Navy Family Ombudsman

Program Manual

Compassionate

Caring

Knowledgeable

Giving

Committed

Honorable

Supportive

Professional

Confidante

Lifeline

Friendly

Empowering

Diligent

Dependable

Loyal

Serving Our Families Around the World

CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Welcome to the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual

Inside these pages, you will find a wealth of information about Navy's Ombudsman Program, including some very recent changes that strengthen and improve the ability of these terrific volunteers to help Sailors, families, and commands stay connected and informed.

There has never been a better time for such a manual. The world around us is changing faster than we can sometimes grasp, and the demands being placed on our people and their families reflect the dynamic security environment in which we must now operate. Gone are the days when we can plan on deployments merely by looking at a calendar, and gone are the days we can predict exactly how and where our Sailors will be engaged. We must all be ready all the time, for every day is pre-deployment day. This is the essence of the culture of "continuous readiness" we must all embrace.

Few people help us maintain continuous readiness better than Navy Family Ombudsmen. Ombudsmen ease the strain of deployments so our Sailors can focus on the important work they must do for the Nation. They offer advice and referral on a wide range of issues and concerns, everything from child care to housing. They even play a major role in crisis response, helping command families prepare and respond to disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and all manner of emergencies.

If it is likely to happen -- or even unlikely -- chances are an Ombudsman knows how to handle it.

This new Program Manual will improve their ability to do so. Updated to reflect important provisions in the new Navy Family Ombudsman instruction, it offers valuable implementation guidance, information, and resources to give our Ombudsmen the confidence they need to give others the confidence they will most assuredly need during this critical and uncertain time in our Nation's history. Perhaps most important of all the new guidelines is the requirement for every command -- at sea and ashore -- to make available to every Navy family a trained and ready Ombudsman.

I believe family readiness is tied to combat readiness, and combat readiness depends on a culture of continuous readiness. A strong Navy Family Ombudsman Program remains one of the surest and most effective means by which we ensure continuous readiness. Please read and use this manual to stay ready, stay connected, and stay informed.

And for those of you volunteering your time as Navy Family Ombudsmen, thank you for your service on behalf of our Sailors and their families!

Sincerely,

M. G. MULLEN
Admiral, U.S. Navy

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Introduction

Navy Family Ombudsmen are a group of extremely dedicated volunteers who are trained to assist Navy families successfully navigate the challenges of the Navy lifestyle. This *Manual* is a supplement to OPNAVINST 1750.1F which governs the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. The manual is divided into sections for the commanding officer, ombudsman, and Fleet and Family Support Center in addition to this introduction that provides an overview of:

- The Benefits of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.
- The History of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.
- Program Structure.
- Roles and Responsibilities.
- OPNAVINST 1750.1F.

1. What is an Ombudsman?

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006, entry for ombudsman is:

om • buds • man (om budz man) n.

A person who investigates complaints and mediates fair settlements, especially between aggrieved parties such as consumers or students and an institution or organization.

Or, a government official, especially in Scandinavian countries, who investigates citizens' complaints against the government or its functionaries.

Ombudsmen are volunteers, appointed by the commanding officer, to serve as an information link between command leadership and Navy families. They are trained to disseminate information both up and down the chain of command, including official Department of the Navy and command information, command climate issues, local quality of life (QOL) improvement opportunities, and "good deals" around the community. They also provide resource referrals when needed, and are instrumental in

resolving family issues before they require extensive command attention. The command ombudsman program is shaped by the commanding officer's perceived needs of his/her command. The command ombudsman is appointed by and works under the guidance of the commanding officer who determines the priorities of the program, the roles and relationships of those involved in it, and the type and level of support it will receive.

2. NAVY FAMILY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM BENEFITS

In a 2005 study of the ombudsman program conducted by the Navy Inspector General, 83% of respondents indicated that a fully supported ombudsman program improves family readiness, and that family readiness improves mission readiness.

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program:

- Ensures a responsive and accurate source of information between commands and families.
- Provides an effective, well-trained information and referral service.
- Provides a proactive information and education resource via carelines, newsletters, telephone/email trees, and briefings.
- Delivers a positive spokesperson and role model for family members.
- In conjunction with the Navy's sponsor program, can facilitate the smooth transition of Sailors and their families during PCS moves.
- Has proved to be invaluable during natural and man-made disasters.
- Serve as a critical link for families during mobilization or geographic separation.

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program enables service members to be more focused and productive at work because their families have a safety net. Since the Navy recruits Sailors, but retains families, families who are satisfied with the Navy lifestyle will more likely choose to stay Navy.

If the approximate 4,000 Navy ombudsmen worldwide each volunteer 10 hours per month each year, the total estimated value of their service to the Navy is over $8.5 million dollars per year.

This estimate is derived by using the 2005 average paraprofessional hourly rate of $18.04 per hour according to *Independent Sector* <http://www.independentsector.org> a coalition of leading nonprofits, foundations, and corporations whose mission is to strengthen not-for-profit initiative, philanthropy, and citizen action.

3. Navy Family Ombudsman Program History

The Navy's philosophy of developing healthy, self-reliant families is epitomized through the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. The ombudsman concept originated in Scandinavian countries where they investigated citizens' complaints against the government or its functionaries. Today the concept is widely utilized in the fields of government, business, and healthcare.

Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr. created the Navy Family Ombudsman Program on 14 September 1970 by issuing Z Gram 24. Admiral Michael G. Mullen, CNO, re-emphasized the importance of the program in 2007, signing an updated instruction and highlighting the requirement that all Navy families have access to a Navy Family Ombudsman.

4. Program Structure and Governance

The primary guidance for the Navy Family Ombudsman Program is **OPNAVINST 1750.1F** released in 2007.

Structure of the program includes:

- **Chief of Naval Operations** appoints one or more **Ombudsmen-at-Large** whose guidance is defined by their letter of appointment.
- **Commander, Naval Education and Training Command (NETC)** develops, maintains, and distributes Navy Family Ombudsman Program training materials.
- **Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC)** manages the Navy's overall Ombudsman Program via the **Ombudsman Program Manager** who can be contacted at <www.ffsp.navy.mil>.
- **Ombudsman Program Advisory Group (OPAG).** The Ombudsman Program Advisory Group (OPAG) is a working group of individuals, convened at the discretion of CNIC (N91), to include the Ombudsman-at-Large, CNO (N13) representative, CNIC Force Master Chief, Fleet and Family Support Program Director, Ombudsman Program Manager and Navy Reserve Force Family Support Program Manager. The OPAG includes augmentation by representatives of other activities as needed to advise on policy, special projects and curriculum development based on input received from Regional Ombudsman Advisory Boards.

- **Regional Ombudsman Advisory Boards (ROAB).** Regional Ombudsman Advisory Boards are appointed and convened by the Regional Commander. Membership is identified by the Regional Commander. Responsibilities of ROABs are to support and advise area assemblies. ROABs are not policy-making or supervisory bodies and do not interfere with the operation of individual command ombudsman programs. ROABs meet at least semi-annually. Recommendations and observations should be forwarded to the CNIC Ombudsman Program Manager.
- A **Regional or Base Commander** sponsors a local ombudsman assembly in support of tenant commands to provide ongoing training, policy discussion and clarification, assist commands to recognize and show appreciation to their ombudsmen, ensure maintenance of a current roster of area ombudsmen in the absence of a local Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC), ensure appropriate ombudsman roles in installation disaster preparedness, and do other functions as directed. The base or regional commander appoints an ombudsman, and perhaps an advisory group, to run the local ombudsman assembly.
- The local **Fleet and Family Support Center** provides Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT) and support to area commands and ombudsmen.
- **Commanding Officers** execute the Navy Family Ombudsman Program within their command.

Ombudsmen are Navy volunteers who are:

• Part of the command support team.

• Work within the guidelines and policies established by the commanding officer.

5. Ombudsmen Roles and Responsibilities

Commanding officers tailor the ombudsman program to fit the needs of their command. Therefore, job descriptions vary slightly from command to command. Ombudsman duties should be defined and documented in a letter, signed by the commanding officer, at the time of appointment. Command ombudsmen are official Navy volunteers who are part of the command support team and work within the guidelines and policies established by the commanding officer. Command ombudsmen:

- Serve as a liaison between command families and the command.
- Keep the CO informed regarding the general morale, health, and welfare of command families.
- Communicate regularly with the command and command family members.
- Contact families upon arrival to introduce themselves and explain how they can be of help to the family.

- Develop and distribute a command-approved monthly or quarterly newsletter, or if not possible, contribute to a command-approved column in appropriate publications.
- Establish and maintain an up-to-date and timely telephone tree or use the command careline to rapidly distribute and gather information.
- Are aware of services provided and contact information of the Fleet and Family Support Centers and other support organizations available to Navy families.
- Maintain current records on performance of their ombudsman duties in accordance with a Privacy Act system of records as is covered in Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT).
- Serve as a source of emergency and crisis information.
- Represent the command at local ombudsman assembly meetings.
- Avoid conflicts of interest.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Collect and submit data on services provided.
- Coordinate services for families during mobilization or geographic separation.
- Perform other official roles, functions, or duties assigned by the CO.

Other types of duties COs may assign include:

- Assist in the organization and implementation of the command welcome program and participate in the indoctrination and orientation programs for new command members.
- Represent the command on committees, boards, and working groups in the military or civilian community.
- Establish, maintain, or contribute an up-to-date and timely command telephone careline which is a recorded message providing information to families.

6. Roles and Functions Ombudsmen DO NOT Assume

Ombudsmen are advocates for both the command and command families and are trained to provide information and make referrals. They are not social directors. A formal or informal spouse or family support or readiness group conducts social activities; however, it is appropriate and encouraged for ombudsmen to support and participate in these activities. Announcements of social events that promote the morale, health, and welfare of command families may be included in the ombudsman newsletter.

The ombudsman, by virtue of training and experience, must empower family members to help themselves. The ombudsman maintains an up-to-date list of resources so family members can be referred effectively to the appropriate agency. Ombudsmen responsibilities do not include:

- Providing childcare.
- Transporting people.
- Lending money.
- Allowing people to stay with them in their home.
- Doing for others what they must learn to do for themselves.

7. Overview of OPNAVINST 1750.1F

The original Navy instruction, OPNAVINST 1750.1 shifted the focus of the ombudsman program away from a grievance-processing role and expanded its scope to identify the command ombudsman as an appropriate person to assist the commanding officer in his or her responsibilities for the morale and welfare of command families.

Updates and clarification to the Navy Ombudsman Program have evolved. OPNAVINST 1750.1F published in 2007 provides the most current guidance. A brief overview of OPNAVINST 1750.1F is provided below. Contents of this instruction are thoroughly reviewed in Ombudsman Basic Training. A copy of OPNAVINST 1750.1F in its entirety follows this section.

The instruction includes:

- List of relevant guidance in support of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.
- Detailed definition of program structure and roles and responsibilities of the CNO to the unit commanding officer.
- List of required forms and reports concludes the instruction.

Enclosures to OPNAVINST 1750.1F include:

- Enclosure 1 Policy Waiver Request Procedures.
- Enclosure 2 Chief of Naval Operations Ombudsmen-at-Large Duties.
- Enclosure 3 Fleet and Family Support Center Duties in Support of Ombudsmen.
- Enclosure 4 Ombudsman Program Advisory Group (OPAG) and Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board (ROAB)
- Enclosure 5 Ombudsman Assembly.
- Enclosure 6 Program Support.
- Enclosure 7 Reporting Requirements for Child Abuse, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Assault.

8. Navy Family Ombudsman Program OPNAVINST 1750.1F

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER

OPNAVINST 1750.1F
CNO
30 Mar 07

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1750.1F

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: NAVY FAMILY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

Ref: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990
(b) OPNAVINST 3120.32C
(c) 5 U.S.C., Chapter 81, Subsection 552a
(d) SECNAVINST 5211.5E
(e) 18 U.S.C., Chapter 11
(f) DOD 5500.7-R of Aug 93
(g) SECNAVINST 1752.3B
(h) 10 U.S.C., Chapter 81 and Section 1588
(i) OPNAVINST 5380.1
(j) 28 U.S.C.
(k) OPNAVINST 5218.7B
(l) BUPERSINST 1710.11C
(m) Joint Federal Travel Regulations, Appendix E
(n) NAVSO P-1000, Department of the Navy Financial Management Policy Manual, Vol 9, Ch 5
(o) COMNAVCRUITCOMINST 1754.1
(p) SECNAVINST 1754.1B
(q) SECNAVINST 1752.4A

Encl: (1) Policy Waiver Request Procedures
(2) Chief of Naval Operations Ombudsmen-at-Large Duties
(3) Fleet and Family Support Center Duties in Support of Ombudsmen
(4) Ombudsman Program Advisory Group and Regional Ombudsman Advisory Boards
(5) Ombudsman Assembly
(6) Program Support
(7) Reporting Requirements for Child Abuse, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Assault

1. Purpose. To provide policy and assign responsibility for the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. References (a) through (q) apply. This instruction is a complete revision and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 1750.1E.

3. Applicability. The provisions of this instruction apply to all Navy commands/units.

4. Discussion

a. The Navy Family Ombudsman Program is a Navy-wide program established to improve mission readiness through improved family readiness. A strong command Ombudsman Program, both ashore and afloat, will help ensure that families have the information necessary to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle. Per references (a) and (b), commanding officers/commanders are charged with the responsibility for the morale, health, and welfare of command personnel and inherently their families. The Ombudsman Program helps commanding officers/commanders have a better understanding of the welfare of the command's families. It also assists commands and their families to be better prepared to meet emergency situations. Every Command, afloat and ashore, is required to appoint an Ombudsman. Fleet, Force, and Regional Commanders, as well as their staffs, should appoint Ombudsmen for their staffs only. There is no such position as a Fleet, Force, or Regional Ombudsman. There is no hierarchy within the Ombudsman Program and there are no prescribed supervisory roles over other Ombudsmen within the Recruiting Command or throughout the Navy.

b. The Ombudsman Program was introduced to the U.S. Navy by Z-gram 24 on 14 September 1970 by the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt. Admiral Zumwalt adapted this program from a 19th century Scandinavian custom originally established by the King to give ordinary private citizens an avenue to express their grievances to high government officials. To improve family readiness, the primary focus of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program is command communications, information, and referral, while still providing an avenue for hearing about the welfare of command families.

c. Ombudsman Appreciation Day is 14 September (or the Friday preceding the 14th, if it falls on a weekend). While the 14th is of significance to the history of the program, commands are authorized to celebrate the event at any time deemed appropriate during the month of September or as soon as possible thereafter.

d. The Command Ombudsman is a volunteer who is the spouse of an active duty or selected reserve command member. If the commanding officer/commander is unable to select the spouse of an active duty or selected reserve command member, refer to enclosure (1) for waiver procedures. The Ombudsman supports the command mission by providing communications, outreach, resource referral, information, and advocacy to and for command families.

e. For the purpose of this instruction, the term command master chief also includes a chief of the boat or a command senior enlisted advisor.

5. Action

a. The Chief of Naval Operations may appoint in writing one or more Navy-wide Family Ombudsmen-at-Large. The spouse of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and the Chairman of Naval Services FamilyLine have been appointed to fill these positions. Support for Ombudsmen-at-Large will be specified in their appointing letters and at enclosure (2).

b. Commander, Navy Installations Command will:

(1) Maintain policy, establish procedures, and implement the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

(2) Publish and maintain the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual and post additional guidance and procedures for operation to the Ombudsman website at http://www.ffsp.navy.mil.

(3) Ensure the program effectively addresses family readiness issues.

(4) Adequately resource the program at management, regional, and local levels to provide sufficient training supported through Fleet and Family Support Centers, materials, website maintenance, and marketing. For a complete list of Fleet and Family Support Center support requirements, see enclosure (3).

(5) Establish training requirements and ensure sufficient training is held to support requirements. Training

will only be provided by Commander, Navy Installations Command qualified trainers using approved curriculum.

(6) Coordinate Ombudsman Basic Training with regional commanders, recruit commands, and the Navy Reserve Forces Command to ensure that Command Ombudsmen are normally able to receive this training prior to (or within six weeks of) appointment.

(7) Provide guidance on Ombudsman Advanced Training topics, curriculum, and delivery.

(8) Train, certify, and decertify Certified Ombudsman Trainiers. All training must be approved by Commander, Navy Installations Command. Conduct an annual conference with program trainers to obtain recommendations for changes to program curriculum or delivery.

(9) Establish an Ombudsman Program Advisory Group. The Group will serve as a working group and will include augmentation by representatives of other activities as needed to advise on policy, special projects, and curriculum development.

(10) Provide guidance in the establishment of Regional Ombudsman Advisory Boards. The chairperson will forward recommendations and/or issues to the Commander, Navy Installations Command Ombudsman Program manager for the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group's review.

(11) Establish and maintain an Ombudsman website and registry at http://www.ffsp.navy.mil. The purpose is to provide additional information on the program and to provide an Ombudsman locator. Also, establish and maintain an automated Ombudsman data collection system located at this website to collect program statistics and workload data.

(12) Develop a comprehensive outreach and marketing plan to educate servicemembers and their families about the Ombudsman Program, to include the family readiness alliance network. This network bundles key support services, e.g., Fleet and Family Support Programs, Child Development Centers, chaplains, School Liaison Officers, and Family Readiness Groups, as well as Ombudsmen at the local installation level to provide coordinated services in support of servicemembers and their families. This

network optimizes marketing efforts with an end-state that maximizes family readiness.

(13) In the event of a nationwide national disaster or emergency, stand up a centralized Ombudsman Resource Center to augment official Navy response efforts. The Center will be staffed by volunteers for the purpose of communicating with local Ombudsmen and family members to assist in locating and providing services to families.

c. Regional Commanders shall:

(1) Establish a Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board to support and provide advice on issues relating to the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. The Board will provide feedback to Commander, Navy Installations Command on trends and issues in their region concerning the ombudsman program. Board composition and duties are described in enclosure (4) and the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

(2) Coordinate with type and local commanders to ensure that sufficient Ombudsmen Assemblies exist in their region to support the area Ombudsmen. Procedures for establishing Ombudsmen Assemblies can be found in enclosure (5) and the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

(3) In coordination with the Fleet and Family Support Centers, be responsible for conducting Ombudsman Basic Training and Advanced Training. Navy Reserve Forces Command shall offer Ombudsman Basic Training at remote sites within the Continental United States.

(4) Ensure that appropriate roles for Ombudsmen are included in regional and installation plans for disaster preparedness (especially in the establishment of emergency Community Support Centers and/or Family Assistance Centers) and Ombudsmen are included in disaster preparedness exercises.

(5) Ensure outreach and marketing plan includes the family readiness alliance network at each installation.

d. Commanding officers and commanders shall:

(1) Establish and execute the Navy Family Ombudsman Program per this instruction and the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

(2) Ensure that command family members have access to the services of an Ombudsman. Commanding officers and commanders (ashore and afloat) will vector crew/staff and families to appropriate providers within the family readiness alliance network.

(a) Appoint sufficient command Ombudsmen to provide required services to command families.

1. Guidance for selecting, appointing, and supervising Ombudsmen is included in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual. All Ombudsmen must be appointed per references (h) and (i).

2. Small commands having few family members, or tenant commands, may arrange with one or more other commands, or the installation command, to share the Ombudsman services of the other or host command. Such agreements must be at the concurrence of all commands involved and should be specified in writing, including any agreed-upon provisions for support of the combined Ombudsman program as stipulated in enclosure (6).

(b) Ensure their Command Ombudsman information is added to the Ombudsman Registry (as soon as official appointment is made) at www.ffsp.navy.mil. The registry shall be updated as changes occur.

(3) Accept volunteer services from the Ombudsman per reference (i) by completing DD 2793 (Rev. 2-02), Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentalities with the Ombudsman.

(4) Ensure that the Command Ombudsman receives required training and provide him/her with a copy of this instruction, the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual, and a letter of appointment containing other specific instructions.

(a) Ombudsman Basic Training is required for all Ombudsmen and must be documented per reference (i). This training provides the information and skills training necessary for an Ombudsman to properly execute the duties required by this instruction and the commanding officer/commander.

(b) The Ombudsman should attend Ombudsman Basic Training before assuming Ombudsman duties, but not later than six weeks after appointment. If the Ombudsman is unable to attend training prior to assuming Ombudsman duties, the command will ensure that the Ombudsman completes the on-line orientation of must-know information/orientation at www.ffsp.navy.mil.

(5) Ensure that the command Ombudsman receives a regularly updated command roster to include inbound personnel and families. References (c) and (d) provide for the release of roster information to the Ombudsman without the consent of the individuals listed when the Ombudsman is acting in an official capacity.

(6) Communicate regularly with the Command Ombudsman.

(a) Commanding officers and commanders should assign a point of contact for the Ombudsman; this is often the command master chief. Decide what issues and events are to be handled through the point of contact and which should come directly to the commanding officer/commander.

(b) Introduce the Ombudsman to other chain of support members (e.g., the command chain of support, also known as the Command Support Team, is generally comprised of the commanding officer, executive officer, command master chief and their spouse, chaplain (if one is assigned), and the Ombudsman), and to any other advocates assigned to work with the program. Although not in a supervisory role, other members of the command chain of support can help the Ombudsman by virtue of their Navy experience. It is recommended that leadership spouses and others in advocacy roles attend Ombudsman Basic Training with the Command Ombudsman if space is available and at no extra cost to the government. This training will provide important guidelines and direction in assisting the Ombudsman, and cover the requirements of confidentiality. Also, in the event an Ombudsman leaves suddenly, for any reason, a trained member of

the Command Support Team can then fill the position until another Ombudsman is selected and trained.

(7) Ensure the Command Ombudsman receives adequate equipment, material, and funding support per enclosure (6).

(8) Establish specific funding resources for support of the Command's Family Ombudsman Program. References (h) and (i) authorize use of Appropriated Funds or Non-Appropriated Funds in support of the Ombudsman Program. Pursuant to reference (m), reimbursable items may include childcare, mileage, parking, tolls, and communication equipment when used in an official capacity. Travel and training expenses may also be paid by the command or reimbursed per enclosure (6). Commanding officers/commanders must ensure their Ombudsman is reimbursed for authorized expenses in a timely manner.

