and citation forms, and medal sets and pins.
- (2) Commandant (CG-00) and Vice Commandant (CG-09) will only sign DPSAs that they present personally. When Commandant (CG-00) or Vice Commandant (CG-09) is requested to sign a DPSA by a Headquarters directorate or field unit, the award must first be routed through and approved by the requesting office's chain of command. Upon approval, a draft of the award will be submitted to Commandant (CG-00), accompanied by a scheduling request, which will list three prospective dates for presentation. These two documents must be received by Commandant (CG-00) at least 45 days prior to the first identified presentation date. Drafts and scheduling requests should be emailed to USCG.EXEC@uscg.mil. If approved for presentation, Commandant (CG-00) will notify the point of contact for the DPSA of the selected presentation date, and will prepare the citation text and certificate. Commandant (CG-00) will maintain supplies for these DPSAs, including folders, mats, certificate and citation forms, and medal sets. If not approved for signature by Commandant (CG-00) or Vice Commandant (CG-09) at the DPSA level, the award will be returned to the point of contact for re-write or for consideration of the next lower award.
- (3) All units and offices awarding Meritorious Public Service Awards and Coast Guard Public Service Commendations will prepare the citation text and certificate and then route these through the chain of command for final approval and signature by their Director or Assistant Commandant.
- (4) Certificates of Merit and Certificates of Appreciation can be signed by any Headquarters office Chief, Commanding Officer/Officer-in-Charge or anyone authorized to sign the next higher award.
- (5) All units and offices will provide Commandant (CG-09232) recipient names, levels and dates of all PSAs they award. Commandant (CG-09232) will maintain this

information to ensure duplicate awards are not given. Units and offices will consult with Commandant (CG-09232) prior to PSA preparation to ensure they are not duplicating previously-awarded PSAs.

(6) Commandant (CG-09232) is the point of contact for any questions concerning PSAs.

j. Supplies. All directorates and field units are responsible for maintaining supplies. Most supplies can be ordered through the Surface Forces Logistics Center in Baltimore, Maryland. Public Service Award certificates, blank stock for award citations (item 11 below CG7530-01-095-5952), presentation folders and lapel pins can be ordered through the Surface Forces Logistics Center in Baltimore at the following link: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/sflc/Pages/ALD/CatGenStores.aspx>. Requests are submitted by MILSTRIP. Downloadable citation templates can be obtained through the "FIND A FORM" search function on the main CGPortal page at <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil>. At the discretion of units and offices, small letter sized blue presentation folders can be used in lieu of the large white presentation folders for awards below the MPSA level. List of forms, medals and awards for Public Service Awards are managed by SFLC.

(1) Distinguished Public Service Award Certificate, Form CG-4769 ACN 7530-01-GF9-0007

(2) Distinguished Public Service Award Citation Sheet, Form CG-4769A, can be downloaded electronically from CGPortal.

(3) Meritorious Public Service Award Certificate, CG-4770 ACN 7530-00-F02-5030

(4) Meritorious Public Service Award Citation Sheet, Form CG-4770A, can be downloaded electronically from CGPortal.

(5) Public Service Commendation Certificate, Form CG-4771 ACN 7530-00-F02-4970

(6) Public Service Commendation Citation Sheet, Form CG-4771A, can be downloaded electronically from CGPortal.

(7) Certificate of Merit Certificate, Form CG-4772 ACN 7530-00-F02-4990

(8) Certificate of Merit Citation Sheet, Form CG-4772A, can be downloaded electronically from CGPortal.

(9) Certificate of Appreciation Certificate, Form CG-4773 ACN 7530-00-F02-5010

(10) Certificate of Appreciation Citation Sheet, Form CG-4773A, can be downloaded electronically from CGPortal.

(11) CG7530-01-095-5952 – Certificate/Deed Paper

- (12) CG7530-01-GF3-2010 – Award Filler is 8 ½ x 11 inches, portrait orientation with Coast Guard mark, emblem, and stripe, and is printed on Certificate/Deed Paper.
- (13) Large white Public Service Award Presentation Folders, ACN 7510-01-GG0-1102
- (14) Small blue Public Service Award Presentation Folders, CG7510-01-097-6004
- (15) Public Service Award Lapel Pin, NSN 8455-01-370-2364
- (16) Distinguished and Meritorious Public Service Award medal sets are available through the Ira Green Company at 1-800-663-7487, IMPAC Program Coordinator or email <https://www.iragreen.com/>. Allow two to three weeks for delivery of medal sets. The Distinguished and Meritorious Public Service Award medal sets are not necessarily limited to the Ira Green Company but Commandant (CG-09232) is not currently aware of any other providers. Any company that wishes to have their Distinguished and Meritorious Public Service Award medal sets reviewed by the Coast Guard should contact Commandant (CG-09232).
- (17) Light blue mats that are used in the large white award folders can be ordered from any art supply store or from Internet company MATcutter, design #4842301, color m150741 azure on tru-wht core at 1-888-275-2464 or on the website at: <http://www.matcutter.com/home.php>. The dimensions are external edges 14 x 11 inches with internal cuts of 10 ¾ x 8 ¼ inches.
11. FORMS/REPORTS. The forms referenced in this Instruction are available on the Coast Guard Standard Workstation or on the Internet: www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-C4IT-CG-6/The-Office-of-Information-Management-CG-61/Forms-Management/.
12. SECTION 508. This Instruction was created to adhere to Accessibility guidelines and standards as promulgated by the U.S. Access Board. If changes are needed, please communicate with the Coast Guard Section 508 Program Management Office at: Section.508@uscg.mil.
13. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Units and individuals may recommend changes in writing via the chain of command to Commandant (CG-092), U. S. Coast Guard Stop 7103, 2703 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave SE, Washington, DC 20593-7103.

/M. M. DEAN/
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Director of Governmental and Public Affairs