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COMDTINST 3120.4B
09 DEC 2021

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 3120.4B

Subj: COAST GUARD STANDARD OPERATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS/GLOBAL FORCE MANAGEMENT

Ref: (a) Commandant’s Executive Decision-Making (EDM) Process, COMDTINST 5420.40 (series)
(b) Standard Operational Planning Process/Global Force Management Process Guide

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction updates policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities for the Coast Guard’s Standard Operational Planning Process (SOPP) and for Coast Guard Global Force Management (GFM). The acronym SOPP/GFM is used to describe a deliberative planning process for translating Coast Guard enterprise-wide strategic intent into effective mission execution. Coast Guard SOPP/GFM serves as the central mechanism to integrate long-range planning and budgeting through annual collaborative contributions and feedback, mission priorities, program guidance, and resource apportionment and allocation. Furthermore, the SOPP/GFM process ensures resource alignment with National, Department, and Coast Guard priorities. The primary objectives of SOPP/GFM are to:

- a. Standardize operational planning products for use by the Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO), the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS), Area Commanders, Districts, Sectors, and other operational commands;
- b. Establish a Coast Guard GFM process and governance structure including a Flag-level Global Force Management Board (GFMB) and O-6 level Global Force Management Board Working Group (GFMB-WG);
- c. Adapt the SOPP/GFM cycle to align with the Department of Defense GFM process and account for other departmental and interagency requests for Coast Guard forces;

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- d. Translate and communicate Coast Guard strategic intent, through planning guidance and direction, to influence mission execution;
 - e. Measure operational mission performance that informs subsequent strategic, budgetary, readiness, and operational planning efforts; and
 - f. Incorporate risk-informed methods and processes at the strategic and operational levels to inform decisions regarding mission prioritization, evaluation of mission performance targets, and force allocation to respond to dynamic shifts in mission demand.
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.
 3. AUTHORIZED RELEASE. Internet release is authorized.
 4. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Coast Guard Standard Operational Planning Process / Global Force Management, COMDTINST 3120.4A is cancelled.
 5. BACKGROUND. This update incorporates improvements to the SOPP/GFM process that evolved since initial implementation, and aligns decision support and adjudication processes with Reference (a). The Coast Guard's SOPP/GFM process continues to mature as an effective, systematic, and standardized operational planning process to collaboratively develop strategic guidance that communicates direction, priorities, and resource allocation and apportionment decisions throughout the chain of command. The process ensures alignment between Sectors, Districts, Areas, and Deputy Commandants, and provides enterprise guidance, while preserving the autonomy of operational units, to respond as events require. On-scene initiative and decision-making remain key factors in all successful Coast Guard operations.
 6. DISCLAIMER. This Instruction 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.
 7. MAJOR CHANGES. The major changes to this Instruction include updates to reflect the current organizational structure, alignment, and naming convention for Coast Guard Headquarters offices. Moreover, this Instruction was significantly condensed as a result of updating and expanding the Standard Operational Planning Process/Global Force Management Process Guide, Reference (b). Reference (b) should be reviewed alongside this Instruction to provide a complete and current picture of SOPP/GFM structure, guidance, and products.
 8. SCOPE AND AUTHORITIES. Pursuant to the requirements of the Coast Guard Organization Manual, COMDTINST M5400.7 (series), the Deputy Commandant for Operations will develop and oversee execution of operational policy, planning, resource acquisition and international engagement at the strategic level; establish and maintain relations with interagency partners and maritime stakeholders to support policy development; and ensure alignment among mission areas to optimize mission execution as the recognized international leader in the Maritime Safety, Security and Stewardship.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.

- a. Commandant Office of Environmental Management (CG-47) reviewed the development of this Commandant 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).
- b. This Commandant 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).

10. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) web sites. Internet: www.dcms.uscg.mil/directives/, and CGPortal: <https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

11. 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>.

12. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE. Operational planning as described in this Instruction refers to the annual cycle of planning for Coast Guard operations and contingency preparedness. While it does not specifically address dynamic field-level and crisis-action planning, the information generated from SOPP/GFM will serve to inform these other planning processes. Out-year Requests for Forces (RFF) or Requests for Assistance (RFA) are inputs into the SOPP/GFM planning cycle and will be coordinated accordingly. This Instruction addresses current year changes to force apportionment levels for planned operations previously developed and approved through the SOPP/GFM cycle, however, it does not address emergent current year RFFs and RFAs as a result of responses to unanticipated contingencies or unplanned response operations.