(9) Ensure that current and reporting command personnel (including single personnel) and their family members are aware of who the Command Ombudsman is, what services they can provide, and how to contact them. Include the Ombudsman in the command indoctrination program. Provide a generic command e-mail address for the Ombudsman or Ombudsmen.

(10) Ensure the Navy Family Ombudsman Program is included in appropriate command inspections and reviews.

(11) Ensure that appropriate role(s) for the operational unit Ombudsman is/are included in the operational unit disaster preparedness plan as well as including roles for operational unit Ombudsmen in installation plans for disaster preparedness. This includes roles for Ombudsmen in the establishment of emergency Family Assistance Centers or Community Support Centers. All Ombudsmen should be included in disaster preparedness exercises.

(12) Ensure that data from the Ombudsman monthly worksheets is entered in the automated Ombudsman data collection system at www.ffsp.navy.mil by the Ombudsman or command designated personnel. Reserve unit commanding officers shall ensure Reserve Unit Ombudsmen send quarterly reports to the Family Support Program Manager at the Navy Reserve Forces Command. Commanding officers and Type Commanders should monitor

workload data to ensure sufficient Ombudsmen have been appointed to provide required services.

(13) Be aware of the following provisions for appointing ombudsmen:

(a) Probation Periods. A probationary term may be established when appointing an Ombudsman. The recommended probation periods are six months for a first time Ombudsman and three months for an experienced Ombudsman.

(b) Term of the Ombudsman Appointment. The Ombudsman's term of service automatically expires when the Ombudsman's spouse transfers from the command, is discharged, transfers to the Fleet Reserve, or retires. A letter of resignation is also required whenever there is a change of command; however, the new commanding officer/commander may request the current Ombudsman remain until a new Ombudsman is trained and in place, or may offer to reappoint the incumbent.

(c) Ombudsman Resignation. A letter of resignation from the Ombudsman to the command is required as stated above, or at any time the Ombudsman can no longer fulfill the duties of the position.

(d) Termination of Service for Cause. The commanding officer/commander should terminate the appointment when the Ombudsman violates the Code of Ethics, knowingly fails to execute their responsibility regarding the issues required to be reported, knowingly submits an unauthorized claim for Ombudsman funds outside the boundaries established by regulation and the commanding officer/commander, or if the commanding officer/commander considers the Ombudsman's behavior to be detrimental to the command.

(14) Be aware of additional considerations for appointing command Ombudsmen serving outside of the Continental United States, and those serving at recruiting and reserve commands/units.

(a) Outside of the Continental United States. Living overseas presents different challenges and rewards for an Ombudsman. Major challenges involve language, isolation, communication, transportation, and cultural differences. These

factors should be taken into consideration when appointing an Ombudsman.

(b) Recruiting Commands. At a minimum, an Ombudsman is to be appointed for each Navy Recruiting District headquarters. An Ombudsman will be appointed for Commander, Navy Recruiting Command; Navy Recruiting Orientation Unit; and each Navy Recruiting Region headquarters. Due to the varying geographic characteristics of each Navy Recruiting District, more than one command Ombudsman may be required to adequately serve the needs of command families. Where additional Ombudsmen are deemed necessary, one Ombudsman should be designated to coordinate the family newsletter and serve as a central point of contact for general information; however, additional command Ombudsmen shall report to their commanding officer/commander, not the designated Ombudsman. Reference (o) provides supplemental guidance for the Recruiting Command Family Ombudsman Program.

(c) Navy Reserve Ombudsmen. At a minimum, an Ombudsman is to be appointed for each Navy Operational Support Center. Additional Ombudsmen may be assigned to Navy Reserve units within the Navy Operational Support Center. The Navy Operational Support Center Ombudsman should serve as a central point of contact for general information; however, additional unit Ombudsmen shall report only to their commanding officer/commander.

(15) Be knowledgeable about personal protections afforded to Ombudsmen. An Ombudsman, while providing services under this instruction, shall be considered to be an employee of the government only for the purposes designated in references (c) and (i) concerning compensation for disability or death of employees resulting from personal injury sustained while in the performance of their duty, and claims for damages or losses for property loss, personal injury, or death per reference (j) (see the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual for additional guidance).

(16) Be familiar with the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual which includes sample forms, appointment and termination letters, and additional guidance for management of the Ombudsman program.

(17) Ensure the Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board has support as needed, including materials and clerical assistance, to perform their designated duties as described in enclosure (4).

e. Ombudsmen shall:

(1) Attend Ombudsman Basic Training prior to beginning duties (required) and advanced training to expand knowledge and improve skills. If a former Ombudsman is reappointed, the Ombudsman Basic Training course must be completed as a refresher if more than 18 months have passed since the last assignment or if more than three years have elapsed since attending the Ombudsman Basic Training course.

(2) Serve as the liaison between command families and the command, keeping the commanding officer/commander informed regarding the general morale, health, and welfare of the command's families.

(3) Communicate regularly with command and command family members. Contact families upon arrival as soon as possible to introduce themselves and explain how they can be of help to the family. Ombudsmen can greatly facilitate the relocation of new families by working with the Command Sponsor Program Coordinator to receive advance information on arriving families.

(4) Develop and distribute a command-approved monthly or quarterly newsletter, or if not possible, contribute to a command-approved column in appropriate publications. Additional guidance for newsletter preparation is in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

(5) Obtain command approval on all official correspondence before printing, distributing, or mailing.

(6) Establish and maintain an up-to-date and timely telephone tree or use the Careline to rapidly distribute and gather information.

(7) Become knowledgeable about all programs offered from the local Fleet and Family Support Center, chaplains, and other support agencies to be able to keep family members informed of

available resources and confidently recommend the services. Reference (p) gives Ombudsmen the authority to request and receive support from Fleet and Family Support Centers.

(8) Represent the command at local Ombudsman Assembly meetings.

(9) Maintain well-organized, active, and up-to-date communication records on the performance of Ombudsman duties. The Ombudsman will comply with the provisions of reference (d).

(10) Serve as a source of emergency and crisis information. Perform other official roles, functions, or duties assigned by the commanding officer/commander.

(11) If directed by the commanding officer/commander, assist with the formation and facilitation of the command Family Readiness Group, and may serve as liaison between the command and the group. Ombudsmen are not responsible for coordinating and conducting command-sanctioned homecoming activities.

(12) Provide immediate action when reportable issues or life endangering situations come to their attention by reporting to the appropriate official/organization and the commanding officer/commander. Additional guidance for required reporting can be found at enclosure (7), in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual, and during Ombudsman Basic Training. Mandatory reporting is required for:

(a) All suspected child abuse/neglect,

(b) Alleged domestic abuse,

(c) Suspected/potential homicides, violence, or life endangering situations,

(d) All suspected/potential suicidal risks, and

(e) Other issues identified by the commanding officer/commander as reportable.

(13) Adhere to the strictest code of confidentiality to protect the privacy of individuals and maintain the credibility of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. For issues requiring

immediate attention, the safety and well-being of every individual takes precedence over their right to confidentiality. The Ombudsman must be trained on the provisions of the Privacy Act and reference (d), in proper referrals, and maintaining a current resource list.

(14) Avoid conflicts of interest in their dealings with the command and family members. Criminal laws and regulations relating to conflicts of interest are described in references (e) and (f).

(15) Collect data on services provided and time expended, and provide this data monthly to the commanding officer/commander. A copy of the Ombudsman telephone log is to be provided to the command as directed. Data from the Ombudsman monthly worksheets will be entered into the automated data reporting system by the Ombudsman or command designated point of contact.

(16) Coordinate services for families during mobilization or geographic separation. In any situation in which family members remain in one community while the service member reports to another location for duty, such as mobilization of a unit, executing individual augmentation orders, or executing permanent change of station orders, the losing command retains responsibility for local support services to family members remaining in their area and for assisting family members in connecting with the gaining Command Ombudsman, Family Readiness Group, or other family support activity. The gaining command assumes responsibilities for official command communication with the Sailors and their family members.

(a) The Navy Reserve or losing Command Ombudsman shall contact the gaining command's Ombudsman to coordinate services to ensure the family receives services to which they are entitled. Contact information can be obtained from the Ombudsman Registry or from the Fleet and Family Support Center Ombudsman Coordinator at the gaining command. The Fleet and Family Support Center Ombudsman Coordinator's contact information may be found on the Ombudsman Program website at www.ffsp.navy.mil.

(b) Ombudsmen from both the losing and gaining commands will coordinate or share responsibility for those

family members who do not accompany the Sailor to the area of the active duty assignment.

(17) Perform other assigned duties. In addition to responding to the needs of the command's families, the commanding officer/commander may direct the Ombudsman to:

(a) Assist in the organization and implementation of the command welcome program (Command Sponsor Program), and participate in the indoctrination and orientation programs for new command members.

(b) Represent the command on committees, boards, and working groups in the military or serve as a military family liaison to civilian community organizations that are providing service and support to command families.

(c) Work closely with the other members of the Command Support Team.

(d) Establish, maintain, or contribute an up-to-date and timely command telephone "Careline" to provide information to families.

(18) Submit a letter of resignation to the commanding officer/commander when the Ombudsman's spouse transfers from the command, is discharged, transfers to the Fleet Reserve, or retires. A letter of resignation is also required whenever there is a change of command.

(a) The Ombudsman may be reappointed by the new commanding officer/commander or requested to remain until a new ombudsman can be appointed.

(b) The Ombudsman will confer with the commanding officer/commander or point of contact about turnover of any personal notes or records on unresolved issues to the incoming Ombudsman. All other correspondence, personal notes, and records will be destroyed per command procedures for handling personal-confidential, Privacy Act-protected information.

(19) Be familiar with the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual, which includes sample forms, letters, and additional guidance for performing Ombudsman duties.

f. CNO (N13) will provide a representative to serve as a member of the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group to stay abreast of family readiness issues that have application to other family-related programs.

g. Commander, Naval Education and Training Command will:

(1) Work with the Commander, Navy Installation Command Ombudsman Program Manager and other commands to develop, maintain, and distribute Navy Family Ombudsman Program standardized training to include:

(a) Ombudsman Basic Training curriculum and training workbook.

(b) Ombudsman Advanced Training syllabus and curriculum guides.

(c) Command Leadership Training for all members of the Command Leadership and Command Support Teams.

(2) Incorporate Ombudsman program training in applicable curricula as necessary to ensure Navy leadership is aware of the importance of the program and able to carry out their responsibilities to achieve a successful command Ombudsman program.

(3) Incorporate Ombudsman program awareness into other Navy training to ensure Sailor awareness and understanding of the Ombudsman program.

(4) Provide a representative to serve as a member of the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group to review and update training procedures and curriculum as required.

6. Forms and Reports

a. DD 2793 (Rev. 2-02), Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities, is available at www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/ddforms2500-2999.htm

b. SF 1164 (Rev. 11-77), Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, is available at

www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/formsprogram.htm. This form is also available at www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/formslibrary.do?formType=SF.

c. DD 1351-2 (Jul 04), travel voucher or sub-voucher will be used for reimbursement of travel expenses is available at www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/ddforms1000-1499.htm or automated travel programs used by a command may be substituted.

d. Ombudsman monthly data worksheets are available in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual or online at www.ffsp.navy.mil. Data collection requirements described in the program manual are exempt from reports control per SECNAV M-5210.1.

M. G. MULLEN
Admiral, U.S. Navy

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POLICY WAIVER REQUEST PROCEDURES

1. It is Navy personnel policy to hold firmly to the requirement that persons appointed as Navy Family Ombudsmen be the spouses of active duty members of the command or selected reserves. However, it is recognized that there are circumstances in which it may be in the best interest of the command to name another individual. To request a waiver from the eligibility requirements for Ombudsman appointment and other issues within the Ombudsman Program, the following applies:

a. The requesting command will forward a letter to the Ombudsman Program Manager at Commander, Navy Installations Command requesting a waiver. The request should contain the reasons for the request and any extenuating circumstances that necessitate a waiver to the policy (per guidance below). The letter, including a point of contact with phone number and e-mail address, should be forwarded via the appropriate chain of command.

Family Readiness Programs
Commander
Navy Installations Command (N9121)
2713 Mitscher Road SW, Suite 300
Anacostia Annex, DC 20373-5802

b. The Ombudsman Program Manager will approve or deny the waiver request. For Reserve Commands, it is also requested that an endorsement to the waiver request be obtained from the Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command Ombudsman Program point of contact.

Family Support Program Manager
Commander
Navy Reserve Forces Command
4400 Dauphine Street
New Orleans, LA 70146

2. Requests for waivers of the requirement that only spouses of active duty members of the command or selected reserves be appointed as Ombudsman will be considered, if criteria for Ombudsman eligibility appointment waiver are met. Waivers will be issued for the remainder of the commanding officer's/commander's assignment, unless otherwise specified and

will not exceed three years. Waivers may be requested for the following persons and the command should address the candidate's ability to meet the requirements (requirements noted with an "*" are not negotiable):

a. Parent/family member of single members:

(1) Lives in vicinity of the command, or has a close connection with the command.

(2) Has experience as a recent (within five years) military member or family member.

(3) Has demonstrated an interest in the command and the ability to attend training and perform duties of the role. *

(4) Application to command demonstrates appropriate attributes, skills, and volunteer experience.

(5) Is nominated by the command, not self-nominated. *

(6) Command demonstrates that other efforts to recruit spouse volunteers have not been successful.

b. Active duty, former active duty, civilian, or spouses of civilian members of the command:

(1) Currently an active member or recently retired (within two years) from the command.

(2) Has demonstrated unique abilities to perform the role of liaison between families and the command. *

(3) Has demonstrated an interest in the command and the ability to attend training and perform duties of the role. *

(4) Is nominated by the command, not self-nominated. *

(5) Command demonstrates that other efforts to recruit spouse volunteers have not been successful.

c. Family member of retired members of the command:

(1) Was formerly an Ombudsman or an Ombudsman at the time of retirement.

(2) Has demonstrated an interest in the command and the ability to attend training and perform duties of the role. *

(3) Is nominated by the command, not self-nominated. *

(4) Command demonstrates that other efforts to recruit spouse volunteers have not been successful.

CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS OMBUDSMEN-AT-LARGE DUTIES

1. The Chief of Naval Operations may appoint, in writing, one or more Ombudsmen-at-Large. They are the spouse of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and the Chairman of the Naval Services FamilyLine. The Ombudsman-at-Large is responsible for advising the Chief of Naval Operations and/or Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy on matters affecting Sailors and their families. The Ombudsman-at-Large will report directly to Chief of Naval Operations. Specific duties will be addressed in the letter of appointment. Additional duties that may be performed by the Ombudsman-at-Large are:

a. Act as a focal point for the important flow of information to Navy Ombudsmen, Sailors, and their families.

b. Be an advocate of the Navy and the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

c. Understand available Navy family programs and provide vital, timely, and responsive information to the Navy community.

d. Serve as a member of the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group.

2. Per reference (i), the Commander, Navy Installations Command Ombudsman Program Manager shall be the accepting official for any additional volunteers assisting the Ombudsman-at-Large in the performance of official duties. The Ombudsman-at-Large shall supervise the volunteers as part of their official duties.

3. The Ombudsman-at-Large may travel to Navy sites with the Navy Inspector General and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. They may also visit commands, meet with command Ombudsmen and family members, and attend meetings and conferences. During these visits, information important to the successful operation and improvement of the Ombudsman Program may be learned and Ombudsmen-at-Large are encouraged to share this information with the Commander, Navy Installations Command Ombudsman Program Manager per guidance from the Chief of Naval Operations.

4. The Ombudsman-at-Large will be provided training and support per the provisions of reference (i).

Enclosure (2)

a. An Ombudsman-at-Large not currently familiar with the Ombudsman Program is encouraged to attend Ombudsman Basic Training prior to or as soon as possible after appointment, and other training to ensure continued familiarization with the Ombudsman Program.

b. Commander, Navy Installation Command's and the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy's offices have been designated by the Chief of Naval Operations to provide support to the Ombudsmen-at-Large per the provisions for command support of Ombudsmen in this instruction.

5. The term of service for the Ombudsman-at-Large automatically expires and a letter of resignation is required when their spouse retires from active duty or transfers to the Fleet Reserve. A letter of resignation is also required when a new Chief of Naval Operations is appointed. The new Chief of Naval Operations may request the current Ombudsman-at-Large remain until a replacement can be found or reappoint the incumbent.

FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER DUTIES IN SUPPORT OF OMBUDSMEN

1. The Fleet and Family Support Center shall provide a variety of services to support and enhance the effectiveness of local command Family Ombudsman Programs as required by reference (p). Specific services to be provided are as follows:

a. Coordinate and offer the standardized Ombudsman Basic Training course per assessment of local requirements. This includes advertising the schedule, providing classroom space, arranging for certified Ombudsman Basic Training trainers, and furnishing students with a copy of all current training materials, as needed. The student will be required to have a copy of this instruction. The student's sponsoring command is responsible for printing and issuing it prior to the first day of class. Only those trainers certified by Commander, Navy Installations Command to instruct Ombudsman Basic Training should do so. To the maximum extent possible, these trainers should include non-Fleet and Family Support Center staff. The use of outside guest speakers is not authorized during Ombudsman Basic Training.

b. Report non-completion of Ombudsman Basic Training to the sponsoring command and explain the circumstances.

c. Help arrange and provide speakers and trainers for advanced training. Advanced training is defined as that which takes place after successful completion of Ombudsman Basic Training. Outside guest speakers are permitted during advanced training.

d. Coordinate topical speakers for Ombudsman Assembly meetings.

2. A member of the Fleet and Family Support Center staff is to be assigned the function of Ombudsman Program Coordinator. In addition to the training requirements, the coordinator serves as an advisor/consultant to local Ombudsmen, the Ombudsman Assembly, and to commands. The coordinator will not serve as the chairperson for the Assembly. Additionally, other Fleet and Family Support Center staff members should provide advice to Ombudsmen regarding interventions and approaches to be used with families.

Enclosure (3)

3. The Fleet and Family Support Center will:

a. Maintain a current roster of local Ombudsmen, including Navy Reserve Ombudsmen.

b. Provide space for Ombudsman Assembly meetings, if available.

c. Provide personal support and counseling for Ombudsmen.

d. Provide office space, supplies, and assistance with newsletter preparation for Ombudsmen and Assembly Chairs/ Coordinators, if required.

e. Coordinate training for Ombudsmen Assemblies that support Ombudsmen educational and informational needs.

f. Consistent with other Fleet and Family Support Center priorities, provide assistance to local Ombudsmen.

g. Provide program guidance, policy clarification, and recommendations for Ombudsman recognition to commands if requested.

h. If issues arise that appear to be negatively affecting the local program/family members, the Fleet and Family Support Center Site Manager or Ombudsman Coordinator shall notify the respective command. By providing accurate and timely information, the respective commanding officer/commander may then take appropriate action.

i. Provide information and forms regarding Navy and community resources, including updates and changes.

j. Be a source of many services for Navy families, thereby serving as a major referral resource for Ombudsmen.

k. Refer command families to their Ombudsman, provide information to new arrivals about the Ombudsman Program, and assist the out-of-area Ombudsman in connecting with the gaining Command Ombudsman for mobilizing and geographically separated members.

4. Additional information can be found in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual and at the Ombudsman Program website, www.ffsp.navy.mil.

Enclosure (3)

OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM ADVISORY GROUP AND REGIONAL OMBUDSMAN ADVISORY BOARD

1. The Ombudsman Program Advisory Group will be a working group of individuals, convened at the discretion of Commander, Navy Installations Command (N91), to include the Ombudsmen-at-Large; a CNO (N13) representative; Commander, Navy Installations Command Force Master Chief; Fleet and Family Support Program Director; Ombudsman Program Manager; and Navy Reserve Force Family Support Program manager. The Ombudsman Program Advisory Group will include augmentation by representatives of other activities as needed to advise on policy, special projects, and curriculum development, based on input received from the Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board.

2. Regional Ombudsman Advisory Boards shall:

a. Be appointed and convened by the Regional Commander, or designee, for the purpose of reviewing Ombudsman program implementation within the region, and providing feedback from local Ombudsman Assemblies on policy, implementation, or other programmatic issues to the Commander, Navy Installations Command Ombudsman Program Manager.

b. Membership will be identified by the Regional Commander and may include both active and reserve personnel that are members of the family alliance network, a spouse of a senior military member(s)(officer/enlisted), a chaplain, command master chiefs and Ombudsmen representing commands within the area of responsibility, assembly chairpersons, Fleet and Family Support Program Ombudsman Coordinator(s), an action officer from the sponsor's staff, staff legal officer, and any other interested and appropriately positioned person(s).

c. Responsibilities of the Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board will be to support and advise area assemblies. They are not policy making or supervisory bodies and will not interfere with the operation of individual Command Family Ombudsman programs.

d. The Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board shall meet as needed, but at least semi-annually. The chairperson will forward all recommended changes and observations requiring higher level review or action to the Commander, Navy Installations Command

Ombudsman Program Manager for action by the Program Manager and/or the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group as applicable. Recommendations and observations from the Board should be forwarded to the Commander, Navy Installations Command Ombudsman Program Manager.

Enclosure (4)

OMBUDSMAN ASSEMBLY

1. The local Ombudsman Assembly is an important component of the Ombudsman Program. The Assembly is an excellent forum for sharing and exchanging successful practices. As with all informational exchanges, confidentiality must be maintained. Established by the sponsoring command (base commander, commanding officer, regional commander, or area coordinator) in support of tenant commands, the Assembly functions only under the supervision and guidance of the sponsor. Ombudsman Assemblies should be included in the installation(s) family readiness alliance network. The Assembly may:

a. Serve as a resource for an Ombudsman's professional growth by arranging advanced training.

b. Serve as a liaison for policy discussion and clarification by appropriate local authorities regarding issues of interest to Ombudsmen and command family members.

c. Provide such functions as peer mentoring and sharing of common information of interest to all commands.

d. Provide assistance to commands to recognize/show appreciation to their Ombudsmen.

e. In the absence of a local Fleet and Family Support Center, maintain a current roster of all area Ombudsmen.

f. Perform other functions as directed by the sponsoring command (e.g., provide resource handbooks and materials, publish newsletters, distribute assembly meetings minutes, and maintain a calendar of events).

2. Assemblies are not policy making or supervisory bodies and will not interfere with the operation of individual command Family Ombudsman Programs; however, they may make recommendations about community matters affecting the well being of command family members in the area.

3. Because of the structure and diversity of Navy communities and installations, there may be more than one assembly within a geographic area. Assemblies are not hierarchical and do not have authority over another assembly regardless of the rank of

the sponsor. Local commanders may decide that one area assembly consisting of all Ombudsmen within the geographic location is sufficient.

4. Each sponsoring command shall have a local Ombudsman Assembly instruction. An example is provided in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

5. Assemblies are information-sharing groups and do not function as social clubs. Assemblies shall not establish or maintain treasuries or collect dues for the purpose of sponsoring Assembly activities.

6. All appointed Ombudsmen of local commands will participate in the Assembly. Others, such as senior leadership and senior leadership spouses, command master chiefs, and command chaplains, are encouraged to attend. Representatives of other military or civilian organizations may be invited to attend meetings to share information about their activities and respond to concerns of the membership.

7. Assembly leadership should be selected and appointed in writing by the sponsoring command for a specified term. A sample description of the duties of the Assembly Chairperson is provided in the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

8. The Chairperson must be a current or former Ombudsman whose spouse is an active duty or reserve member of a command that is a member of the Assembly. A Fleet and Family Support Center Ombudsman Coordinator cannot serve as the Chairperson, but can serve as an advisor to the assembly. Duties can include:

a. Representing the sponsoring command as a member of committees, boards, or group meetings (those organizations desiring this representation should submit a request through the Assembly's sponsoring command).

b. Providing information and referral liaison with other military and community organizations.

c. Providing input and feedback to the Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board via the Assembly Chairperson regarding the operation and policies of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program and

offer recommendations to improve support and standardization of the program worldwide.

9. The sponsoring command shall ensure the Assembly has any support needed, including materials and clerical assistance, to perform their designated duties.

PROGRAM SUPPORT

1. Funding. Every command will establish specific funding resources for support of the Command's Family Ombudsman Program. References (h) and (i) authorize use of the command's Appropriated Funds or Non-Appropriated Funds in support of the Ombudsman Program. This includes reimbursement of personal expenses incurred during performance of Ombudsman duties, when appropriate. It is important for the commanding officer/commander and the Ombudsman to discuss the budget and determine what support can be provided and what will be reimbursed. The Ombudsman, based on the authorized budget, must document their expenses and submit SF 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, to the command for reimbursement. This form can be found at www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/formsprogram.htm. When applicable, receipts must also be submitted.

2. Reimbursable Items. The Ombudsman must be acting in an official capacity as directed by the commanding officer/commander to receive reimbursement for:

a. Childcare, by any provider, but not to exceed the local rate that would be charged by the Child Development Center. Currently established Child Development Center usage priorities apply to the Ombudsman.

b. Mileage, parking, and tolls paid at the current Government privately-owned vehicle rate. Mileage must be documented and parking and tolls require receipts.

c. Communication equipment such as a computer, cell phone, pager, or other electronic devices, long distance calling cards or plans, or internet service are authorized. Command pre-authorization/approval of equipment expenditures is required for reimbursement. Command-owned equipment may be issued to the Ombudsman at the discretion of the commanding officer/commander if they decide the command program will function more effectively. This equipment must be accounted for and returned when the Ombudsman resigns the position. The Ombudsman must limit use of these items to execution of official duties only.

d. Telephone lines and any necessary telecommunication equipment may be installed in the private residences of persons

who provide voluntary services per reference (h). In the case of equipment installed under this authority, the commanding officer/commander may pay the charges incurred for the use of the equipment, for authorized purposes, using Appropriated Funds or Non-Appropriated Funds. Installation of such equipment must not be done routinely, but only after careful consideration and subsequent decision that to do so is necessary for the command Family Ombudsman Program to function effectively.

e. Travel expenses incurred during command-directed/ authorized participation in training, conferences, etc., will be paid.

(1) Local commands may reimburse the Ombudsman for costs of childcare and mileage incurred during Ombudsman Basic and Advanced Training. To be eligible for reimbursement, the Ombudsman must have a letter of appointment and have signed the volunteer agreement. In locations where training is not available, a command may issue Invitational Travel Orders, per reference (f), to enable the Ombudsman to complete the course at another installation. To obtain a list of approved training sites, contact Commander, Navy Installations Command at (202) 433-4620/DSN 288. Additionally, all Fleet and Family Support Center Ombudsman Training Schedules, including the Reserve Ombudsman Mobile Training Team, can be found at www.ffsp.navy.mil. When Ombudsman Basic Training is not available in your area, use reasonable effort to find the closest training in order to minimize travel expenses.

(2) Travel expenses incurred during command-directed/ authorized participation in other training, conferences, or meetings, will be paid by the command. The command is authorized, budget permitting, to issue Invitational Travel Orders and fund the associated travel, berthing, meals, and incidental expenses for Ombudsmen to attend non-local training that will improve their effectiveness, per reference (f). Expenses may be reimbursed or travel advances may be authorized per reference (n). DD 1351-2, Travel Voucher, Subvoucher, or other command approved travel claim process must be used to claim travel reimbursement. Local travel expenses are to be reported on SF 1164, Claim for Reimbursement for Expenses on Official Business. Receipts must be submitted as required by the command.

3. Other Incidental Expenses. Other incidental expenses may be paid from Appropriated Funds, per reference (i). The expense can only be incurred and paid directly by the command at the discretion of the commanding officer/commander. These expenses are not reimbursable to the Ombudsman.

4. Other Support. Administrative support such as paper, envelopes, pens, copier service, clerical assistance, command telephone cards, use of government mail, and government vehicle transportation should be budgeted and may be provided from Appropriated Funds or Non-Appropriated Funds, as command resources permit.

5. Newsletter Expenses. The command will assume all costs for production and delivery of the Ombudsman newsletter. The newsletter content must be approved by the command prior to printing or electronic distribution. If produced solely within the command, it is responsible for providing technical/ administrative support, paper, printer access, and delivery costs (stamps/bulk mail, etc.) If it is printed/delivered by the Document Automation and Production Service, the command must approve and provide the funding. The local printing officer can provide guidance. Use of government mailing privileges is authorized for official information such as mailing of newsletters, per reference (k). For definitions and additional guidance on use of official mail privileges, see the Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.

6. Responsibility for Supervision of the Ombudsmen. Navy has the responsibility for the primary supervision of Ombudsmen when they are providing services to Navy. This responsibility may be delegated to authorized supervisors per reference (i).

a. The commanding officer/commander and the Ombudsman, at the time of appointment, must complete a DD 2793, Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Fund Activities and Non-Appropriated Fund Instrumentalities. A copy of the signed agreement should be given to the volunteer prior to commencing volunteer services. Part II of the form will be completed at the end of the Ombudsman's term of service in order to document the dates of the volunteer service. A copy of the completed volunteer agreement shall be given to the Ombudsman upon termination of service. A sample of this form can be found in the Navy Family

Ombudsman Program Manual, or online at www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/ddforms2500-2999.htm. Volunteer records shall be retained for three years following the termination of volunteer service by the command receiving the service.

b. Commanding officers/commanders shall ensure that neither they nor their paid or volunteer staff violate the provisions of reference (c). By law, no Department of Defense official shall directly or indirectly impede or otherwise interfere with the right of a spouse of a military member to pursue and hold a job, attend school, or perform volunteer services on or off a military installation. Moreover, no official shall use the preferences or requirements of the command to influence or attempt to influence the employment, education, or volunteer decisions of a spouse.

7. Ombudsmen Appreciation/Recognition. Each command will establish a program to recognize the volunteer contributions of their Navy Family Command Ombudsman. Some general guidelines include:

a. Personally support the program, especially with their time.

b. Value the Ombudsman's opinion and advice.

c. Let the Ombudsman know they have done a good job, in writing or in person, and look for opportunities to provide official recognition at command functions and in publications.

d. Celebrate Ombudsman Appreciation Day in an appropriate and timely way.

e. Present a personally written letter of commendation or certificate of appreciation at the end of service.

f. Issue an official nametag with command emblem attached, inscribed with the Ombudsman's title and name.

g. Purchase an Ombudsman pin through the Navy Uniform Service of the Navy Exchange and present to the Ombudsman.

While it is usually worn separately from the nametag, it can also be attached to it.

h. Include the Ombudsman's name and e-mail address in the plan of the day/week.

i. The commanding officer/commander may use Non-Appropriated Funds, if available, for individual Ombudsman appreciation dinners and Ombudsman plaques and awards. Per reference (1), the Non-Appropriated Funds limitation is $50 per Ombudsman per year, not to exceed a total of $500 (multiple Ombudsmen) per Morale, Welfare, and Recreation fund per year. Cash awards are not authorized.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR
CHILD ABUSE, DOMESTIC ABUSE, AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

1. Child and Spouse Abuse. Incidents of child and domestic abuse must be reported per reference (g). When allegations of child or domestic abuse come to the attention of a command, the Family Advocacy Program shall be notified. The Family Advocacy Program staff shall inform the member's command and law enforcement officials, as indicated by case circumstances.

a. Child abuse is defined as the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment of a child. It does not include discipline administered by a parent or legal guardian to their child, provided it is reasonable in manner and moderate in degree and otherwise does not constitute cruelty.

b. A child's safety and well-being is protected by Federal and State law. All States and U.S. territories have mandatory child abuse reporting laws. All Department of the Navy personnel, including Ombudsmen (with the exception of chaplains and attorneys having privileged communication), must report to the Family Advocacy Program any incident or suspected incident of child abuse occurring on a military installation or involving persons eligible for Family Advocacy Program services. The threshold for reporting is very low in that even the suspicion of child abuse/neglect must be reported. The Family Advocacy Program will report suspected child abuse incidents to the responsible state child protective services agency.

c. Abuse occurring between spouses or adult intimate partners merits the same concern as similar incidents between unrelated persons. Domestic abuse is defined as:

(1) domestic violence, or

(2) a pattern of behavior resulting in emotional/psychological abuse, economic control, and/or interference with personal liberty when such violence or abuse is directed toward a person of the opposite sex who is:

(a) a current or former spouse,

(b) a person with whom the abuser shares a child in common, or

(c) a current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile. Domestic violence is an offense under United States Code, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and State law that involves the use, attempted use, or threatened use of force or violence or the violation of a lawful order of protection directed toward one of the persons identified above.

d. Ombudsmen should be aware that victims of domestic abuse now have two avenues for reporting abuse to the Navy. Victims who want to pursue an official investigation should disclose that they are a victim of domestic abuse to appropriate command, base security, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, or Family Advocacy Program personnel. This process is referred to as unrestricted reporting and results in command, Family Advocacy Program, and law enforcement notification. Victims who would like to receive support, advocacy, and care while deciding whether they would like to pursue an official investigation may now disclose domestic abuse to a Family Advocacy Program victim advocate, Fleet and Family Support Program clinical counselor, or military medical/dental healthcare provider. This restricted report may not be disclosed to a command, law enforcement personnel, or to the Family Advocacy Program (for clinical assessment, case management, and Case Review Committee review) unless the victim authorizes disclosure in writing or another exception applies.

e. All allegations of domestic abuse shall be reported by the Ombudsman to the Family Advocacy Program. As a guide, the Ombudsman should consider domestic abuse to have been alleged if the spouse discloses to the Ombudsman an incident of abuse, a third party (e.g., a child) discloses to the Ombudsman that they witnessed domestic abuse, or the Ombudsman has first-hand knowledge of an incident of domestic abuse. Trained professionals will determine the validity of allegations, not the Ombudsman or the command.

f. An Ombudsman who suspects that domestic abuse might be occurring should advise the individual of the restricted reporting option and provide information on contacting a Family Advocacy Program victim advocate or Fleet and Family Support Program clinical counselor. It is the responsibility of the Fleet and Family Support Program clinical counselor or Family

Advocacy Program victim advocate to meet with the individual, fully inform them of the benefits and limitations of each reporting option, and provide a safety assessment, safety planning, and other support.

g. If at any time the Ombudsman believes that the life, health, or safety of an individual is in imminent danger of domestic abuse, the Ombudsman is required to report the situation immediately to the Family Advocacy Program and appropriate command officials. Safety is the ultimate concern for anyone involved in an abusive situation.

2. Sexual Assault. When an adult discloses sexual assault outside the marital or intimate partner relationship, the Ombudsman should be aware of the victim's rights and provide information on available assistance through the Sexual Assault Victim Intervention program or through community sexual assault resources. Sensitivity to the victim's privacy is paramount. If the assault occurred on Navy property or was perpetrated by an active duty member, the incident must be reported to the installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, who will take further action per current Navy sexual assault requirements in reference (q).

Chapter 1: Selection Process

Strong leadership is key in ensuring an effective Command Ombudsman Program. This section of the manual provides information to assist commanding officers in effectively implementing the Navy Family Ombudsman Program to fit the unique needs of their commands.

This chapter covers selecting an ombudsman that fits the needs of the command. Topics include:

- Determining the Number of Ombudsmen Needed.
- Recruitment Strategies.
- Conducting the Interview.
- Appointment.
- Recognition.

1.1 How Many Ombudsmen Are Needed?

Commanding officers may appoint as many command ombudsmen as they choose. Many like to have at least two ombudsmen:

- To ensure availability and accessibility.
- To share and allocate ombudsmen responsibilities.
- To represent the diversity of the command.
- To allow time off.
- To have one experienced ombudsman who has been serving for at least a year assist a less experienced ombudsman.

- To have an ombudsman whose spouse is more senior and one whose spouse is more junior.
- In case a command emergency involves a command ombudsman's spouse.

When there are two or more ombudsmen it is critical to define roles and responsibilities from the beginning. There is no such thing as a primary ombudsman and a secondary ombudsman or ombudsmen assistants unless clearly specified by the commanding officer. When appointing more than one ombudsman it is important to specify clear communication channels. Will each ombudsman contact the CO and command POC individually or will communication be funneled through one ombudsman? Will each be responsible for each ombudsman role or will responsibilities be divided? Clear direction from the beginning can prevent future communication difficulties.

The following chart provides minimum guidelines:

# of Command Personnel	# of Assigned Ombudsmen
1 – 250	1
251 – 1000	2 -3
1000 +	4 +

1.2 ATTRIBUTES AND ELIGIBILITY

An ombudsman will be the spouse of an active duty or selected reserve member of the command, enlisted or officer. This requirement can be waived if, after diligent search, no appropriate spouse volunteer is available. The ombudsman must be able to represent both the command and family members impartially. It is preferable that an active duty or reserve member not be appointed to an ombudsman position.
The ombudsman needs to be viewed by the families as accessible so they will remain approachable and functional. An ombudsman with several years of Navy life experience will acclimate more easily and have greater credibility. OPNAVINST 1750.1F provides guidance on selecting alternative ombudsmen and waiver request procedures. Any individual providing ombudsman services must adhere to the requirements of OPNAVINST 1750.1F.

Sample Ombudsman Qualities

Do not expect to find someone who possesses every desired quality. Look for potential maturity and experience with Navy life. A good candidate will grow into an effective ombudsman.

Desirable Qualities	Remarks/Notes
Prior volunteer experience, especially as an ombudsman.	
Time and energy for the job.	
A team player, friendly, confident, a "doer."	
Intelligent, caring, good communicator, works well with other people.	
Mature, patient, flexible, stable.	
Good role model.	
Positive and optimistic.	
Possesses at least basic computer skills.	
Undesirable Qualities	
Likes to gossip or moralize about others.	
Has severe personal problems; especially those who were referred to Navy or civilian services for child or domestic abuse.	
Someone who does not demonstrate support of overall Navy goals and the command mission.	
Someone whose spouse is experiencing professional/disciplinary problems at work. An ombudsman cannot be expected to support the command when adverse action may be taken against the spouse.	
Chronic complainer.	

A qualified and well-trained ombudsman is a critical resource for the command. Failure to select the best volunteer can have a negative impact on the relationship a command has with its family members and can foster a bad image of the command and the Navy. It can be difficult to find a person who possesses all of the desired qualities and skills, so look for a person who has the potential to grow into a highly qualified and effective ombudsman. This requires strong command support and the professional training provided by the Navy's Ombudsman Basic Training program and continuing training offered locally by the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) and the local ombudsman assembly.

Establishing and maintaining a successful Ombudsman Program requires an effective working relationship between the commanding officer (CO), executive officer (XO), ombudsman, command master chief (CMC), and where appropriate, the chaplain. One of the most important assets available to the ombudsman is the Command Support Team (CST). The Command Support Team is designated by the CO and typically includes the CO, XO, CMC, their respective spouses, the ombudsman, and where assigned, the chaplain.

1.3 RECRUITMENT

Over two-thirds of Navy spouses are in the workforce so it is critical to demonstrate command support and the importance of the ombudsman role in recruitment efforts. Commands who have a reputation for strongly supporting the Navy Family Ombudsman program usually find they have a number of potential volunteers because ombudsmen candidates:

- See evidence of strong command support of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.
- Have experienced the impact of accurate, timely information through the ombudsman careline and newsletter.
- Received good customer service and assistance through the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

Command ombudsman recruitment strategies include:

- Word of mouth.
- Announcements at quarters and over the 1MC.
- Plan of the day/week/month announcements.

- Notices in the ombudsman and command newsletters.
- Announcements at family readiness group meetings.
- Announcements at command functions.
- Direct mail from the CO to all command spouses.
- Announcements on the command web site.
- Ask other command ombudsmen or leadership spouses for recommendations.
- Ask an individual directly.

Generally, the job posting includes information about:

- Primary duties.
- Eligibility criteria.
- Contact information.
- Application format.
- Deadline for submission.
- Whether or not references are required.

Some commands use an application form and others ask candidates to submit a resume. A sample application form follows:

1.3.1 Sample Application for Command Family Ombudsman

SAMPLE APPLICATION TO VOLUNTEER FOR A COMMAND FAMILY OMBUDSMAN POSITION FOR (COMMAND NAME) FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Personal Data: Date: _____

Name (last, first, middle): _____

SSN: _____ Phone #: _____

Name of spouse: _____ SSN: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Employer: _____ Position: _____

Address: _____

Work PH #: _____ Immediate Supervisor: _____

Work Hours: _____

Background

1. Do you have a valid driver's license? ❑ Yes ❑ No

   Issuing state: _____ License No: _____

   Exp. date: _____

2. With the exception of minor traffic violations, have you ever been convicted of, or are you currently charged with any misdemeanors or felonies? (If yes, please explain on back of this page.) ❑ Yes ❑ No

3. Any prior substantiated Family Advocacy involvement? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Previous Ombudsman/Related Experience

1. Have you ever been a Command Family Ombudsman before? ❑ Yes ❑ No
   If yes:

   Command: _____ Dates of Assignment: _____

   Reason for leaving: _____

   Command: _____ Dates of Assignment: _____

   Reason for leaving: _____

2. Have you previously completed Ombudsman Basic Training? ❑ Yes ❑ No

   Date completed: _____

3. Other training/experience that will help you effectively perform the duties of an Ombudsman:

   _____

Medical History

1. Do you have any medical problems that might restrict you from performing necessary duties (depending on the command, can require going aboard ship or boat): ❑ Yes ❑ No

   If yes, please explain: _____

References (please read carefully)

1. List three references. Include name, complete address and phone number of each. Members of your family and individuals who reside in the same household may not be used as references. Please advise your references that they may be contacted by this command. References may include members of this or former commands as well as employer, former employer, etc.

   a. Name: _____ PH#: _____

      Address: _____

   b. Name: _____ PH#: _____

      Address: _____

   c. Name: _____ PH#: _____

      Address: _____

I hereby certify that all entries on this application are true and complete. I understand that any falsified information or misrepresentation of the facts may result in the denial of selection or revocation of appointment regardless of length of service. I agree to abide by the applicable regulations and policies of Navy Command Family Ombudsman Program as prescribed by OPNAVINST 1750.1F and with the requirements of the Commanding Officer or their duly appointed representative.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (When Filled In)

1.4 Interviewing Ombudsmen

The interview may be the most critical part of the selection process and is subject to validation requirements. Interview objectives should be position-related and well documented, and all candidates should be asked the same questions. Plan the interview in terms of the behaviors and responses to be observed, the evaluation standards applied, and the procedures for conducting the interview session. The interview should be objective and structured so the information to be obtained is well defined and recorded in a standard manner.

Interviews are sometimes defined as a conversation with a purpose and are used to further evaluate candidates for selection. Normally the interview is a one-on-one meeting between the selecting official and the candidate. The purpose of the interview is to obtain position-related information from the candidate to make a selection decision. The meeting should include a description of the duties of the position and performance expectations.

1.4.1 Developing Questions

Questions which concern the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the desired duties should be used. Generally, interview questions should:

- Strive to provide evidence of the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- Not have a "yes" or "no" answer.
- Be objective, allowing the candidate to provide sufficient information.
- Be position-related.
- Not have "obvious" answers.
- Use appropriate vocabulary.
- Not be a "test."

Verbal communication skills can be directly observed during the interview. For abilities involving interpersonal relations, questions should not automatically trigger a socially acceptable response (i.e., "Do you like working with people?").

Follow-up questions may be needed to get additional pertinent information. The interviewer needs to ensure there is sufficient data for making a documented rating decision before proceeding to the next question.

Most questions should be open-ended encouraging the candidate to talk. Avoid the following types of questions:

- Multi-questions that ask for several responses are confusing for both the applicant and the interviewer. In most cases, ask questions one at a time.
- Leading questions, which suggest a desired answer and do not elicit an objective response, should be avoided in an interview (e.g., "You do like working with people, don't you?").
- Vocabulary used in questions should be geared to the level of the interviewees. Avoid jargon or acronyms, which may intimidate candidates.

Sample interview question for ombudsman candidates:

- Why do you want to be a command ombudsman?
- How would friends and colleagues describe you?
- Tell me/us about a time you helped another person deal with a crisis.
- Tell me/us about a time when you did not agree with someone in charge and how you handled it.
- What do you find to be the most rewarding aspect of the Navy lifestyle? The most challenging?
- This position requires you to compile a newsletter. What experience do you have that will help in this task?
- Are you willing to attend Ombudsman Basic Training, local ombudsman assembly meetings, and advanced training as available?
- Is your spouse supportive about you taking on the command ombudsman role?