13. DISCUSSION. Enclosure (1) depicts the annual SOPP/GFM process and timeline, including the general sequencing, significant milestones, and deliverables. The supplemental Standard Operational Planning Process/Global Force Management Process Guide, Reference (b), is updated annually and provides additional details, including the Operational Planning Calendar and detailed descriptions of required planning products, and their relationships.

14. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS.

- a. Area Major Cutter Support Memo: Provides Area resourcing estimates of District mission support requirements during the resource allocation process for enterprise consideration. The memo should explain the basis of how support levels were determined, intended employment (e.g., SAR, LMR, etc), and operational risk if the projected major cutter support level cannot be fully sourced.

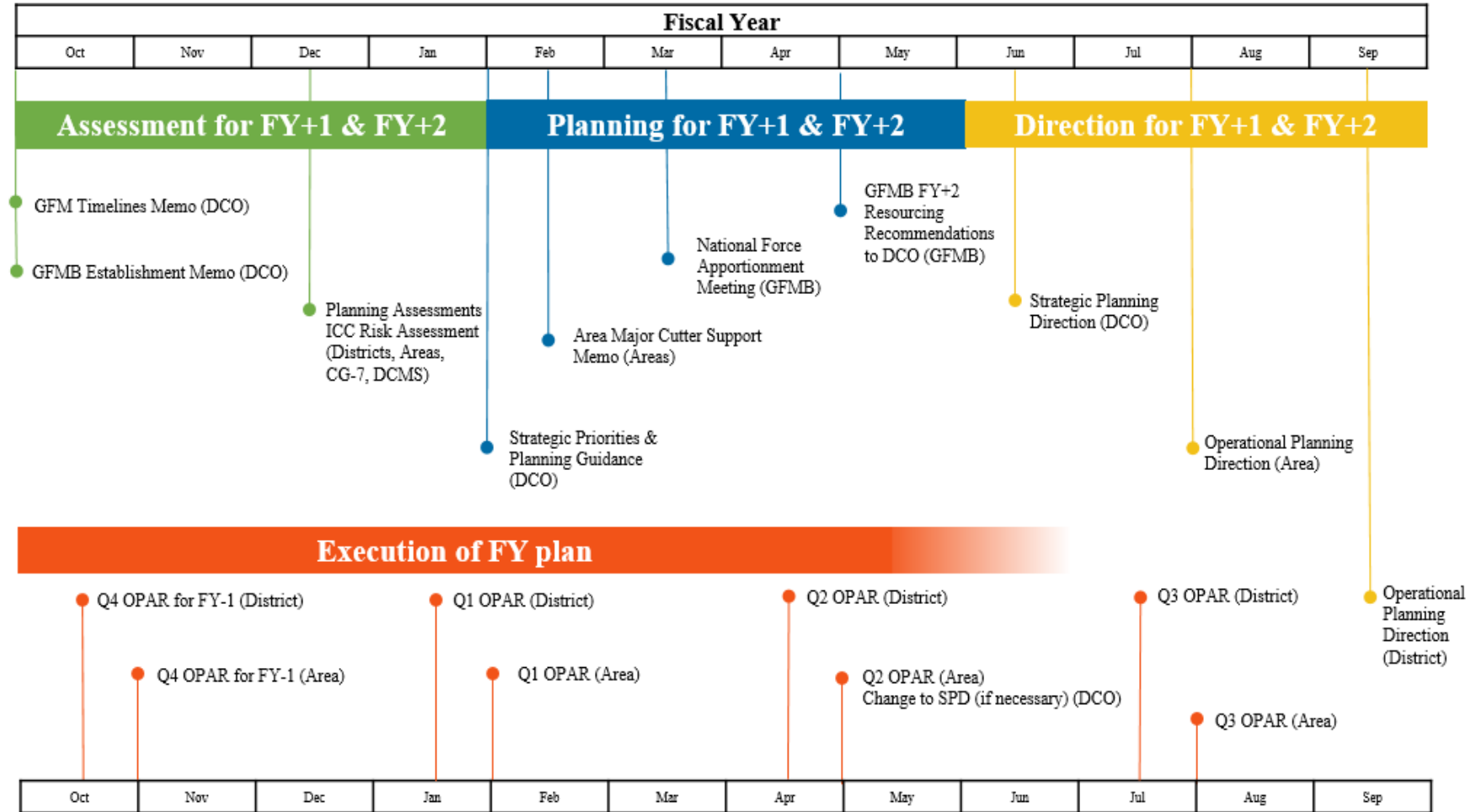
- b. DCO's Timelines and Guidance Memo: Issued by DCO to initiate the planning cycle by directing the development of planning support products, establishing timelines, and providing guidance for Strategic Planning Direction development.
- c. Force Allocation: For the purposes of this process, "force allocation" refers to asset distribution and assignment to a specific mission, purpose, or supported external RFF.
- d. Force Apportionment: Distribution of budgeted operational asset hours by mission, primarily to establish operational ceilings and facilitate tracking that correspond to the service's budgeted capacities.
- e. Coast Guard Global Force Management Board (CG GFMB): Advisory body to DCO for current and out-year mission management, asset allocation, and resource hour apportionment.
- f. Coast Guard Global Force Management Board Working Group (CG GFMB-WG): Provides enterprise-wide Subject Matter Expert (SME) and Action Officer support to the GFMB in any capacity necessary to facilitate informed decision-making and development of resourcing recommendations.
- g. Coast Guard Global Force Management Board Establishment Memo: Issued annually by DCO to identify flag-level membership in the Coast Guard GFMB. The memo also identifies membership of the GFMB-WG and establishes the meeting calendar for the SOPP/GFM planning cycle.
- h. National Force Apportionment Meeting (NFAM): DCO-sponsored enterprise operational planning conference that supports development of asset allocation and resource hour apportionment recommendations. NFAM provides an opportunity for SOPP/GFM planners, mission managers, resource claimants, and other stakeholders to discuss asset capacity, resource limitations, operational constraints, and competing demands to ensure broad understanding of the enterprise operational planning landscape.
- i. Operational Performance Assessment Reports (OPAR): Transparent feedback mechanism that provides a quarterly assessment of operations, mission performance, resources expended, capability gaps, and recommendations to improve operational planning and effectiveness.
- j. Operational Planning Direction (OPD): Provides Area and District Commander direction for subordinate commanders to follow in executing Coast Guard missions. It is intended to assist subordinate commanders in making resource apportionment decisions.
- k. Planning Assessment (PA): DCMS, Area Commanders, District Commanders, and the Assistant Commandant for Capability (CG-7) each provide an assessment to address anticipated operational and mission support environments. Planning Assessment templates and focus areas are described in Reference (b).
- l. Risk Assessment: The Intelligence Coordination Center provides an annual assessment to inform planners and stakeholders of trends and analysis that may influence local, regional, or global Coast Guard mission management and response postures.