1.4.2 Conducting the Interview

The following suggestions are provided to assist in developing sound interviewing skills by being familiar with the "do's and don'ts" of conducting interviews:

- Allow equal interview time for each candidate and to rate responses following each interview.
- Secure an interview room free from interruptions and distractions. Make sure the seating arrangement allows the candidate to feel comfortable.
- Explain the purpose of the interview, the duties of the position and your performance expectations.
- Acquire sufficient information for making a documented rating decision on each knowledge, skill, or ability factor.
- Ask follow-up questions when a candidate's initial response is inadequate to rate.
- Complete an interview worksheet on each candidate before interviewing the next. If more than one interviewer is involved, discuss ratings and try to reach consensus following the interview.
- Prepare for the interview by becoming familiar with the questions to be asked and the knowledge, skills, and abilities you wish to rate.
- Express appreciation for the candidate's participation and time away from work or home.
- Conclude the interview by summarizing what will happen next in the selection process.

1.5 Appointment

Initially appointing an ombudsman for a probationary period is recommended. If the new appointee has previous experience as an ombudsman, the recommended probationary period is three (3) months. If there is no previous experience, the recommended period is six (6) months. Whatever the length of the probation, it should be indicated in the appointment letter.

Once selected, a command ombudsman becomes an official Navy volunteer. References that apply to the use of volunteer services include:

- OPNAVINST 5380.1.
- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81, Sections 8101-8152.

- 10 U.S.C. Chapter 81, and Section 1588.
- 28 U.S.C.

As an official volunteer, the ombudsman must:

- Sign a *Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Activities or Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentalities (DD 2793)* in order to be covered for personal liability. This form can be accessed at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2793.pdf> and www.ffsp.navy.mil.
- Receive a letter of appointment signed by the commanding officer. A copy should be sent to the Fleet and Family Support Center and ombudsman assembly chair. The appointment letter ensures a seat at Ombudsman Basic Training and allows distribution of name and contact information.
- Must be registered by the command with the Navy's Ombudsman Registry at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

Additionally, command ombudsmen should receive:

- A nametag and ombudsman pin. (Pins are available through the NEX Uniform Shop for a nominal fee.)
- A copy of the *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.* Download at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.
- Information about upcoming Ombudsman Basic Training classes. If an ombudsman is unable to attend training within six weeks of appointment, they must take the CNIC online orientation. This does not replace mandatory attendance of Ombudsman Basic Training. See <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil> for more information.
- A copy of OPNAVINST 1750.1F. Download from: <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>. Note: It is also included in this *Manual.*
- A follow-on meeting to discuss:
  - Specific duties and responsibilities of the command ombudsman.
  - Command point of contact roles and responsibilities.
  - Navy and command reportables, and procedures for reporting.
  - Accessing and maintaining the command roster and information on the handling of Privacy Act protected information.
  - Role of leadership spouses with the command's ombudsman program.

  - Command policy for communication with parents, boy/girlfriends, and fiancé(e)s of Sailors.
  - Communication during deployment/mobilization.
  - Ombudsman's role in the command's disaster preparedness plan.
  - Use of official phone/email tree.
  - Newsletter production and procedures.
- Reimbursement procedures.

Per OPNAVINST 1750.1F, an ombudsman volunteer file is created and maintained by the command. A copy of the appointment letter, volunteer agreement, and training records must be maintained for three years after an ombudsman leaves the command.

Notification to command family members of the new ombudsman should be made in the POD, the command or ombudsman newsletter, on the careline, web site, and perhaps, by direct mail.

A sample format for a command ombudsman appointment letter follows.

1.5.1 Sample Letter of Appointment

Sample Letter of Appointment Format

Dear [**name of ombudsman**],

Congratulations on your selection as a **(name of command)**'s Family Ombudsman Program. As such, you will play a critical role in helping to maintain family readiness. Your term of appointment is **(length of time)** including a probationary period of **(number)** months.

You are expected to attend Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT). Information about upcoming class dates is available at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>. Please report back to the command upon completion of OBT.

Commander Navy Installations Command provides an online orientation in the event you are unable to attend Ombudsman Basic Training within the first six weeks of assignment. Go to <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil> for additional information.

To ensure (name of command) families have the most current information on resources available to them you are expected to attend local assemblies and advanced training, and share that information at Command Family Readiness Group meetings.

My door is always open to you. Your command point of contact is **(insert name)**. S/he can be reached at **(XXX) XXX-XXXX**. Your official command address is:

Command Family Ombudsman
USS EVERSAIL
FPO AE **XXXXX-XXXX**

Please use this address when mailing or receiving mail in your official position as command family ombudsman.

Sincerely,
CO

Copy to:
File
Fleet and Family Support Center
Local Ombudsman Assembly Chair

1.6 Orientation and Training

All members of the Command Support Team (CST) need to have a clear understanding of the CO's priorities and expectations for the command's Ombudsman Program. The Ombudsman Code of Ethics is the essential foundation upon which an ombudsman's credibility is established and maintained. Ombudsmen must remain committed to strict adherence to the code. Ombudsmen must:

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Support the command's mission.
- Work within the chain of command as directed.
- Maintain the highest standards of professionalism.

Commanding officers introduce this code of ethics and provide orientation training for their newly appointed ombudsmen. During the first meeting with the ombudsman after he/she has been appointed, provide the following information:

- Primary duties.
- Command point of contact for the ombudsman.
- In addition to the requirements to report allegations of domestic abuse, child abuse, and homicidal and suicidal threats, inform the ombudsman of other types of situations you want reported to you or your command POC.
- A command roster with information on how updates will be provided.
- Roles of the commanding officer's spouse, the executive officer's spouse, and command master chief's spouse within the command.
- Policy for communication with significant others of service members such as boy/girlfriends, fiancé(e)s, and parents.
- Method and frequency of communication during deployment and/or mobilization.
- The ombudsman's role in the command's disaster preparedness plan.
- Use of communication tools such as official phone or email tree activation, newsletters, etc.
- Procedures for reimbursements.

If the command deploys or mobilizes, the following should also be discussed:

- The CO's emergency leave policy and expectations for verification.
- A plan for regularly scheduled email/telephone communication.
- A plan for the CO or CMC to provide regular verbal or written updates for the command careline.
- The ombudsman's POC at the squadron, group, or other command who can assist while the command is deployed.
- Funding for printing/distribution of the ombudsman newsletter.

The Navy Family Ombudsmen Program Manual, which includes a copy of The Navy Family Ombudsman Program Instruction, OPNAVINST 1750.1F, should be provided by the command and reviewed by ombudsmen before taking on the role. The manual is available at: <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

An online orientation for ombudsmen who are unable to attend ombudsman basic training within six weeks of appointment is also available. The purpose of this online orientation is to provide the new ombudsman with an overview of the program. However, upon completion of the online orientation ombudsmen are not certified, trained ombudsmen. Ombudsmen are not considered trained until they complete Ombudsman Basic Training. The training schedules are available at <www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

1.7 Recognition

September 14th is the traditional day when Navy Family Ombudsmen are recognized for their efforts as that was the day, in 1970, when Admiral Zumwalt initiated the ombudsman program.

September 14th is the traditional day when Navy Family Ombudsmen are recognized for their efforts as that was the day, in 1970, Admiral Zumwalt initiated the ombudsman program.

Command ombudsmen recognition may include a luncheon, a base sponsored appreciation ceremony, and/or token gifts such as ball caps, plaques, command coins or flowers. Ombudsmen say they also appreciate:

- Having their opinions valued.
- A note or phone call from the CO, POC, or a leadership spouse acknowledging when they have done a good job handling a situation.
- Recognition at command functions and in publications.
- A parking space reserved for them when they have meetings at the command.

- A verbal thank you from a family they have helped.
- Timely reimbursement of expenses.

Additional low cost ways to recognize ombudsmen include:

- Posting the command ombudsman's picture along side the CO, XO, and CMC's photo on the quarterdeck.
- Letting the command ombudsman board the ship first upon return from sea.
- Providing ombudsmen business cards.
- Sending a birthday or anniversary of appointment date card.
- Having the ombudsman represent the command at meetings.
- Interviewing the ombudsman on the installation or ship's television channel.
- Asking the ombudsman to brief the chiefs and officers on the Navy's Family Ombudsman program.

1.8 Turnover

Ombudsmen are instructed to submit a resignation letter whenever:

- There is a change in commanding officer.
- They can no longer perform their assigned duties.
- They are unable to work effectively within their chain of command.
- When their spouse transfers to another command, retires or otherwise separates from the command.

As a courtesy when a new CO reports, the current ombudsman should submit a letter of resignation. The new CO may ask the ombudsman to remain until a new command ombudsman is trained and in place, or he or she may reappoint the existing ombudsman.

Commanding officers may also choose to remove an ombudsman from his or her role by simply sending a letter thanking them for their service, or for cause.

There are times when a volunteer commits an egregious act that must not be excused. Termination for cause may include:

- Any violation of the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics* including breach of confidentiality, failure to support the command's mission, failure to work within the chain of command, or failure to maintain high standards of professionalism.
- Theft of equipment or making false claims for reimbursement.
- Sexual harassment.
- Inability to work effectively as a member of the command support team.
- Unavailability to command family members.
- Failure to participate in required and available training, as directed.
- Failure to report a mandated reportable.

No matter the reason for ombudsman turnover, it needs to occur in a professional manner. Information and items that should be discussed or transferred to the new command ombudsman include:

- How to handle any contact logs or other written documentation regarding calls.
- The newsletter production process.
- Directions for use of the careline.
- Turnover of any command-owned equipment and supplies.
- Procedures for alerting families to the change in ombudsmen.
- Any other topics that might affect families.

It is hoped that with good screening, clear direction from the CO, and good communication with the command ombudsman program POC, unplanned terminations will be unnecessary.

1.8.1 Ombudsman Termination Letter Sample Format

A sample format for a termination for cause letter follows.

Sample Ombudsman Termination Letter For Cause

From: Commanding Officer
To: (Ombudsman)

Subj: TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT AS COMMAND FAMILY OMBUDSMAN

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 1750.1F

1. Per reference (a), your appointment as this command's family ombudsman is terminated immediately for (examples for termination)

   a. Breach of confidentiality.

   b. Unavailability to command family members.

   c. Failure to execute this command's ombudsman mission, as directed by appropriate authority.

   d. Failure to participate in required and available training, as directed.

   e. Incompatibility with chain of command.

2. Thank you for your service.

(Commanding officer's signature)

Chapter 2: Funding and Administration

The commanding officer or designee should work with the command ombudsman to determine a realistic budget for the ombudsman program. This chapter covers:

- Items that may be Funded.
- Reimbursable Expenses.
- The Importance of a Current Command Roster.
- Data Collection and Reporting Requirements.

2.1 Items that May be Funded

The commanding officer shall identify funding and establish a budget for the command's ombudsman program. Commands may use appropriated funds (APF) or non-appropriated funds (NAF) in support of the command ombudsman program. It is important to talk with the ombudsman to ensure an understanding of items the command will fund. Items that may be funded include:

- **Recognition:** The CO may use NAF, if available, for individual ombudsman appreciation dinners, plaques and awards. The NAF limitation is $50 per ombudsman per year. Cash awards *are not* authorized.
- **Administrative Support:** Items such as paper, envelopes, pens, copier service, clerical assistance, command telephone cards, and government vehicle transportation may be provided from APF or NAF as command resources permit.
- **Newsletters:** Costs for production and delivery of ombudsman newsletters. Newsletter content must be approved by the command prior to distribution. If the newsletter is produced solely within the command, the command is responsible for providing technical and administrative support, paper, printer

access, and delivery costs (stamps/bulk mail, etc.). Newsletters printed and delivered by Document Automation and Production Service (DAPS) must be approved and funding provided by the command. The local printing officer can provide guidance.

2.2 REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

Commands will reimburse for specific, pre-agreed expenses such as:

- **Childcare.** Childcare expenses by any caregiver, but at a rate not to exceed the local rate that would be charged by the Child Development Center (CDC), may be reimbursed.
- **Mileage, Parking, and Tolls.** Paid at the current Government privately owned vehicle rate. Mileage must be documented. Parking and tolls require receipts. Go to General Services Administration <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=9646&contentType=GSA_BASIC> to learn the current per mile rate for mileage reimbursement.
- **Communication Equipment.** Command-owned equipment such as computers, cell phones, pagers, or other electronic devices may be issued and must be returned when an ombudsman leaves the position. Calling cards/plans for long distance use may also be authorized.
- **Internet Service.** Internet service can be authorized and funded.
- **Telephone Lines.** Necessary telecommunication equipment may be installed in the ombudsman's home. COs may pay the charges incurred for the use of the equipment using APF or NAF. Installation of such equipment must not be done routinely, but only after careful consideration and subsequent decision that to do so is necessary for the command ombudsman program to function effectively.
- **Travel Expenses.** Travel expenses incurred during command-directed or authorized participation in training, conferences, etc., will be reimbursed. The expense report (SF 1164) and receipts must be submitted as required. Invitational Travel Orders must be issued before travel takes place for authorized reimbursement. Commands may issue Invitational Travel Orders for out-of-area travel, reimburse expenses, and may authorize a travel advance for anticipated expenses. If reimbursement of travel expenses will cause hardship for an ombudsman's family, the command may provide a travel advance. The ombudsman will need to file a travel voucher with receipts upon completion of travel. Since many commands use automated travel order

programs, the ombudsman's POC or command administrative officer can advise on the necessary procedures and/or forms.

To receive reimbursement, the command POC should instruct the ombudsman to document expenses and submit a *Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business* (SF 1164) and appropriate receipts. SF 1164 can be found at <http://contacts.gsa.gov/webforms.nsf/0/4366F7D7DC67B9AC85256A720047DB33/$file/SF1164.pdf > and www.ffsc.navy.mil.

Ombudsmen submit the completed SF 1164 with receipts to the command POC to be forwarded to the disbursing office for payment. Ombudsmen should submit a Direct Deposit form so that reimbursement can be directly deposited into their bank accounts through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Direct Deposit forms can be obtained from any financial institution. Ombudsmen should retain a copy of the submitted claim for their records.

To expedite reimbursement for ombudsmen, earmark funds for the command ombudsman program each fiscal year. Make it clear to administrative personnel that reimbursement for ombudsmen expenses is authorized and timely reimbursement is expected.

2.3 Official Command Roster

The official command roster is the most important tool ombudsmen need to do their job.

The roster of all command personnel contains pertinent information needed by the ombudsmen for the performance of their official duties. It is needed on a daily basis and is especially critical in times of crisis. It is the most indispensable tool ombudsmen need to do their job. The extent of the roster information provided is at the discretion of the commanding officer and can include:

- Service member's name.
- Last four digits of the social security number (in case there are multiple individuals with the same name, which can be common at a large command).
- Rate/rank.
- Date of birth.
- Primary next of kin names, telephone numbers, addresses, and email address. (Spouse and children, if married. Parents or others the service member wants notified, if single.)
- Phone number where a service member's family would evacuate to in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

- Present rotation date (PRD) may be helpful.

It is essential that a process be developed and maintained to ensure that the command ombudsman has the most current official command roster. In case of emergency, the ombudsman must rely on the accuracy of the roster to contact families of both married and single personnel. Some commands instruct ombudsmen to only respond to individuals listed on the official command roster. Ombudsmen are taught at Ombudsman Basic Training that the official command roster contains information that must be maintained as described in *The Privacy Act.*

A current official command roster is especially critical when a command deploys, even for short time periods. The ombudsman needs to be informed of spouses of personnel who join the command just before or during a deployment. These are often the families who most need ombudsman referral services as they acclimate to their new duty station.

2.4 DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Ombudsmen are required to keep a daily log of telephone and email contacts. Sample forms are available in the ombudsman section of this *Manual.* Ombudsmen are required to submit an Ombudsman Monthly Worksheet to the commanding officer or POC. Per OPNAVINST 1750.1F, all commanding officers will ensure their command ombudsman is added to the Ombudsman Registry (as soon as official appointment is made) at http://www.ffsp.navy.mil. The registry shall be updated as changes occur. The commanding officer may assign the ombudsman or command POC the responsibility of entering the data into the ombudsman database that can be found at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>. All commands are required to have login access to the Ombudsman Monthly Worksheet database, and the Ombudsman Registry. The database is found on the privatized site and requires login to access. The Ombudsman Monthly Worksheet format follows.

Ombudsman Monthly Worksheet

Command UIC/RUIC _____

Deployed ❑ Yes ❑ No (if no, # of months since last deployment _____)
❑ Shore Command (Non-deploying)

Ombudsman Name _____

Command Type (Air, Surface, Submarine, Shore, Other) _____

Total Contacts		Contacts By	
_____	Email	_____	Family Member/Parent
_____	Phone	_____	Spouse/Legal Guardian
_____	In-person	_____	Significant Other
		_____	Other

Types of Calls	Number of Calls	Time Spent
Child Birth		
Childcare		
Deployment		
Emergency		
(ARC, NMCRS, Accidents)		
Employment		
Financial		
FRG		
Housing		
Pay		
PSD/Legal		
Relocation/Sponsor		
Reportables (Abuse, suicide, homicide)		
Transportation		
TRICARE/DENTAL/DEERS		
Other		

Number of Presentations Given _____ Hours _____

Number of Trainings Attended _____ Hours _____

Chapter 3: Training

Initial and ongoing training are essential for a command ombudsman to be effective. This chapter provides an overview of the variety of training opportunities available for command ombudsmen including:

- Command Orientation.
- Online Orientation.
- Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT).
- Advanced Training.

3.1 Orientation

Training begins with the commanding officer's guidance and should include:

- Information about job duties.
- Assignment of a command POC.
- Reporting requirements and procedures.
- Guidance for working within the command support team.
- Expectations and goals for the ombudsman program at the command.

The *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual,* which includes a copy of *The Navy Family Ombudsman Program Instruction,* OPNAVINST 1750.1F, should be provided by the command and reviewed by ombudsmen before taking on the role. The *Manual* is available at: <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

The Ombudsman Program Manager maintains an online orientation for ombudsmen who are unable to attend ombudsman basic training within six weeks of appointment. The purpose of this online training is to provide the new ombudsman with an overview of the program. However, upon completion of the online orientation ombudsmen are not certified, trained ombudsmen. Ombudsmen are not considered trained until they complete Ombudsman Basic Training. The training schedules are available at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

3.2 Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT)

Basic training is required of all ombudsmen. It is the CO's responsibility to ensure that all command ombudsmen attend ombudsman basic training. The command is required to maintain a training record for each command ombudsman. The ombudsmen and command POC should discuss how they want to manage this record. It provides information to properly execute the duties of command ombudsman. Ombudsman Basic Training is fifteen hours long and includes:

- Module 1: Ombudsman Program Overview.
- Module 2: Professionalism.
- Module 3: Command Relationships.
- Module 4: Communication Skills.
- Module 5: Information and Referral.
- Module 6: Crisis Calls.
- Module 7: Disasters.
- Module 8: Mission Readiness.
- Module 9: Managing Your Program.

OBT is coordinated by local Fleet and Family Support Centers and Navy Reserve Forces Command. In locations where training is not available, commands shall arrange for the ombudsman to attend the training at other sites and shall issue Invitational Travel Orders. To obtain a list of CNIC approved training sites go to <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

3.3 Advanced Training and Ombudsman Assemblies

Once an ombudsman completes ombudsman basic training, their proficiency is maintained by attending advanced training often offered through local ombudsmen assemblies. An ombudsman assembly is a monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly meeting of all command ombudsmen in a given region. It is established by the sponsoring command (base commander, CO, area coordinator) in support of tenant commands. Each sponsoring command has a local instruction that governs its assembly's operation. The assembly functions under the supervision and guidance of the sponsor. Functions of the assembly may include:

- Serving as a resource for professional development of local ombudsmen by arranging topical training.
- Serving as a liaison for policy discussion and clarification by appropriate local authorities regarding issues of interest to ombudsmen and command family members.
- Assisting commands to recognize/show appreciation to their ombudsmen.
- In the absence of a local FFSC, maintaining a current roster of area ombudsmen.
- Other functions as directed by the sponsoring command such as providing resource handbooks, publication of a newsletter, and maintaining a local calendar of events.

COs, XOs, CMCs, Chaplains, and their spouses are also encouraged to attend.

Advanced training topics are determined locally and generally include information or speakers on the following:

- American Red Cross.
- Casualty Assistance Calls Program.
- Crisis Response.
- Deployment Readiness.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Supporting Spouses of Individual Augmentees.
- Navy Legal Services Office.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

- Media Relations.
- Newsletters.
- Operations Security.
- Service Member Civil Relief Act.
- Sexual Assault Prevention.
- Suicide Prevention.
- TRICARE.

Chapter 4: Command Support Team

The command support team (CST) is designated by the commanding officer. Typically, it includes the CO, XO, CMC/COB, chaplain, their spouses, and command ombudsmen. The CST helps to build and maintain the well-being and morale of the command and command families. This chapter includes information about:

- Team Member Roles.
- Family Readiness Groups.

4.1 Benefits of an Effective Team

Even though the United States prides itself as a country of rugged individualism, much emphasis is placed on teamwork in business, educational settings, and in the military. Benefits of an effective team include:

- Improved morale throughout a company or a command.
- Buy-in of a defined mission or goal.
- Processes and procedures may be improved through increased communication and cooperation.
- Organizational productivity is increased.
- A team's strengths and weaknesses are more easily identified to alert the team when outside assistance may be needed.
- The ability to problem solve is improved as team members are more willing to contribute ideas for solution.

4.2 Command Support Team: Active Duty Roles

The CO is responsible for the overall effectiveness of the command's Ombudsman Program just as he or she is responsible for every Navy program implemented at the command level. The CO generally appoints either the XO or CMC to serve as the POC for the Command Ombudsman Program. The ombudsman should be directed to go to the POC for routine needs such as:

- Securing an official command roster.
- Arranging for funding and distribution of the ombudsman newsletter.
- Including information about the Ombudsman Program in the command's POD/POW/POM.
- Being a speaker for command indoc, mobilization, or pre-deployment briefs.
- Reviewing and approving the ombudsman newsletter.
- Including information about the Ombudsman Program in the command's welcome aboard information for new service members.

COs should provide clear instruction to their ombudsman on how to handle notification to the command regarding urgent or crisis situations such as sexual assault, domestic abuse, or suicide. Do they contact their POC who notifies the CO, go directly to the CO, or notify both?

At larger commands where there may be a command chaplain, the chaplain can support the ombudsman program by being:

- A referral source for personal and marital counseling, if trained to do so.
- A source of advice for ombudsmen.
- A source of information about referrals in the Navy system.
- An advocate for the Navy's Ombudsman Program.
- A source of support for the ombudsman to call upon when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

4.3 Command Support Team: CO/XO/CMC/COB Spouse Roles

The roles of the command support team with the ombudsman program are well-defined. It is important for the commanding officer to also clearly define the roles of the spouses of the command support team. The involvement and support of the spouse of the commanding officer, executive officer, and command master chief/chief of the boat can be an invaluable asset to the ombudsman program. The degree of involvement that any of these individuals will have may differ by command and by personal interest.

> NOTE: Prior to the implementation of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program, spouses of the CO, XO and CMC/COB traditionally took on the roles of ombudsman and family readiness group leadership.

OPNAV 1750.1F allows COs to select their spouse, the spouse of the XO or CMC/COB, or another member of the chain of command to serve as an advocate to the Command Ombudsman Program. To assist in their leadership role, training is available. *The Command Spouse Leadership Course* is a fully funded Navy program offered to spouses of prospective commanding officers while their spouses attend the *Command Leadership Course* in Newport, RI.

Spouses of Command Master Chiefs and Chiefs of the Boat may attend the *Command Master Chief Spouse Leadership Course* which is a similar program for senior enlisted spouses when their Sailor is attending the *Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat Course.*

Training topics for both include:

- Team building.
- Command support team relationships.
- Values and ethics.
- Situational leadership.
- Ombudsman program.
- Conflict resolution.
- Group dynamics.
- Customs and traditions.
- Crisis and stress management.

It is also recommended that leadership spouses attend Ombudsman Basic Training, preferably with their command ombudsmen. This training provides important guidelines and direction in assisting the ombudsmen, as well as the requirements of confidentiality. In the event an ombudsman leaves suddenly for any reason, a trained member of the command support team can then fill in until another ombudsman is selected and trained.

The roles of CO, XO, and CMC/COB spouses may include:

- Being a sounding board for the ombudsman and family readiness group leaders.
- Attending Ombudsman Basic Training.
- Attending local ombudsman assembly meetings.
- Meeting regularly, especially when the command is deployed, to maintain good communication.
- Being an advocate for the command ombudsmen.
- Editing the ombudsman newsletter.
- Attending command activities such as retirements, promotion ceremonies, social events, etc.
- Ensuring family issues and concerns are a priority.
- Sharing information about new programs, services, and resources of benefit to military families.
- Representing their spouse's views, if known.

To ensure positive command support team relationships:

• Establish clearly defined roles.

• Maintain good communication.

• Reiterate these guidelines each time a new member is added to the team.

More and more spouses of the CST are dividing responsibilities to make it easier for everyone. The CO's spouse may coordinate wardroom spouse functions, the XO's spouse may liaison with the ombudsman, and the CMC's spouse may serve as the advisor to the Family Readiness Group. The secret to positive CST relationships is to establish clearly defined roles, maintain good communication, and to reiterate these guidelines each time a new member is added to the team.

If a customary spouse of the CST is not available, the CO may choose to select another spouse of a senior command member to be responsible for the roles of that spouse. The CO should appoint all volunteer members of the CST in writing to assist them in performing their roles when representing the command.

For more helpful information about the volunteer roles of CO, XO, and CMC/COB spouses, Naval Services FamilyLine publishes guides including:

- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Commanding Officers and Executive Officers.*
- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Command Master Chiefs and Chiefs of the Boat.*
- *Guidelines for Launching Clubs and Command Family Associations.*

Contact Naval Services FamilyLine at:

Naval Services FamilyLine
1014 N Street SE, Suite 120
Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374-5067

Toll Free: 1-877-673-7773
Fax: (202) 433-4622
Email: nsfamline@aol.com
Web site: <www.lifelines.navy.mil/Familyline>

4.4 Command Support Team: Ombudsman Roles

Ombudsmen play an important role in the command support team by virtue of their experience and training. Roles within the team may include:

- Providing valuable information to the CST regarding trends in types of calls received.
- Maintaining open communication with all team members even those who may be geographically separated.
- Managing rumors.
- Providing information and referral to team members if requested.
- Attending local ombudsman assembly meetings and sharing information about changes and additions to programs and services available to command families.
- Being supportive of other members of the CST.
- Attending command activities such as retirements, promotion ceremonies, social events, etc.
- Ensuring family issues and concerns are a priority.

4.5 Family Readiness Groups (FRG)

A family readiness group (FRG) is a command organization that may operate on Department of Defense installations. Members typically include spouses, but may also include parents, children, and fiancé(e)s as determined by the commanding officer.

The purpose of an FRG is to plan and conduct social, informational, care-taking, and morale-building activities that will increase family readiness and enable the total Navy family to meet the challenges of the mission and the military lifestyle. FRGs may offer programs or services that complement either appropriated or non-appropriated fund activities on an installation, but they shall not compete with such programs.

Command family readiness groups were formerly comprised mainly of women and were called wives' clubs. This began to change in the 1980s when more women began to make up the active duty Navy. Command family readiness groups are called by a number of names:

- Family Support Group.
- Family Support Club.
- Family Readiness Group.
- Friends and Family Support Group.
- Command Family Association.
- Spouse Group.

The term family readiness group has been adopted more and more because of the change in the OPTEMPO and the resultant family separations. The days of a planned deployment, with a long period of time at home afterwards, are history. Families and Sailors need to be ready at all times. They can no longer wait for the pre-deployment brief to remind them to get their ID cards renewed, make sure that their legal work is current, the car is registered, etc.

Activities sponsored by a group may be informational, supportive, and social. Groups assist COs in providing family members with the tools and experiences necessary to educate, enable, and empower them to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle by creating a mutually supportive Navy family. Group goals may include:

- Providing family support during deployments, mentoring new family members, and assistance in times of crises.
- Coordinating deployment farewells and homecomings.

- Assisting with the command sponsor program.
- Promote family networking, communications, and activities that enhance family readiness.
- Plan and conduct social events and activities.

Activities may include:

- Departure and homecoming preparation.
- Informational and educational briefs.
- Holiday and children's celebrations.
- Communication activities such as web sites, videos, and other communications between family members that strengthen the relationship between command, personnel, and family members.
- Welcoming new families.
- Facilitating family member attendance at orientation sessions.

The command FRG can be a resource to the command and ombudsman. Spouses new to the command, or spouses who want to volunteer can be referred to the FRG as a way to get involved with the command and learn more about the Navy lifestyle.

The ombudsman's role with the FRG is clear. They may assist with the formation and facilitation of a group, but should not be part of the official leadership of the group. However, they should be an active participant.

Ombudsman can support the command FRG by:

- Helping to start a command sponsored FRG if none exists, or assisting in recharging a flailing group.
- Advertising meetings and events in the ombudsman newsletter.
- Introducing themselves and providing information at each meeting.
- Assisting with locating speakers and activities for group meetings.
- Being available before and after meetings to provide individual information and referral to participants.

Chapter 5: Command Communication

Key to the morale of Sailors and their families is clear, honest, frequent communication. Communication from the command to family members most often occurs through the command's ombudsmen. This chapter includes information about:

- Carelines.
- Phone Trees.
- Newsletters.
- Briefings.

5.1 Communication Tools

The term, mess deck intelligence, refers to rumors generated by Sailors when they do not have accurate information. In the absence of factual information distributed frequently and in many formats, Navy family members create their own version of mess deck intelligence, or rumors. Rumors create anxiety, cause families to make bad decisions, and cause more work for the command support team.

Frequent communication from the command reduces rumors, assures family members that they have the most current information, and instills confidence in the ombudsman that he/she will be kept informed. Command sponsored carelines, newsletters and telephone trees are key tools to facilitate communication. It is important for the commanding officer or his/her POC to establish and inform the command ombudsman of expectations for use of these tools.

5.2 Carelines

A careline is a telephone line dedicated to a specific command. It may be a single recorded message updated by the command ombudsman or there may be options for the caller to listen to messages from the commanding officer, the chaplain, the family readiness group, etc. Most commands house the equipment in a Navy facility and the message is remotely updated. Many small commands and shore installations rely on phone trees, newsletters, and installation publications to keep family members informed and do not have a dedicated phone line. An updated message from the CO/XO/CMC when the command is deployed is warmly received by families who eagerly await news about their loved ones.

5.3 Phone Trees

Phone trees are often used by commands to pass information to family members. They are also extremely useful to facilitate communication during or after a crisis such as a hurricane or a command accident. However, for large commands they may be impractical. Establishing a phone tree requires the permission of those listed on the command roster. Volunteers are identified who are willing to call 10–12 other family members. They are then provided with a list of individuals to call and a written message to be relayed. Ombudsmen are instructed to use the phone tree as directed by the command.

5.4 Newsletters

In a recent Navy survey regarding the Navy's Family Ombudsman Program, the overwhelming majority of ombudsmen, service members, and family members find a command newsletter helpful. However, only 58% of active duty and 50% of reserve ombudsman publish a newsletter at least quarterly. More than 90% of ombudsmen and more than 80% of recipients feel newsletters are helpful, yet more than 75% of service and family members say they do not receive an ombudsman newsletter. Clearly, an ombudsman or command newsletter is beneficial. It can be used to:

- Transmit information from the command to family members.
- Inform readers of community and Navy services available.
- Express the command's interest in the morale and welfare of family members.
- Encourage, inspire, and uplift.

The benefits of a newsletter include:

- Reducing the number of phone calls received by the ombudsman.
- Reducing rumors by providing firsthand, accurate information.
- Allowing information to reach the greatest number of people at one time.
- Establishing the command ombudsman as a credible source of information.

Establish guidelines regarding newsletter:

- Content.
- Length.
- Publication frequency.
- Review and approval procedures.
- Administrative support.
- Distribution.

The Navy Mail Center has the ability to completely produce and mail newsletters, delivering a professionally produced newsletter at a reduced cost. The newsletter can be produced using Microsoft Word and sent to the Document Automation and Production Services (DAPS) <http://www.daps.dla.mil/> to print and mail. Attach an updated mailing list using Microsoft Excel. The list is forwarded to Navy Mail Center for the mailing process. Zip codes should be five digits for civilian addresses and nine digits for military addresses.

Typically, each newsletter may be a maximum size of four 8½ X 11 pages, front and back. They are produced in black ink on white 20 lb. paper. Content and design are at the discretion of the originator, but must be in accordance with Navy standards.

5.5 Briefings

To provide information about the command's ombudsman program, the command ombudsman should be invited to do brief presentations at educational and social events. Connecting a name to a face is reassuring to many family members who might otherwise be reluctant to call upon their command ombudsman. Ombudsman may be invited to:

- Brief new Sailors as part of command indoc training. If the ombudsman works and cannot be available in person (in conjunction with command personnel), he/she can create a short videotape to be shown. At a minimum, a letter from the ombudsman should be included in any welcome materials sent to those with orders to the command.
- Introduce themselves at pre-deployment programs and give an overview of the ombudsman program.
- Be introduced at command social events such as picnics, parties, etc.
- Be a regular agenda item at Family Readiness Group meetings where they can share information about programs or services available to military families.

Chapter 6: Command Emergencies and Disasters

It is human nature to hope for the best and avoid planning for the worst. This is especially true of the Navy's youthful population who may have never experienced a personal, command or natural disaster. Active duty personnel practice what to do in case of command emergency. Command ombudsmen have an uphill climb in encouraging family members to prepare for disaster. This chapter covers:

- Disaster Preparation.
- Command Emergencies.
- Natural and Manmade Disasters.

6.1 Disaster Preparedness

Disaster can strike quickly and without warning. They can force families to evacuate from their neighborhoods or be confined to their homes. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away.

While it is difficult to plan for a command emergency, or natural or man-made disaster, the command ombudsman should have an identified role and be involved in any command preparedness drills. In addition, along with command leadership, the ombudsman should routinely reinforce the need to plan. Typical ways an ombudsman can help command families maintain readiness for an unplanned emergency or disaster include reminding families via the newsletter, careline and at meetings. Ombudsmen can help command families be ready should a disaster occur by:

- Reminding families to ensure their Sailor's emergency data (page two) and SGLI information is routinely updated.
- Publishing short articles in the ombudsman newsletter about the need for disaster preparation.

- Providing print materials about disaster preparedness at FRG meetings and command functions.
- Helping families who are new to the area become familiar with the types of disasters most likely to occur in their locale such as hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, wildfires, and floods.
- Suggesting families develop an emergency communication plan.
- Providing lists of items to include in a disaster supply kit.
- Publicizing evacuation routes, emergency public shelters, procedures for pets during a disaster, and information specific to people with disabilities. This information should be disseminated before disasters occur and when a disaster is imminent.
- Informing families of free services available through Navy Legal Services Office such as will preparation.

Many web sites have information about disaster preparedness that is easy to read and understand. They also have checklists or booklets that can be downloaded and personalized for families. Three excellent sites include:

1. Homeland Security < http://www.ready.gov/>.
2. Federal Emergency Management Agency <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>.
3. The American Red Cross <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/>.

6.2 COMMAND EMERGENCIES

Should a command emergency occur that involves injury or death to Sailors, the ombudsman should stay, if possible, in close communication with the command. If not possible, the ombudsman should be in communication with the assisting squadron or command, or Immediate Superior-in-Command (ISIC). The Fleet and Family Support Center that serves the command will also work closely to support the ombudsman.

The ombudsman has been the primary point of contact for family members. Families are accustomed to interacting with the ombudsman and will call them first to verify the extent of any command crisis. Directing the ombudsman to initiate the phone tree and providing information for distribution should be considered. For commands without a phone tree, a carefully worded message for the careline is also an option.

Should an ombudsman's spouse be in danger, or a possible casualty, other command ombudsmen should take a lead in working with families and the media. At many locations, a plan is in place for the local assembly chair to step in to assist the ombudsmen of a command involved in an emergency.

The casualty definition period is the most stressful for families. Command families have a tendency to want to gather together with their Navy family to await news of their loved ones. A facility on base is often opened and staffed with military leadership, counselors, chaplains, childcare providers, and medical personnel to assist families during this difficult time.

In the event of a casualty, the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO) notifies a family member of a loved one's death or injury. The ombudsmen should never accompany the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer. However, they may have current contact information that might make it easier for the CACO to locate a family member.

6.3 Natural and Man-made Disasters

All installations have disaster preparedness plans in place. Ideally, pertinent information from these plans is widely distributed. Command family members should also have a personal disaster preparedness plan and the resources to implement it. In the event the local disaster plan is put into effect, the ombudsman POC should call the ombudsman and inform them of the nature of the disaster. The command may ask the ombudsman to calmly notify family members.

If an evacuation order is given, the ombudsman can provide the locations of nearby shelters via the careline, phone tree, or email. Families should be instructed to contact the ombudsman by cell phone or email once they have arrived at a shelter or other safe location. Instruct the ombudsman to record contact information. This allows a command to keep track of where command families are temporarily located.

Ombudsmen should assist others as much as possible, but should not put themselves or their families in danger by failing to evacuate themselves in a timely manner.

6.4 Disaster Assistance

Commanding officers can assure their ombudsman that there are many resources available to assist during an emergency. Ombudsmen are provided information on disaster assistance resources in OBT including services provided by:

- Casualty Assistance Calls Program.
- The Affected Navy Family Assistance/Ombudsman Resource Center.
- The American Red Cross.
- State Emergency Management Agencies.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.
- United Services Organization.

The Affected Navy Family Assistance is the newest assistance program. It evolved from Task Force Navy Family, stood up by the CNO as a result of severe hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region in 2005. The purpose of the Navy Family Assistance is to restore Sailors and their families affected by disaster to a stable, independent condition. During the time of a natural disaster an Ombudsman Resource Center (ORC) will be stood up to assist ombudsman in delivering resources and information to families during a recovery process.

Services provided include:

- Health care.
- Educational needs.
- Chaplain assistance.
- Language assistance.
- Temporary/permanent housing.
- Legal assistance.
- Financial assistance.
- Pay and benefits.
- Employment assistance.
- Childcare.
- Clinical counseling.

- General transportation.
- Pet care/boarding.

6.5 Summary

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program is an important tool commanding officers have at their fingertips. Sailors who believe the Navy cares about their welfare and that of their families will be more effective on the job. They can focus on the command's mission, whether at home or at sea, knowing their family has someone to turn to when a question or crisis arises.

Chapter 1: Professionalism

Ombudsmen are dedicated volunteers who successfully navigate the Navy lifestyle and assist others to do the same. This section of the manual is designed to provide a solid foundation to help ombudsmen effectively perform their varied roles. Topics covered in this chapter include:

- The Ombudsman Code of Ethics.
- Maintaining Confidentiality.
- Orientation, Basic, and Advanced Training Requirements.
- Handling Grievances.

GET STARTED

1.1 Ombudsman Code of Ethics

Ombudsman roles and responsibilities are described in general in the introductory section of this *Manual* and in OPNAVISNT 1750.1F. Commanding officers tailor the Ombudsman Program to fit the needs of their command. Therefore, job descriptions vary slightly from command to command. Specific ombudsman duties should be defined and documented in a letter, signed by the commanding officer, at the time of appointment.

Each commanding officer determines *what* their command's ombudsman's roles will be. The ombudsman determines *how* those functions are carried out. Many professional groups have codes of ethics – a set of accepted behavioral guidelines that govern the day-to-day activities of a profession or organization.

The *Ombudsman Code of Ethics* is the essential foundation upon which an ombudsman's credibility is established and maintained. Ombudsmen must remain committed to strict adherence to the code. Ombudsmen will:

Ombudsman Code of Ethics

- *Maintain confidentiality.*
- *Support the command's mission.*
- *Work within the chain of command as directed.*
- *Maintain the highest standards of professionalism.*

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Support the command's mission.
- Work within the chain of command as directed.
- Maintain the highest standards of professionalism.

1.1.1 Confidentiality

Confidential information is sensitive information about a service member or family member. It is kept within the CO's designated network and is for official use only. Command ombudsmen must adhere to the strictest code of confidentiality to protect the privacy of individuals and to maintain the credibility of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

The commanding officer determines which individuals at their command have a *"need to know"*. The executive officer, command master chief, and chaplain are almost always designated. Depending on the situation, the command sexual assault victim intervention (SAVI) POC, family advocacy program (FAP) POC, drug and alcohol program advisor (DAPA), or command financial specialist (CFS) may also be informed.

Failure to maintain confidentiality results in a lack of confidence in the ombudsman by the CO and the affected Sailor or family member. It can also cause severe and irreparable harm to individuals.

Types of confidential information ombudsmen may hear include:

- Marital problems.
- Substance abuse issues.
- Financial difficulties.
- Parenting challenges.
- Work performance issues.
- Infidelity.
- Violations of law.
- Mental health disorders.
- Child neglect or abuse.

- Medical issues.
- Domestic abuse.
- Suicidal or homicidal behaviors.

Family members may contact their command ombudsmen to ask for information, guidance, referrals, or they may simply want to discuss their concerns with a caring person. Ombudsmen should not share information with anyone including their spouse, other members of the command support team, or helping agencies without the CO's approval. An ombudsman may seek assistance for families without disclosing identifying information.

The following examples should help clarify the concept of confidentiality.

- A newly married spouse calls and tells the ombudsman she thinks she and her husband need marriage counseling because they are arguing all the time about the upcoming deployment. The ombudsman assures the caller that it is normal for Navy couples to argue before a major deployment. But, without providing names or specific detail, the ombudsman also calls the FFSC and the base chaplain to see if they have an available counseling appointment before the ship deploys. This is not a breach of confidentiality as no identifying information was revealed.
- Mary Smith calls and tells the command ombudsman that she thinks she and her husband need marriage counseling because they are arguing all the time about the upcoming deployment. The ombudsman assures the caller that it is normal for Navy couples to argue before a major deployment. The ombudsman then calls the FFSC and base chaplain, provides Mary's name and number, and asks if they will call her about a counseling appointment. This is a breach of confidentiality because the ombudsman did not ask Mary if he/she could provide her name, telephone number, and information about her situation to the FFSC or chaplain.

Other ways to protect confidential information include:

- Keeping the command roster in a secure location and password protecting an electronic roster.
- Answering calls in a private area.
- Discussing trends, rather than specific ombudsmen calls and emails.
- Maintaining call logs in a secure area.

Ombudsmen should always ask themselves how they would like sensitive information managed if it were about them.

1.1.1.1 Non-confidential Information (Reportables)

Confidentiality is NOT keeping information from the CO or those in the chain of command who have a need to know. Families must be made aware that not all communication with a command ombudsman is confidential. The safety and well being of every individual takes precedence over their right to confidentiality. Navy instruction requires ombudsmen to report:

- All suspected/known child abuse/neglect.
- Alleged domestic abuse.
- Suspected/potential homicides, violence, or life endangering situations.
- All suspected/potential suicidal risks.
- Other issues identified by the Commanding Officer as reportable.

Reports should be made to the CO, or designee, and to the respective agency or law enforcement.

Ombudsmen should be reminded to routinely inform family members of the types of information that cannot be kept confidential. The ombudsman newsletter is often a good place to make this reminder. In addition, whenever an individual contacts the ombudsman and discloses a reportable issue, the ombudsman should make every effort to get assistance for the individual and inform the caller that a report must be made. There are some exceptions, called *restrictive reporting options,* for adults who have been physically or sexually assaulted. These options are discussed in detail in *Chapter Six: Crisis Calls* and are thoroughly covered in Ombudsman Basic Training.

1.1.2 Mission Support

Another element in the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics* is to support the Navy and command's mission. Ombudsmen demonstrate their support for the mission of the command and the Navy simply by taking on the volunteer role of command ombudsman. There may be times when an ombudsman does not feel very supportive due to the demands the command places on his or her spouse, the possible lack of responsiveness to their needs as ombudsman, or personal issues with their family. However, they should not reveal any negative feelings to the families served.

Ombudsman command support is also demonstrated by:

- Maintaining a positive tone on the careline or in email messages.
- Focusing on positive events in the newsletter.
- Making timely referrals.
- Responding to calls and messages in a timely manner and giving full attention to the caller.
- Explaining situations in a positive manner.
- Controlling rumors.
- Seeking the correct information when necessary.
- Keeping disagreements with command leadership private.
- Attending command functions.