- m. Strategic Planning Direction (SPD): Culmination of SOPP/GFM strategic and operational planning efforts in a single source document. Issued annually by DCO, the SPD is the Coast Guard's primary mechanism for providing Area Commanders with operational guidance, direction, resource capacity apportionment, and asset allocations to strategic priorities across all missions.
 - n. Strategic Priorities & Planning Guidance (SPPG): Provides direction and serves as year-long guidance to the CG GFMB and CG GFMB-WG for Strategic Planning Direction resource allocation and apportionment recommendations or adjustments as required by the dynamic nature of our global missions. The SPPG is developed annually by DCO.
15. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. This Instruction requires all Coast Guard organizations involved in operational planning related to guidance, prioritization, resource apportionment, monitoring, and performance assessment to employ the Coast Guard SOPP and adhere to the roles and requirements defined in Reference (b). The annual Coast Guard SOPP/GFM timeline, process, and responsibilities for key deliverables are depicted on Enclosure (1).
16. FORMS/REPORTS. Applicable forms and reports described in Reference (b) are located on the DCO-51 Coast Guard Portal site under the tab entitled "SOPP/GFM Library."
17. 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.
18. REQUESTS FOR CHANGES. Address questions concerning Standard Operational Planning Process/Global Force Management (SOPP/GFM) to Commandant (DCO-51), Planning and Integration Division within the Office of Planning, Integration and Workforce Support (DCO-5).

/SCOTT A. BUSCHMAN/
Vice Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Deputy Commandant for Operations

Encl: (1) Annual Coast Guard SOPP/GFM Process Overview

Annual Coast Guard SOPP/GFM Process Overview



Important Notes The milestones are an indicator of the general SOPP/GFM timeline and major inputs/products. Refer to the GFM Timelines and GFMB Establishment Memos for annual meeting dates. Additional SOPP/GFM details and product templates can be found in Reference (b).