1.1.3 Chain of Command

A chain of command is a reporting and leadership structure. Chains of command exist throughout the Navy and civilian workforce. Knowing the chain of command allows an ombudsman to use the systems in place to assist Navy families. Whether or not acting in an official capacity as command ombudsmen, ombudsmen must use the chain of command. When addressing an issue at the Navy Exchange, TRICARE, housing, or within the command, there is never an issue that would require the ombudsman to start at the top of the chain of command. When an ombudsman has questions about the chain of command, they should ask their command POC for help.

It is also important for an ombudsman to keep his or her chain of command informed. Ombudsmen do this by:

- Copying the CMC and XO on correspondence to the CO.
- Back-briefing the CMC and XO regarding any decisions made during meetings with the CO.
- Sending copies of their monthly report to all members of the chain of command and other members of the command support team, if requested.

It is especially important to keep the chain of command informed when the ombudsman is handling grievances.

Grievances are complaints about Navy services and facilities. Ombudsmen do not deal with problems between the service member and his/her chain of command. There are established procedures within the chain of command for that purpose. Also, ombudsmen have no grievance procedure against the command for policies with which they disagree. Certainly, they should make their views known to the commanding officer, but if the grievance remains then the ombudsman should choose to resign.

Individuals contacting the command ombudsman must first make every attempt to resolve the concern within existing channels. Once this is done, the ombudsman should:

- *Get the facts from the caller.* Times, dates, statistics, etc. are necessary.
- *Consider its merit.* Is the complaint legitimate? How would the caller like to see the problem resolved?
- *Clarify what steps the person has already taken.* Has the caller used existing channels to try to resolve the problem? If not, suggest to the person that the proper channels for resolution now be followed. If proper channels have been followed, research the grievance or suggestion.
- *Examine the channels with which the individual was dissatisfied.* Determine if this grievance can be handled employing common sense and knowledge of the Navy organization.
- *Determine what constructive suggestions can be offered.* To whom should the grievance or suggestions be addressed? An ombudsman should consult with their command POC and keep them informed of the grievance and actions being taken. A telephone call should be used if the situation is urgent or uncomplicated. A letter or email can be used when the situation is more complex. State the situation and offer suggestions to rectify. For example: "I am the ombudsman for _____. I have been asked to bring to your attention _____. A suggestion for improvement is _____."

1.1.4 Professionalism Standards

The final element of the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics* is to maintain the highest standards of professionalism. A professional image is projected through:

- Dress or appearance.
- Courtesy.
- Behavior.

Appropriate dress is a picture an ombudsman provides to the world. No one expects a volunteer to purchase a new wardrobe. However, it is important to dress professionally when engaged in ombudsman duties.

A pair of dark trousers, a jacket or sweater, and dark colored shoes is an effective outfit for men or women when attending command meetings (even onboard ship), community meetings, training, and family readiness group meetings.

Younger spouses look to their command ombudsmen to determine appropriate dress at command social functions such as picnics and holiday parties. It is fine to be festive; however, the Navy is a conservative culture. The book, *Service Etiquette,* by Oretha D. Swartz is useful for questions about etiquette and protocol. It is published by Naval Institute Press and is available by calling 800-233-8764 or online at <www.usni.org>.

FYI

Professional courtesy includes addressing all members of command by their title (Captain Smith, Commander Orton, Master Chief Johnson). Use *Mrs.* or *Mr.* when referring to their spouse. It is permissible to call spouses by their first name once they have given permission. It is not permissible to refer to the commanding officer by his or her first name. Ombudsmen always refer to the CO, XO, and CMC/COB by their titles.

In addition, professional courtesy includes:

- Prompt responses to phone calls and emails.
- Ensuring the command support team is kept informed.
- Privately handling disagreements.
- Paying attention to detail.
- Offering solutions to problems.
- Respecting other's opinions and beliefs.

Ombudsmen are in a highly visible volunteer position. This means other spouses observe them whether they are acting in an official capacity as command ombudsman or as a private person. Outrageous or inappropriate behavior will affect the way an ombudsman is perceived and may have an impact upon effectiveness.

Even simple behaviors such as arriving at functions on time, being prepared for meetings, smiling, and chatting with others while standing on the pier or at the squadron are noticed.

1.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest can occur between an individual's personal interest and his or her public duty. This can exist whether or not money is involved, and whether the conflict is actual or only perceived. Most commands do not have command ombudsmen sign a *Conflict of Interest Agreement;* however, many military and civilian agencies do. Military and civilian personnel may not use their position within a government organization for personal gain. This includes command ombudsmen. Ombudsmen may not use their position to solicit individuals they come into contact with as a result of their volunteer work. Examples of soliciting that are not allowed include:

- Selling cosmetics, baskets, scrap booking supplies, etc. to command personnel and family members.
- Taking orders for products.
- Distributing any business cards with the exception of their ombudsman business card.
- Providing information about a business during a presentation.
- Hanging posters about a personal business at the command.
- Advertising in a command sponsored newsletter.

Avoiding conflict of interest, or the appearance of conflict of interest, supports the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics* to maintain the highest standards of professionalism.

According to the *Standards of Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch* < http://ethics.od.nih.gov/LawReg/soc0999.pdf > military and civilian personnel may not use their position within a government organization for personal gain.

1.3 TRAINING

Initial training of ombudsmen ensures Navy families receive a standardized level of services throughout the Navy. As ombudsmen grow and mature in their roles, ongoing training enables them to stay abreast of changes in programs and services, and to become familiar with new programs and services available to Sailors and their families. Initial and ongoing training are essential for a command ombudsman to be effective. A variety of training opportunities are available for command ombudsmen.

Initial and ongoing training are essential for a command ombudsman to be effective.

1.3.1 ORIENTATION

Training starts with the commanding officer's guidance and should include:

- Information about job duties.
- Assignment of a command POC.
- Reporting requirements and procedures.
- Guidance for working within the command support team.
- Expectations and goals for the ombudsman program at the command.

The *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual* which includes a copy of *The Navy Family Ombudsman Program Instruction, OPNAVINST 1750.1F,* should be provided by the command and reviewed by ombudsmen before taking on the role. The manual is also available at: <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

The Ombudsman Program Manager maintains an online orientation for ombudsmen who are unable to attend ombudsman basic training within six weeks of appointment. The purpose of this online orientation is to provide the new ombudsman with an overview of the program. However, upon completion of the online orientation, ombudsmen are not certified, trained ombudsmen. Ombudsmen are not considered trained until they complete Ombudsman Basic Training. The training schedules are available at <www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

1.3.2 OMBUDSMAN BASIC TRAINING

Basic training is required of all ombudsmen. It provides information to properly execute the duties of a command ombudsman. Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT) is fifteen hours long and includes nine training modules. The nine modules are:

1. Introduction, History, Structure, Ombudsman Roles.

2. Professionalism, Code of Ethics and Confidentiality.
3. Command Support Team and the Family Readiness Group.
4. Information and Referral.
5. Communication Skills.
6. Handling Crisis Calls.
7. Disasters.
8. Mobilization and Deployment.
9. Managing Your Program.

OBT is coordinated by local Fleet and Family Support Centers and Navy Reserve Forces Command. In locations where training is not available, commands may issue Invitational Travel Orders. To obtain a list of CNIC approved training sites go to <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

1.3.3 Advanced Training and Ombudsman Assemblies

Once an ombudsman completes basic training, their proficiency is maintained by attending advanced training often offered through local ombudsmen assemblies. An ombudsman assembly is a monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly meeting of all command ombudsmen in a given region. It is established by the sponsoring command (base commander, CO, area coordinator) in support of tenant commands. Each sponsoring command has a local instruction that governs its assembly's operation. The assembly functions under the supervision and guidance of the sponsor. Functions of the assembly may include:

- Serving as a resource for professional development of local ombudsmen by arranging topical training.
- Serving as a liaison for policy discussion and clarification by appropriate local authorities regarding issues of interest to ombudsmen and command family members.
- Assisting commands to recognize/show appreciation to their ombudsmen.
- In the absence of a local FFSC, maintaining a current roster of area ombudsmen.

- Other functions as directed by the sponsoring command such as providing resource handbooks, publication of a newsletter, and maintaining a local calendar of events.

COs, XOs, CMCs, Chaplains, and their spouses are also encouraged to attend.

Advanced training topics are determined locally and generally include information or speakers on the following.

- American Red Cross.
- Casualty Assistance Calls Program.
- Crisis Response.
- Deployment Readiness.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Navy Legal Services Office.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.
- Media Relations.
- Newsletters.
- Operations Security.
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.
- Sexual Assault Prevention.
- Suicide Prevention.
- Supporting Spouses of Individual Augmentees.
- TRICARE.

1.3.4 Certified Ombudsman Trainers

Only CNIC certified trainers are authorized to instruct Ombudsman Basic Training. Trainers must:

- Be an Ombudsman (Active Duty or Reserve), Ombudsman Assembly Chairperson, paid Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) staff, or spouse of a command senior officer or enlisted, and others on a case by case basis.
- Have completed OBT and have two years experience.

With the exception of specific command guidance, all of the information needed to be an outstanding command ombudsman is available through this Manual, the CNIC online Ombudsman Orientation, and Ombudsman Basic Training.

- Be recommended by their spouse's CO. FFSC staff must be recommended by the FFSC director/site manager.
- If applicable, have command-authorized funding for travel and per diem.

Ombudsmen who want to become certified trainers should ask their command for a recommendation. This is an excellent opportunity for talented ombudsmen who have a desire to give back to their ombudsman community to do so. The Ombudsman Program Manager certifies Regional Train the Trainers whose purpose is to train and certify trainers to teach OBT.

1.4 Training Funds

Local commands may reimburse the ombudsman for costs of childcare and mileage incurred during training. To be eligible for reimbursement, the ombudsman must have a letter of appointment and have signed the volunteer agreement.

In locations where training is not available, a command may issue invitational travel orders to enable the ombudsman the opportunity to complete training at another installation. A list of approved training sites is available at www.ffsp.navy.mil. The student must bring a command provided copy of the *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.*

Budget permitting, commands may fund associated travel, berthing, meals, and incidental expenses for ombudsmen to attend non-local training. Expenses may be reimbursed or travel advances may be authorized per Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR).

1.5 Resumes

Command ombudsmen learn and develop skills that are highly marketable whether they are applying for a volunteer or paid position. Ombudsmen, therefore, should develop or ensure they update their resume. A resume is simply a brief document that summarizes education, work, volunteer, and life experience in a clear and succinct format. When applying to be an ombudsman, one should send a resume and a cover letter.

On one or two pages, a resume highlights the following:

Name
Address
Telephone Number
Email Address

Objective: To be the Command Ombudsman for _____.

Experience: Relevant volunteer or paid work experience.

Education: List most recent education. Give the name of the school, location, the major subjects studied and year completed.

Training: List the title of the seminar or workshop, sponsoring organization, length, and year completed.

Honors and Memberships: Include any awards received and indicate any offices held in organizations.

1.5.1 Sample Resume

Sample Resume

Pat Helpall
301.994.XXXX
19XXX Nelson Court
Valley Lee, MD 20XXX
pathelpall@hotmail.com

Objective
To be Command Ombudsman for USS EVERGONE DDG 2.

Experience
- Active duty Navy spouse for 8 years who has experienced 2 deployments and 4 PCS moves.
- Teach 8 hour American Red Cross Infant/Child CPR course quarterly.
- PTA secretary at Holly Oakes Elementary School during 2006 school year.
- Substitute teacher for 2 years on an “as needed” basis, 2006 – present.

Education
- College of Southern Maryland. 24 credits towards an A.A. degree in Human Resource Management.
- Sturgis High School, Sturgis, MI, graduated with honors, 1997.

Additional Training
American Red Cross classes completed include:
- Disaster Response.
- Adult CPR.
- Infant/Child CPR.

St Mary’s County Maryland PTA workshops attended include:
- Running Effective Meetings.
- Organizing Fund Raisers.
- Membership Growth and Development.

Honors and Memberships
Green Holly Elementary School Volunteer of the Year for 2006.

1.5.2 Sample Cover Letter

Sample Cover Letter

19XXX Nelson Court
Valley Lee, MD 20XXX
September 12, 2007

Commanding Officer
USS BESTSHIPEVER DDG 2
FPO AE 09566-XXXX

Dear Captain Smith:

I would like to be considered for the command ombudsman position that will be created when Sally Jones' husband transfers next month. A copy of my resume is attached. Sally encouraged me to submit my resume. I have talked with her about the responsibilities of the position. I believe the eight years experience I have had as a Navy spouse, coupled with the fact that my dad retired from the Navy after 24 years, makes me a good fit.

My background includes being a member of the USS BESTSHIPEVER Family Readiness Group since my husband reported on board last year. In addition, I am a good listener, well-organized, and can keep confidences.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and discuss your goals for the ombudsman program, especially during the upcoming deployment. I can be reached at 301.555.XXXX.

Sincerely,

Pat Helpall

1.6 Professional Turnover

Ombudsmen should submit a resignation letter whenever:

- There is a change in commanding officer.
- They can no longer perform their assigned duties.
- They are unable to work effectively within their chain of command.
- Their spouse transfers to another command, retires, or otherwise separates from the command.

As a courtesy when a new CO reports, the current ombudsman should submit a letter of resignation. The new CO may ask the ombudsman to remain until a new command ombudsman is trained and in place, or he or she may reappoint the existing ombudsman.

There are many reasons an ombudsman may choose to resign. The first of the following sample resignation letters addresses a resignation letter when a new commanding officer comes aboard. The second letter covers more general circumstances.

Sample Ombudsman Resignation Letter # 1
(New Commanding Officer)

From: (Ombudsman)
To: (Commanding Officer)
Via: (Point of Contact)

Subj: RESIGNATION AS COMMAND FAMILY OMBUDSMAN

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 1750.1F

1. I tender my resignation as Command Family Ombudsman when a new Commanding Officer reports as directed by OPNAVINST 1750.1F.

2. I am available to continue as the Command Family Ombudsman for approximately six months as then my spouse transfers to a new command. I am also willing to help recruit and train a new Command Ombudsman.

3. I appreciate the opportunity I have had to serve the Command and the Command Family Members.

Sincerely,

(Ombudsman Name)

Sample Ombudsman Resignation Letter #2
General Resignation

From: (Ombudsman)
To: (Commanding Officer)
Via: (Point of Contact)

Subj: RESIGNATION AS COMMAND FAMILY OMBUDSMAN

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 1750.1F

1. Per reference (a), I tender my resignation as this Command's Family Ombudsman, effective (date), due to:

   - ❑ Transfer of my spouse.
   - ❑ Retirement of my spouse.
   - ❑ Personal reasons.

2. I appreciate the opportunity I have had to serve the Command and the Command Family Members.

Sincerely,

(Ombudsman Name)

Commanding officers also may choose to remove an ombudsman from his or her role by simply sending a letter thanking them for their service or for cause.

There are times when a volunteer commits an egregious act that must not be excused. Termination for cause may include:

- Any violation of the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics* including breach of confidentiality, failure to support the command's mission, failure to work within the chain of command, and failure to maintain high standards of professionalism.
- Theft of equipment or making false claims for reimbursement.
- Inappropriate sexual harrassment.
- Inability to work effectively as a member of the command support team.
- Unavailability to command family members.
- Failure to participate in required and available training, as directed.
- Failure to report a mandated reportable.

No matter what the reason for ombudsman turnover, it needs to occur in a professional manner. Ombudsmen should discuss with the commanding officer or POC the specifics of turnover to include:

- How to handle any contact logs or other written documentation regarding calls.
- The newsletter production process.
- Directions for use of the careline.
- Turnover of any command-owned equipment and supplies.
- Procedures for alerting families to the change in ombudsmen.
- Any other topics that might impact families.

1.7 Summary

Being an ombudsman is a serious responsibility. Agreeing to the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics,* using good judgment and common sense, and taking advantage of available training opportunities can make the experience of being a volunteer command ombudsman extremely valuable. The following is a poetic description of a professional ombudsman.

By Gayle Brinkley
Former Ombudsman Coordinator, FFSC London

I am not a crutch
But I can support you
I am not a counselor
But I know one
I am not a taxi driver
But I can steer you in the right direction
I am not a rescuer
But I can save lives
I am not a babysitter
But I can refer you to a caregiver
I am not a gossiper
But I am a great listener
I am not an enabler
But I can provide tools to empower you
I am not a master of anything
But I know many experts who understand your need
I am not a Recreation or Health Specialist
But I am concerned about your Morale, Welfare & Health
I am not a busybody as I've been called
But I am an Official Command Representative
I am a Navy Family Ombudsman
And I am of service to You
The Navy Family

Chapter 2: Command Relationships

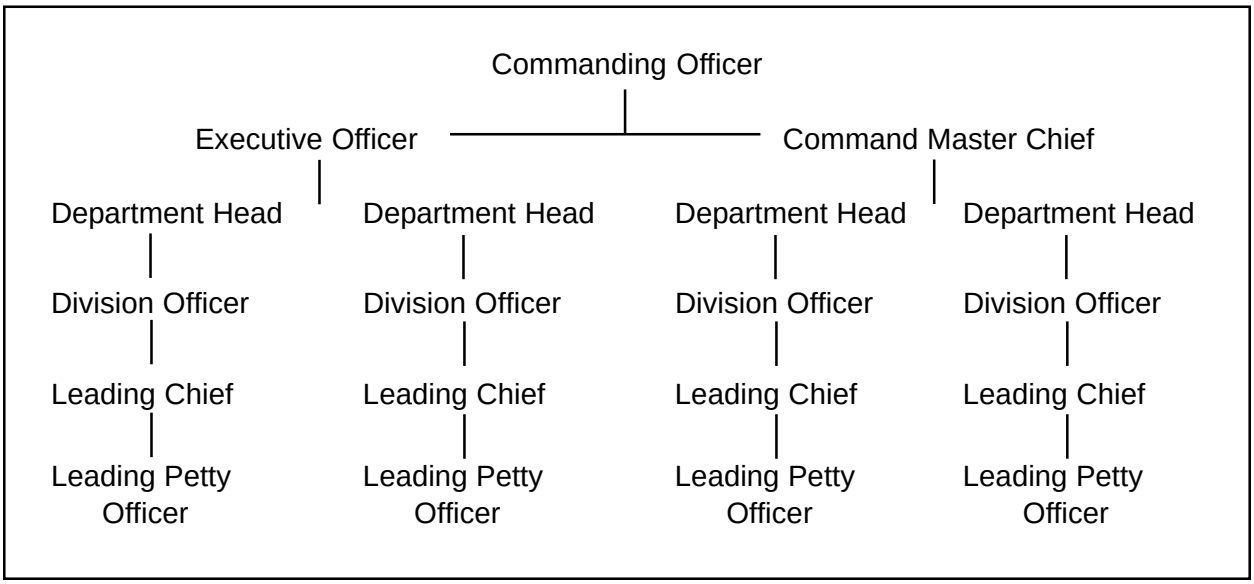
Ombudsmen work with others at the command to support Sailors and their families. This chapter focuses on working effectively with the command support team and family readiness group. Topics covered include:

- Chain of Command.
- Command Support Team.
- Family Readiness Group.

GET STARTED

2.1 Chain of Command

In every command there is a clear hierarchical structure, called the chain of command, which can also be viewed as a "hammock of support" in every command.



An ombudsman must use the chain of command. It helps to identify the proper person to report to and gives the appropriate person a chance to solve an identified problem. The command ombudsman should ask their CO or command POC what the chain of command is for their command.

2.2 Rate and Rank Recognition

To learn more about Navy ranks and rates go to: <http://usmilitary.about.com/od/theservices/a/rankchart.htm>.

In addition to being aware of the chain of command, it is beneficial for ombudsmen to have a basic familiarity with military rates and ranks. Military rank, or simply rank, is a system of identifying seniority within military organizations. The U.S. Navy uses the term, enlisted rating, for enlisted personnel.

There are three general categories of rank/rate:

- Enlisted personnel.
- Warrant officers.
- Commissioned officers.

2.3 Command Support Team (CST)

The command support team (CST) is designated by the commanding officer. Typically, it includes the CO, XO, CMC/COB, chaplain, their spouses, and command ombudsmen. The CST helps to build and maintain the well-being and morale of the command and command families.

2.3.1 Benefits of an Effective Team

Even though the United States prides itself as a country of rugged individualism, much emphasis is placed on teamwork in business, educational settings, and in the military. Benefits of an effective team include:

- Improved morale throughout a company or a command.
- Buy-in of a defined mission or goal.
- Processes and procedures may be improved through increased communication and cooperation.
- Organizational productivity is increased.
- A team's strengths and weaknesses are more easily identified to alert the team

when outside assistance may be needed.

- The ability to problem solve is improved as team members are more willing to contribute ideas for solution.

2.4 Command Support Team: Active Duty Roles

The CO is responsible for the overall effectiveness of the Command's Ombudsman Program just as he or she is responsible for every Navy program implemented at the command level. The CO generally appoints either the XO or CMC to serve as the POC for the Command Ombudsman Program. The ombudsman should be directed to go to the POC for routine needs such as:

- Securing an official command roster.
- Arranging for funding and distribution of the ombudsman newsletter.
- Including information about the Ombudsman Program in the command's POD/POW/POM.
- Being a speaker for command indoctrination, mobilization, or pre-deployment briefs.
- Reviewing and approving the ombudsman newsletter.
- Including information about the Ombudsman Program in the command's welcome aboard information for new service members.

COs should provide clear instruction to their ombudsman on how to handle notification to the command regarding urgent or crisis situations such as sexual assault, domestic abuse, or suicide. Do they contact their POC who notifies the CO, go directly to the CO, or notify both?

At larger commands where there may be a command chaplain, the chaplain can support the Ombudsman Program by being:

- A referral source for personal and marital counseling, if trained to do so.
- A source of advice for ombudsmen.
- A source of information about referrals in the Navy system.
- An advocate for the Navy's Ombudsman Program.
- A source of support for the ombudsman to call upon when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

2.5 Command Support Team: CO/XO/CMO/COB Spouse Roles

The roles of the command support team with the Ombudsman Program are well-defined. It is important for the commanding officer to also clearly define the roles of the spouses of the command support team. The involvement and support of the spouse of the commanding officer, executive officer, and command master chief/chief of the boat can be an invaluable asset to the Ombudsman Program. The degree of involvement that any of these individuals will have may differ by command and by personal interest.

> NOTE: Prior to the implementation of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program, spouses of the CO, XO, and CMC/COB traditionally took on the roles of ombudsman and family readiness group leadership.

OPNAV 1750.1F allows COs to select their spouse, the spouse of the XO or CMC/COB, or another member of the chain of command, to serve as an advocate to the command Ombudsman Program. To assist in their leadership role, training is available. *The Command Spouse Leadership Course* is a fully funded Navy program offered to spouses of prospective commanding officers while their spouses attend the *Command Leadership Course* in Newport, RI.

Spouses of Command Master Chiefs and Chiefs of the Boat may attend the *Command Master Chief Spouse Leadership Course* which is a similar program for senior enlisted spouses when their Sailor is attending the *Command Master Chief/Chief of the Boat Course.* Training topics for both courses include:

- Team building.
- Command support team relationships.
- Values and ethics.
- Situational leadership.
- Ombudsman Program.
- Conflict resolution.
- Group dynamics.
- Customs and traditions.
- Crisis and stress management.

It is also recommended that leadership spouses attend Ombudsman Basic Training, preferably with their command ombudsmen. This training provides important guidelines and direction in assisting the ombudsmen, as well as the requirements of confidentiality. In the event an ombudsman leaves suddenly for any reason, a trained member of the command support team can then fill in until another ombudsman is selected and trained.

The roles of CO, XO, and CMC/COB spouses may include:

- Being a sounding board for the ombudsman and family readiness group leaders.
- Attending Ombudsman Basic Training.
- Attending local ombudsman assembly meetings.
- Meeting regularly, especially when the command is deployed, to maintain good communication.
- Being an advocate for the command ombudsmen.
- Editing the ombudsman newsletter.
- Attending command activities such as retirements, promotion ceremonies, social events, etc.
- Ensuring family issues and concerns are a priority.
- Sharing information about new programs, services, and resources of benefit to military families.
- Representing their spouse's views, if known.

More and more spouses of the CST are dividing responsibilities to make it easier for everyone. The CO's spouse may coordinate wardroom spouse functions, the XO's spouse may liaison with the ombudsman, and the CMC's spouse may serve as the advisor to the Family Readiness Group. The secret to positive CST relationships is to establish clearly defined roles, maintain good communication, and to reiterate these guidelines each time a new member is added to the team.

If a customary spouse of the CST is not available, the CO may choose to select another spouse of a senior command member to be responsible for the roles of that spouse. The CO should appoint all volunteer members of the CST in writing to assist them in performing their roles when representing the command.

To ensure positive command support team relationships:

- *Establish clearly defined roles.*
- *Maintain good communication.*
- *Reiterate these guidelines each time a new member is added to the team.*

For more helpful information about the volunteer roles of CO, XO, and CMC/COB spouses, Naval Services FamilyLine publishes guides including:

- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Commanding Officers and Executive Officers.*
- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Command Master Chiefs and Chiefs of the Boat.*
- *Guidelines for Launching Clubs and Command Family Associations.*

Contact Naval Services FamilyLine at:

Naval Services Family Line
1014 N Street SE, Suite 120
Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374-5067

Toll Free: 1-877-673-7773
Fax: (202) 433-4622
Email: nsfamline@aol.com
Web site: <www.lifelines.navy.mil/Familyline>

2.6 COMMAND SUPPORT TEAM: OMBUDSMAN ROLES

Ombudsmen play an important role in the command support team by virtue of their experience and training. Roles within the team may include:

- Providing valuable information to the CST regarding trends in types of calls received.
- Maintaining open communication with all team members even those who may be geographically separated.
- Managing rumors.
- Providing information and referral to team members, if requested.
- Attending local ombudsman assembly meetings and sharing information about changes and additions to programs and services available to command families.
- Being supportive of other members of the CST.
- Attending command activities such as retirements, promotion ceremonies, social events, etc.
- Ensuring family issues and concerns are a priority.

When two or more ombudsmen are appointed it is vitally important to maintain clear lines of communication to prevent conflict that is detrimental to the individuals involved, the command support team and the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. Items to be clarified include:

- How will communication flow to and from the CO, command POC, and the rest of the command support team?
- How will responsibilities such as updating the careline, editing a newsletter, responding to email, etc. be divided? Will they rotate? If so, how often?
- What methods will command ombudsmen use to maintain open communication?
- How will the ombudsman team handle conflict that naturally arises among each other?

2.7 Command Priorities

All members of the CST need to have a clear understanding of the CO's priorities and expectations for the command's Ombudsman Program. During the first or second meeting with the CO, ombudsmen should learn:

1. What are the primary duties of the command ombudsman? Is there a written job description?
2. Who is the primary point of contact for the ombudsman?
3. In addition to reporting allegations of domestic abuse, child abuse, homicidal and suicidal threats, are there other types of situations the CO wants reported? How do they want reporting to take place?
4. What are the procedures to ensure accurate official command roster updates?
5. What roles do the commanding officer's spouse, the executive officer's spouse, and command master chief's spouse have in the ombudsman program?
6. What is the command policy for communication with significant others of service members such as boy/girlfriends, fiancé(e)s and parents?
7. How will communication take place during deployment and/or mobilization?
8. What is the ombudsman's role in the command's disaster preparedness plan?
9. Under what circumstances is the official phone or email tree activated?

10. How often does a newsletter go out? Is it a command newsletter or an ombudsman newsletter? Who reviews it for accuracy and compliance with Navy standards?
11. What are procedures for reimbursements?

2.8 Family Readiness Groups (FRG)

A family readiness groups (FRGs) is a command organization that may operate on Department of Defense (DOD) installations. Members typically include spouses, but may also include parents, children, and fiancé(e)s as determined by the commanding officer.

The first documented family group was the Navy Wives' Club of America (NWCA) chartered in 1936. Currently, NWCA is a national organization composed of an elected board of officers, regional presidents and over 70 local clubs. Clubs are organized by region, not by individual command and one may belong to both a Wives' Club and an FRG. The clubs are comprised mainly of spouses of enlisted members of the sea services (the Navy, Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard) at military installations throughout the United States and Overseas. Its purpose is to provide welfare and educational projects for sea service families, promote and encourage friendships among spouses, and welcome new service spouses aboard. The group is noted for its annual award of a scholarship to a sea service spouse to continue his or her education.

Command family readiness groups were formerly comprised mainly of women and were called wives' clubs. This began to change in the 1980s when more women began to make up the active duty Navy. Command Family Readiness Groups are called by a number of names:

- Family Support Group.
- Family Support Club.
- Family Readiness Group.
- Friends and Family Support Group.
- Command Family Association.
- Spouse Group.

The term *family readiness group* has been adopted more and more because of the change in the tempo of operations (OPTEMPO). The days of a planned deployment, with a long period of time at home afterwards, are history. Families and Sailors need to

be ready at all times. They can no longer wait for the pre-deployment brief to remind them to get their ID cards renowned, make sure that their legal work is current, the car is registered, etc.

The purpose of an FRG is to plan and conduct social, informational, care-taking, and morale-building activities that will increase family readiness and enable the total Navy family to meet the challenges of the mission and the military lifestyle. FRGs may offer programs or services that complement either appropriated or non-appropriated fund activities on an installation, but they shall not compete with such programs.

Activities sponsored by a group may be informational, supportive, and social. Groups assist COs in providing family members with the tools and experiences necessary to educate, enable, and empower them to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle by creating a mutually supportive Navy family. Group goals may include:

- Providing family support during deployments, mentoring new family members, and assistance in times of crises.
- Coordinating deployment farewells and homecomings.
- Assisting with the command sponsor program.
- Promoting family networking, communications, and activities that enhance family readiness.
- Planning and conducting social events and activities.

Activities may include:

- Departure and homecoming preparation.
- Informational and educational briefs.
- Holiday and children's celebrations.
- Communication activities such as web sites, videos, and other communications between family members that strengthen the relationship between command, personnel, and family members.
- Welcoming new families.
- Facilitating family member attendance at orientation sessions.

The command FRG can be a resource to the command and ombudsman. Spouses new to the command, or spouses who want to volunteer can be referred to the FRG as a way to get involved with the command and learn more about the Navy lifestyle.

The ombudsman's role with the FRG is clear. They may assist with the formation and facilitation of a group, but should not be part of the official leadership of the group. However, they should be an active participant.

Ombudsman can support the command FRG by:

- Helping to start a command sponsored FRG if none exists, or assisting in recharging a flailing group.
- Advertising meetings and events in the ombudsman newsletter.
- Introducing themselves and providing information at each meeting.
- Assisting with locating speakers and activities for group meetings.
- Being available before and after meetings to provide individual information and referral to participants.

2.9 Summary

Everyone benefits when a command support team works together effectively. By having clearly defined roles and expectations, most conflict is eliminated and command family members have the benefit of being supported by a strong leadership team.

Chapter 3: Communication

Communication is the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information by speech, signals, writing, or other behavior. Ombudsmen primarily communicate in three ways:

- Via telephone.
- In-person.
- Through writing.

This chapter provides suggestions for communicating with family members using each method. It also includes information about:

- Protecting Confidential Information.
- Customer Service.
- Communication Theory.
- Barriers to Communication.
- Carelines.
- Phone/Email trees.
- Meetings.

3.1 Operational Security (OPSEC)

Operational Security (OPSEC) is based on the idea that the accumulation of many sensitive or unclassified pieces of information could compromise security by revealing classified information. Thus, OPSEC is an analytic process used to deny adversaries pieces of the information puzzle that, while unclassified, are still valuable.

Collecting intelligence is much like completing a puzzle, where bits of information can be pieced together to form a complete whole. Predictable behavior, casual conversations, discarded documents, and routine acquisitions can all be indicators associated with planning processes or operations; and indicators can give away valuable information about an organization's missions or activities.

Even though information may not be secret, it is what is called *critical information.* Critical information deals with specific facts about military intentions, capabilities, operations, or activities.

Applying OPSEC counters the efforts of an organization's adversaries. Effective OPSEC minimizes the risk that critical information might be inadvertently given away.

The following are some ways to practice OPSEC:

- Shred excess paper involving information on operations.
- Do not discuss classified or sensitive information in open areas like the Navy Exchange, commissary, restrooms, libraries, and other public places.
- Be aware of established routines that could allow an adversary to predict future actions.
- Eliminate or reduce the amount of operational information posted on unclassified web sites.
- Never try to talk around classified information – it is extremely difficult to outsmart experienced intelligence analysts.
- Avoid discussing ship movements, port calls, TAD locations, and installation activities.
- Be aware that email sent over non-secure systems can be intercepted.
- Never attach classified or sensitive documents to unclassified email.
- When using cell phones, fax machines, or pagers, always assume they are being monitored. Equipment to illegally monitor these devices can be readily obtained on the open market.

3.1.1 Internet Considerations

It is especially important not to post sensitive information on the Internet. Web logging or *blogging* is a type of online journal used by some Navy personnel and their family members to document a deployment. Command ombudsmen or family readiness

group newsletters published on the Internet, as well as unofficial Navy-related web sites could be used as a source of unclassified, yet sensitive, information.

These Internet sources make it possible for an adversary to compile sensitive information concerning unit morale, location, organization, personnel, and family members. Blogs, web sites, and electronic newsletters are permitted as long as they do not violate OPSEC.

3.2 Customer Service

Ombudsmen are in the business of providing information and referral services to command families who are their customers. Everyone likes to be the recipient of good customer service and ombudsmen want to provide the best possible service to their customers. The dictionary describes a customer as *"a user of a product or service"* and *"service as contributing to the welfare of another person"*.

3.2.1 Customer Service Tips

Some say customer service is a lost art. To ensure family members do not say that about command ombudsmen, use proven customer service techniques:

- Cheerfully answer the phone.
- Answer the phone only when full attention can be directed towards the caller.
- When unavailable, direct a caller via voice mail to emergency services.
- Ensure careline information is current.
- When listening to a caller take a few brief notes of important details, including dates, names, and situation. However, do not try to write down everything the caller says.
- Listen, even if the caller curses or says unpleasant things. Many people use unpleasant language when they are under stress.
- Make appropriate comments to indicate listening.
- Be empathetic especially when there is nothing that can be done to solve a problem.
- Listen for emotions as well as facts; the tones of the voice, speed of response, or silent intervals are all clues as to the emotional state of the caller.
- Paraphrase what the caller is saying.

- Ask what type of assistance the caller would like. Many times there is nothing that can be done to help. Putting the question back to the caller will help them see that.
- Keep promises. Return calls as promised. Arrive at meetings at the agreed upon time.
- Have the most current information about referral resources.
- Re-contact a customer to see how they are doing.

It reflects positively upon the command and the command ombudsman when good customer service is provided. It is also in keeping with the Ombudsman Code of Ethics requirement to be professional.

3.2.2 Words and Phrases Used to Provide Good Customer Service

Words used with callers can help or they can impede communication. Following are some suggestions on ways to re-phrase common words or phrases that get in the way of effective communication.

- **Use I instead of You**
  Instead of saying: *You're wrong.*
  Use: *I can see there has been a miscommunication.*
  Instead of saying: *You are confusing me.*
  Say: *I'm confused.*
  Or: *Help me understand.*
  Or: *I'm not following. Could you repeat what you just said?*

- **Avoid giving orders**
  People do not like to be given orders. Rephrase directions more politely as a question. Instead of saying: *You have to...*
  Say: *Will you....?*

- **Show empathy**
  An ombudsman may not understand or agree with what a caller says.
  Instead of thinking: *This person is crazy.*
  Say: *I can appreciate what you are saying.*
  Or: *I can see how you would be upset.*

- **Assist the caller**
  Instead of saying: *I can't.*
  Or: *It's not my job.*
  Say: *Let me see what I can do to help.*
  Or: *Fleet and Family Support Center has specially trained staff to assist with....; let me get their number for you.*

- **Avoid causing defensiveness**
  If people think they are being criticized, they will react defensively - often, angrily. Words such as *always* and *never* sound critical and uncompromising; use *often* instead.
  Instead of saying: *You never follow though on the referrals for counseling I give you.*
  Say: *You've often asked me how to get counseling, but you haven't followed up with making an appointment. What can I do to help you make an appointment?*

- **Eliminate problems**
  People often don't like to admit they have a problem they cannot resolve.
  Instead of asking: *What's your problem?*
  Say: *Please tell me what happened.*
  Instead of saying: *That's a problem.*
  Say: *That's a challenge.*

3.2.3 Customer Service on the Internet

Chip R. Bell, author of the *Knock Your Socks Off* book series about customer service, says e-communication automatically creates a distance because it eliminates the opportunity for an interpersonal, face-to-face interchange. Service providers are denied the ability to read nonverbal signals when the customer is upset. A service provider may be communicating to an e-customer who is very upset, but because there is not nonverbal feedback, the level of the customer's frustration is unknown. If communication were occurring in-person, non-verbal communication could be read and a customer's frustrations addressed.

The Navy's mobile lifestyle makes using the Internet a convenient way for family members to use ombudsman services. To ensure command families have outstanding service via the Internet:

- Ensure a command ombudsman web site loads quickly and is easy to navigate.

- Eliminate jargon and acronyms. Use words and phrases that are intuitive to readers.
- Make sure someone is reviewing the *Contact Us* section of the web site and responding to requests at least daily.
- In addition to providing the requested information, provide add-on service. For example, if someone requests information about finding a nursing job when they PCS to the command, assist them with resources and referrals.
- Respond electronically as if writing a letter. Even though email is often used informally, when responding to requests use an appropriate salutation, more formal word choices, correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation. (Use spell check/grammar check programs.)
- Keep responses friendly, but short and easy to read.

3.3 Communication Basics

Good ombudsmen are effective communicators. Over ninety percent of an ombudsman's job involves communicating with someone. Types of communication used include:

- Telephone.
- In-person.
- Written.

Communication is the process of exchanging information and ideas. The elements in communication include:

- Sender – the person who initiates communication.
- Message – information being transmitted.
- Receiver – the person who is trying to understand the message.

Communicating, like other skills, is mastered through training and practice. Information presented in this manual is extensively practiced in Ombudsman Basic Training.

3.3.1 Active Listening

Listening and actually hearing a person's words and their meaning takes full attention. Active listening:

- Helps build trust and positive relationships.
- Encourages a person to share, or continue to share, information.
- Allows the receiver to check their understanding of complex or significant information.

To receive the sender's message, listen for both factual content and emotions associated with the message.

- **Open-ended Questions**
  Open-ended questions begin with words such as what and how. Statements can also be open-ended. An example of an open-ended statement is, *"Tell me more".* Use open-ended questions and statements to get the big picture of the message the caller is sending.

- **Encouragers and Door-openers**
  Encouragers are words and sounds such as:

  - *Uh huh.*
  - *I see.*
  - *Yes.*
  - *Oh.*

  These short words or syllables let the message sender know the intended receiver is listening. Since encouragers are short, they do not interrupt the message sender's thoughts. There may be times when a person calling will need additional encouragement to talk about their feelings, issues, or concerns. Door-openers are similar to encouragers in that they are statements or questions which leave the door open for the person to continue to discuss the issue or concern. Examples are:

  - *Would you like to talk about it?*
  - *I'm interested in your thoughts on that.*
  - *Do you want to say anything more about that?*
  - *I'm wondering how you feel about that.*

- **Reflective Listening**
  Reflective listening or mirroring also encourages a caller to expand on what they are saying. Mirroring is saying back to the caller what they said to you.

  Caller: *I'm so lonely.*

  Listener: *You're lonely.*

- **Silence**
  Unlike a casual conversation when silence can be awkward, when listening in a helping conversation, silence can be valuable. It allows the message sender time to compose their thoughts. It also allows both the message receiver and sender an opportunity to hear and understand a message. After all, a message cannot be received if there is no one available to listen.

- **Paraphrasing**
  Paraphrasing is similar to reflective listening except instead of repeating back exactly what the caller says, the receiver summarizes in his/her own words what was said.

  Listener: *It's been over a month since the squadron left and you thought that by now you'd have a job, and be more involved with the family readiness group, and wouldn't be so lonely.*

  Caller: *Yes, exactly. And I'm worried that maybe I need to see a counselor or something.*

3.3.2 Sending Messages

- **I Messages**
  Rather than using the word "you" use the word "I" when communicating with callers. This method provides a nonjudgmental description of the situation or of the other person's behavior.

  Listener: *I'm not overly concerned that you're still lonely after a month. If you'd like to talk with a counselor I can refer you to a professional or we could talk about some ways to help you overcome loneliness.*

- **Clarify**
  Even with active listening, not all messages are understood the first time they are communicated. It is a good idea to clarify messages not understood. It makes the caller feel their thoughts and feelings are valuable when the ombudsman wants to be sure they understand the message.

Listener: *Could we go back to something you said earlier? I'm not sure I completely understood.*

- **Refocus**
  Sometimes it is necessary to refocus a caller. They may go off on a tangent conversation or may talk about something that cannot happen.

  Caller: *I just wish my husband could come home. Every time I think of him I feel so sad. Maybe they'll come home early.*

  Listener: *We all wish they could come home early, but that is probably not going to happen. What can we do to help make this deployment easier for you?*

- **Contracting**
  Contracting with a caller is getting them to agree to do something and then following through with them to ensure they do.

  Listener: *I'm concerned about you. Would you agree to call the Fleet and Family Support Center and ask to speak with a counselor about your loneliness? If you'd like, I can call ahead and let them know you'll be calling. Would that help?*

  Caller: *I guess.*

  Listener: *Let's hang up. I'll call right now and then call you right back so you know they're expecting your call.*

  Caller: *Ok. Thanks.*

3.4 Barriers to Communication

There are a number of factors that can impede good communication:

- *Environmental factors* such as the television or radio, children, pets, or spouse can cause distractions.
- *Expectations* or *perceptions* of others can be a barrier to communication. A person who tends to blow things out of proportion may not be initially believed when he or she calls with a genuine crisis.
- *Self-concept* or lack of confidence can be a barrier if a person does not believe he or she is worthy of asking for assistance. Or, a person may be too proud to ask for help.

- *Emotions* can impede communication. An ombudsman may be experiencing personal problems that impact their ability to concentrate on another's concerns. Or, a caller may be experiencing such strong emotions that they are unable to clearly communicate.
- *Status* can impact communication as spouses may be hesitant to disagree with the CO's spouse. Or, a family member of a junior enlisted person may be hesitant to contact the ombudsman because the ombudsman's spouse is a chief.
- *Inadequate listening skills* often get in the way of successful communication. Listening and hearing what the other person is saying takes effort that is not always put forth in daily conversations.

3.5 Telephone Communication

Most service provided by ombudsmen is over the phone. Because there is no face-to-face contact, communicating over the phone presents special challenges. Voice tone and word choice become more important to communicate caring.

Over the phone, the listener understands the message 80 percent from voice tone and 20 percent from words.

It is critical that voice tone be pleasant, concerned, patient, informed, and caring. It also helps to deepen one's telephone voice. Lower voices are perceived as being more mature, confident, and in control.

There are several ways to assess one's voice tone. One way would be to get feedback from a co-ombudsman, friend, or neighbor. It must be someone who will be honest, yet offer feedback caringly. An ombudsman can also record themselves as this is an excellent way to learn how others hear you.

3.5.1 Caller Types and Success Strategies

People call for a variety of reasons. An ombudsman response is slightly different for each type of call.

- **Information Requests**
  Most calls are to request routine information. Callers request a telephone number, want to know when the ship is returning to port, or when and where the next family readiness group is being held. Adept ombudsmen can gently train families to read the ombudsman newsletter and call the careline before contacting them for routine information.

Provide the requested information and gently say:

So you know for the future, I publish routine telephone numbers on the back page of the ombudsman newsletter each month.

Or: *Currently the ship is scheduled to pull into port at 1600 this afternoon at pier five, but always call the careline for the most current arrival times. Do you have that number?*

- **Crisis Calls**
  A crisis occurs when a person no longer feels he/she can cope effectively for varied reasons. These calls are more difficult since they sometimes require sensitive handling and provision of immediate help. *Chapter Seven: Crisis Calls* in this *Manual* is devoted to handling crisis calls.

- **Service Demand Calls**
  Service demand calls are from individuals who are unaware of the scope of ombudsman responsibilities. This caller may ask the ombudsman to provide transportation, lend money, or provide childcare. These individuals have genuine needs, but must learn how to meet these needs themselves.

  In response to service demand calls, provide information about the needed service such as public transportation, Navy childcare programs, and ways to meet financial needs. Ombudsmen should not fall into the trap of providing the requested service for several reasons:

  - It is not fair to others in the command to provide childcare or loan money to some and not to all.
  - An unreasonable precedent is established for future ombudsmen.
  - Callers will never learn how to handle their needs on their own.
  - Ombudsmen may put themselves and their family at risk for liability.

  To reduce service demand calls, use preventive methods such as providing information in the ombudsman newsletter or putting reminders on the careline about Navy Family Ombudsmen roles and responsibilities.

- **Chronic Callers**
  People who call frequently without a specific request are often referred to as chronic callers. They may view the command ombudsman as a friend who

they call to chat with when bored or lonely. It is fine for an ombudsman to spend time chatting with command family members if they have time to dedicate to the caller.

If an ombudsman does not have the time to spend with a chronic caller:

- Ensure there is not a specific reason for the call.
- Inform the caller of the amount of time available for the call. For example say: *I can only talk for five minutes.*
- After the allotted time, politely, but firmly tell the caller it is time to hang up. Simply say: *I cannot talk any longer. It was good talking with you. Good-bye.*

An ombudsman should not sacrifice their needs or the needs of their family spending time with chronic callers. If callers are lonely or bored, refer them to organizations where they can meet new people, perhaps get a job or do volunteer work.

- **Command Emergency Call**
  A command emergency call is a cross between information and a crisis call. It occurs when a person hears a news report on the radio, sees a story on the news, or hears a rumor involving their active duty service member's command. Family members who have become accustomed to interacting with the command ombudsman will contact them to verify the extent of any command emergency – real or rumored.

  Ombudsmen should not assume that because the command has not contacted them that the news is incorrect. Many times the news media airs partial information before an official military source can contact an ombudsman with verified information. Ombudsmen should tell callers they will research the question and contact them back. For example: *I just saw that on the news too. I'm going to try to contact the command or squadron and will activate the phone tree if this news report is accurate.*

3.5.2 Telephone Protocol

A protocol is a guideline for doing something effectively and consistently. Protocol for handling ombudsman calls includes:

- Greet.

- Identification.
- Business.
- Record.
- Close.

- **Greet**
  When answering the telephone ombudsmen should identify themselves: Johnson residence.

  Or answer anonymously: *Hello.*

  Ombudsmen should delete cute messages, the voices of young children, and dog barks on their voice mail. An ombudsman's voice or voicemail must instill confidence in the caller by sounding professional.

- **Identification**
  The caller will usually ask to speak to the ombudsman. At that point the ombudsman should give their full name and identification.

  This is Sue Helper, Ombudsman for USS BESTSHIPEVER.

  If the caller does not immediately identify him or herself, ask for their name.

  The next step depends on preference and style. Either:

  - Ask for additional identifying data. This is especially important if the command limits who can be served to individuals identified on the command roster.
  - Learn what the caller's request is and gather data after assistance is provided.

- **Business**
  To determine the reason for the call ask:

  How may I help you today?

  If the call is an emergency, get the caller's telephone number immediately in case the call is disconnected. It may be necessary to calm the caller in order to get information.

  If the call is not an emergency, but a request for information, provide the information. If the caller is not clear about their request, use the Problem,

Access, Choose, Try (PACT) model discussed in *Chapter Five: Information and Referral* of this *Manual.*

If the caller simply wants to chat, the ombudsman should determine how much time, if any, he/she has available to chat and inform the caller.

- **Record**
  Calls must be documented. Use the telephone log or monthly report format (See *Chapter Eleven: Administration.*) Some command ombudsmen choose to gather this information first in case the call is terminated for any reason. However, many find they interrupt a caller's train of thought by soliciting information before the caller has an opportunity to discuss the reason for the call.

- **Close**
  Close the call with a summary of the discussion. Indicate actions to be taken by whom and when. Reassure the caller they can call again if necessary. If the call was complex, re-contact the caller in a day or two to see if they got the help they needed.

3.5.3 Carelines

A careline is a telephone line dedicated to a specific command. It may be a single recorded message updated by the command ombudsman or there may be options for the caller to listen to messages from the commanding officer, the chaplain, the family readiness group, etc. Most commands house the equipment in a Navy facility and the message is remotely updated. Many small commands and shore installations rely on phone trees, newsletters, and installation publications to keep family members informed and do not have a dedicated phone line.

Carelines are excellent opportunities for informing, educating, and supporting command families. Careline messages should be updated at least weekly, ideally on the same day of the week, so family members get used to calling for the updated message. Carelines can be the single most effective tool to educate and inform family members about a wide variety of topics.

An updated message from the CO/XO/CMC when the command is deployed is warmly received by families who eagerly await news about their loved ones.

3.5.4 Phone Trees

Phone trees are often used by small commands to pass information to family members. They are also extremely useful to facilitate communication during or after a crisis such as a hurricane or a command accident. However, for large commands they may be impractical. Establishing a phone tree requires the permission of those listed on the official command roster. Volunteers are identified who are willing to call 10 – 12 other family members. They are then provided with a list of individuals to call and a written message to be relayed. The phone tree should be used only as directed by the command.

The phone tree can be used as a means of:

- Official command information.
- Announcing command events.
- Emergency communications.
- Checking on the well-being of families especially during or after a crisis situation such as a hurricane.

To set up a phone tree:

- Get guidelines from the CO on how it will be used and how closely it will be controlled.
- Determine the number of primary callers needed.
- Develop the list of names and numbers for each caller.
- Train the callers via handout, over the phone, or in-person.
- Provide written instructions for each primary caller to keep by their phone.

The phone tree can be set up on the basis of:

- Geography.
- Departments.
- Alphabetically.
- Wardroom, CPO spouses, First Class Petty Officer spouses, etc.

Once phone tree callers have been identified, they need to be trained and provided with a list of individuals to call and an exact written message to be relayed. Callers should be instructed to:

- Make calls in a timely manner.
- Read information exactly as it is provided.
- Not attempt to expound upon the message.
- Keep calls brief.
- Report back to the ombudsman if any special conditions, extreme reactions, etc. are discovered.

Be sure to have a procedure in place to replace phone tree callers when they leave the phone tree.

3.6 In-person Communication

In-person communication is often the easiest as verbal and non-verbal cues are both available. Three styles of in-person communication are:

- Meetings.
- Briefings.
- Informal contacts.

3.6.1 Meetings

Ombudsmen attend meetings with:

- Command leadership.
- The family readiness group.
- Ombudsman assemblies.
- Committees.

Some meetings are called and led by the ombudsman, and at others the ombudsman is a participant. When an ombudsman calls a meeting:

- Be sure a meeting is needed. People are very busy. Can topics be discussed over the telephone or by email? If so, do not meet.
- Provide advance notice. Generally a week is sufficient notice.
- Arrange for a meeting location.

- Provide location, time, and purpose of the meeting to attendees. If participants need to be prepared, send them an advance copy of the agenda and ask them to come prepared to discuss specific topics.
- Begin the meeting on time.
- Do introductions if everyone does not know each other.
- Bring copies of the agenda.
- Ask if items need to be added to the agenda.
- Keep the meeting moving.
- Build consensus for decisions that need to be made.
- If consensus cannot be built, vote.
- Encourage input from all participants.

Ombudsmen should ask to be included as a regular agenda item at family readiness group meetings. At FRG meetings, ombudsmen should:

- Introduce themselves.
- Provide information about upcoming command events.
- Invite individuals to contact them after the meeting by phone, or by email.
- Carry a supply of frequently requested brochures or flyers and announce they are available after the meeting.
- Keep comments to approximately five minutes.
- Remember to look and sound professional!

When ombudsmen attend a meeting they should:

- Arrive on time.
- Pay attention.
- Ask appropriate questions.
- Arrange childcare for their children.
- Not create a disturbance by talking to others during the meeting.
- Turn off their cell phone ringer.
- Stay for the full meeting or sit towards the back of the room and discretely go if they must leave early.

3.6.2 Briefings

Command ombudsmen have the opportunity to do some public speaking. This is a wonderful way to get the word out about services. Ombudsmen may be asked to:

- Introduce themselves at command functions.
- Brief new Sailors at command indoctrination sessions.
- Make announcements at family readiness group meetings.
- Provide remarks at pre-deployment briefings.

Whether presenting to an audience of over one thousand or facilitating a group of five, first establish credibility. The audience needs to identify with the speaker. To do so:

- Look at the audience and smile.
- Ask a question, even if it's rhetorical.
- Introduce yourself and the topic.
- Get their attention; generate interest in the presentation.
- Make the purpose of the presentation clear.
- Introduce the main points by previewing the topic.

When giving the presentation:

- Select the main points. Make sure they are appropriate for the audience.
- Generally speaking, the larger the audience the fewer main points a speaker should try to convey.
- Choose a pattern for organizing the main points. This provides a "road map" for the presentation.
- Support the main points using statistics, stories, examples, etc.
- Never read a presentation word-for-word.
- Let the audience know when questions will be taken. Options include: throughout the presentation, at the end, or another method such as questions submitted in advance.
- Use gestures for emphasis (pointing, making a fist, etc.), to indicate transition (ticking off key points on the fingers), to describe (draw a picture in the air) or to locate (point to person or object).

- Establish and maintain eye contact with different members of the audience. A presenter should make the listeners think they are speaking directly to each one of them.
- Monitor attention level and make adjustments if needed.

Closing remarks are an opportunity to review and summarize the content. Be sure to:

- State that the presentation is concluding.
- Restate main ideas.
- Allow for questions only if appropriate and time allows.
- Limit the time for questions. Do not let the question/answer session go on too long. Say, *I'll take questions for the next five minutes.* Or, *I believe we have time for about three questions.*
- Recognize questions in order. Make and maintain eye contact with the person who asked the question.
- Understand the question. Ask for clarification, if needed.
- Repeat the question before answering so everyone can hear it.
- Offer to research answers to questions if not known, or ask if anyone in the audience knows the answer to the question.
- If possible, try to be available to answer questions after the presentation, or provide a telephone number or email address.

3.6.3 Informal Contacts

Ombudsmen represent the command in informal situations such as:

- Upon their arrival at the command for a meeting with the CO.
- Homecoming.
- At command picnics and parties.
- At the commissary or exchange.

Some people are naturally warm and outgoing; others are more reserved. This is true for ombudsmen as well. In informal situations, ombudsmen should:

- Smile.

- Go up to individuals and introduce themselves.
- Make small talk. Ask how long someone has been a part of the command, where they grew up, where they live, etc.
- Carry business cards with their name, phone number, and email address.

3.7 Written Communication

Five of the most common modes of written communication used by ombudsmen include:

1. Official correspondence.
2. Informal notes and cards.
3. Business cards.
4. Email.
5. Newsletter.

3.7.1 Official Correspondence

Ombudsmen may draft the content of official correspondence and ask the command's administrative personnel to format the letter and put it on command letterhead for signature. Be sure to thoroughly research content and ensure correct spelling and grammar are used. The command administrative officer can advise on preparation of official correspondence and who should sign it.

Situations where ombudsmen might use official correspondence include:

- Responding to official correspondence.
- Sending a letter of appreciation.

3.7.2 Informal Correspondence

Ombudsmen are likely to draft many informal notes or letters. They may write:

- Follow-up notes to people who call.
- Notes of encouragement.
- Explanatory notes with resource materials sent.

These types of correspondence are not mandatory. Although not formal correspondence, these types of correspondence reflect upon the command. Please be sure to use:

- Appropriate stationary or note cards.
- Proper spelling and grammar.
- Legible handwriting.

3.7.3 Business Cards

Ask the command to provide or assist to design command ombudsman business cards. For economy, it is best to print these at home or at the command a few at a time. For a large command with several ombudsmen, a large number of cards can be printed with the command or ombudsman logo, careline and email or web site addresses and blank lines for the individual ombudsman to stamp or write in their name and phone number.

3.7.4 Email

Email is an efficient way to communicate with command leadership and command families within the guidelines of OPSEC. Tips on effectively communicating via email include:

- Keep messages short and polite. An email should never be so long that the reader has to scroll down the page to read it.
- Put the most important information in the first line of the message.
- Clearly identify message content in the content or subject line of the message.
- When sending messages to a group of recipients, set the computer to display the email address of only the individual who receives the message. This protects confidentiality.
- Never draft and send an emotional message.
- Do not use jargon, acronyms, emoting icons, or email shorthand.
- Do use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Do not include attachments as many security programs will not allow attachments.
- Limit graphics as on slower computers they take too long to download and may not open at all.

- Treat email contacts the same as telephone contacts. Respond promptly when able to devote full attention.
- Encourage people to NOT use email for time sensitive communication.

3.7.5 Newsletters

Newsletters are an excellent way to provide information and educate readers. Unlike a careline where only small tidbits of information can be provided, a newsletter allows more in-depth communication. *Chapter Five: Newsletters* provides information on creating a professional newsletter.

3.8 Summary

Ombudsmen are caring communicators. They may have a preferred style of in-person, telephone, or written communication, but will have the opportunity and need to use all three methods. It is important to determine which method or combination of methods is most effective to the receiver. Fortunately, learning to be a good communicator is a skill that can be mastered through study and practice.

Chapter 4: Information and Referral

Information and referral (I&R) service is the backbone of the Ombudsman Program. Customer service, knowledge of resources, and the ability to problem-solve are skills needed to do this function. Topics covered in this chapter include:

- Making Appropriate Referrals.
- Managing Resource Information.
- Referral Sources.

4.1 PACT Model

Information and referral involves determining the caller's needs and finding ways to meet those needs. It sounds simple, but I&R can be complicated, especially when the caller is not certain what is needed or is hesitant to seek help. Information and referral can be as simple as providing a phone number, or complex, requiring active listening to clarify a problem and determine an appropriate service and agency best able to help.

An easy to remember formula for structuring an information and referral call is the PACT model. A pact is an agreement formed with another. PACT is also an acronym that stands for:

P – Problem
A – Assess
C – Choose
T - Try

4.1.1 Problem Identification

To determine a caller's needs or problem, listen carefully to what he or she is saying. Clarify the following:

- Is this urgent? Does the caller have enough money for food and other necessities? Is the caller being evicted or are their utilities being cut off?
- What has the caller already done to try and solve the problem?
- What resources does the caller have?

Determine what the caller wants to accomplish. Ask:

- *How can I help you today?*
- *What have you already done to try to resolve this situation?*

Realize the real reason for the problem may not be the presenting problem. The presenting problem may only be a symptom of a bigger issue that the caller may or may not be willing to address.

4.1.2 Assess Options

A person experiencing a problem often gets stuck in their ability to see potential solutions. Ombudsmen can help an individual think of other possible solutions. This is the problem-solving part of the telephone call. The focus is on options and solutions to the situation.

- Realistically explore available options and solutions. Ask the caller to brainstorm solutions to their problem without evaluating them at first. The ombudsman may have to provide a few suggestions. Ask open-ended questions and encourage the individual not to immediately dismiss suggestions.
- Focus on the exceptions to the problem. What is going on when the caller is not experiencing the problem? This provides hope and builds confidence that a solution can be found.
- Determine the caller's thoughts and feelings about each option. What are the benefits and risks of implementing each option?
- To resolve the problem may require an interruption or a substitution of a behavior pattern. Help change the caller's interpretation of the situation and their behavior or response may change.

- Only a small change is necessary. This small change can have a ripple effect. Help the caller take ownership of the problem and begin to act.

There are some problems that cannot be solved – death, serious illness, possibly divorce. Ombudsmen can still help an individual by being supportive, empathetic, and by providing resources for additional support.

4.1.3 Choose Option

After thoroughly evaluating a caller's needs and determining that a referral is the most appropriate response, take the following steps to make a successful referral:

- Explain why a referral is necessary. For example: ombudsmen do not maintain food pantries, but there are many organizations that do provide emergency food assistance such as Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, community food pantries, and local churches.
- Indicate organizations capable of meeting the caller's needs. Provide enough information about the organizations so that the caller can make an informed choice. Do not provide so much information or the names of so many organizations that the information is overwhelming.
- Link the caller to the service. Let them know what to expect, how the agency works, etc. Also, let the caller know there are other resources and they can call back for more names if necessary.
- Give the caller specific name(s) and number(s) to call. Ensure that the caller writes down the information.
- In certain instances, and with the caller's permission, it may be necessary to make the contact for them. If it appears that the caller does not have the capacity to follow through to resolve his or her problem, but wants help, it may be in their best interest for the ombudsman to make the contact. If the ombudsman has conference calling they can offer to make the call with the caller and do a "warm handoff" to the agency respondent after identifying the reason for the call.
- If appropriate referral sources are not known, contact the FFSC or assist the caller to contact MilitaryOneSource for information or referral.

The following factors influence the success of a referral.

- The manner in which the information is given: A warm, caring manner should be used. Be patient, tactful, and remain neutral. Ask questions to clarify and to

understand the caller's feelings as well as the situation. Get enough information so that an appropriate referral can be made.

- Whether the referral is timely and accurate: Return a call within the same day, or sooner, for emergencies. For example if someone needs assistance with food, waiting to return their call until the end of the day can mean another night without food for a family. Likewise, referring them to an organization that does not provide emergency food assistance can be frustrating for the family.
- The caller's willingness to accept help: If someone calls, but is unwilling to accept assistance, explore the reasons. What is the real reason for the call? The initial question may be a presenting problem while the actual problem has not been addressed. Is the need for food assistance due to a substance abuse problem? Lack of knowledge or skill in budgeting? Due to a pay problem?
- An understanding of what services a resource can provide: It is critical for ombudsmen to have a basic understanding of services provided by frequently used resources within the community. Knowledge of services allows an ombudsman to accurately match family members' needs to organizations that provide the needed services.

4.1.4 TRY REFERRAL

The PACT model is easy to remember when dealing with resource calls.
P – Problem
A – Assess
C – Choose
T – Try

A plan may be as simple as making a phone call or multi-faceted with a number of steps. If a plan has many steps, it is helpful to prioritize. Perhaps the caller can do step one and two, and then get back to the ombudsman to discuss additional steps.

Be careful not to overload a caller with too much information. Callers in crisis or overly stressed may only be able to handle one piece of information at a time. Rarely should more than three resources be provided. It is too easy for a caller to get confused or overwhelmed, and then they may do nothing.

Follow-up can help a caller implement their plan as the ombudsman acts as a reminder and a clarifier. A follow-up contact helps to ensure families receive needed services and helps to update the ombudsman's referral list if there are changes. Ask:

- Were you able to contact _____?
- Were they able to help?
- What assistance was given?

4.2 I&R Principles

A few reminders about providing information and referral:

- Limit the number of referrals given at one time.
- Be sure the person has the correct information and completely understands the steps to be taken.
- If you are unsure of a referral, offer to take the time to research a caller's question and get back to them.
- For mental health counseling, refer callers to the Fleet and Family Support Center, TRICARE or MilitaryOneSource.
- Develop and implement a follow-up procedure.
- After developing an action plan with the caller, summarize the plan before terminating the call.
- Never make specific promises concerning the agency or services being offered.

4.3 Resource Management

Ombudsmen need to be familiar with commonly used resources within their community. This allows them to provide basic information and referrals quickly and efficiently. Learn about resources in a variety of ways:

- Through fellow ombudsmen.
- By reading local publications.
- Searching the Internet.
- Contacting the local Chamber of Commerce or United Way.
- Through the Fleet and Family Support Center.
- Public service announcements on television and radio.
- Networking.
- Attending the local ombudsman assembly and other relevant meetings.
- Reviewing the local telephone book.
- Contacting MilitaryOne Source.
- Taking Advance Training.

When gathering information about an organization, ask:

- What services are offered?
- Is the agency a non-profit organization?
- How much do the services cost?
- Are services confidential?
- Are the staff members professional, licensed, or certified?
- Are appointments available in a timely manner?
- Does the agency have experienced working with military personnel and their families?
- Are they known to have a good record with the Better Business Bureau?

Although it may seem daunting at first, becoming familiar with resources is relatively easy. In fact, there will be many resources referred to so often that ombudsmen will have the telephone number or web address memorized!

Keep resources current by reviewing them at least every six months. Any time an ombudsman makes a referral they should ask the caller to contact them back if any of the information provided is no longer current. Also, ombudsmen should make follow-up calls to ensure callers got the information they needed. Follow-up provides ombudsmen with the opportunity to ensure resource accuracy, demonstrate they care about the caller, and offers an opportunity to provide additional information, if needed.

4.3.1 Resource Organization

In order to dispense information, ombudsmen must "have it or know where to get it". Most ombudsmen maintain some type of resource file. Some choose to organize resources alphabetically, and others group them into categories such as:

- Childcare.
- Resources for the disabled.
- Housing.
- Medical.
- Employment.
- Domestic abuse.

- Recreation.
- Food.
- Money.

Everyone has his or her own system. Some use:

- A loose-leaf notebook.
- File folders.
- Computer listings.
- Rolodex.
- Stacks of similar resources.
- Business cards.
- Bulletin boards.

Whatever system, it is important to keep it up-to-date. In some areas, there are so many resources it would be impossible to stay abreast of all of them. Stay current with the most referred to organizations and have the name and number of the Fleet and Family Support Center and MilitaryOneSource handy. Callers can be referred directly to these resources or the ombudsman can contact the FFSC and get back to the caller.

Personally visit agencies or attend a briefing about agencies referred to frequently.

4.4 Financial Resource Needs

Not everyone receives education about personal finances from their parents or through formal education. In addition, for many Sailors and their families, the Navy is their first real job; so managing finances maybe a new experience. The lack of basic consumer skills and training in financial management could position them for financial difficulty. The Navy lifestyle – including frequent moves, the high cost of living in some areas, prevalence of easy credit, high-pressure sales tactics, undisciplined buying, and consumer scams – further contributes to potential financial problems. Families may also struggle with the expenses associated with caring for a member who has special needs.

Financial problems can lead to revocation of security clearances, inability to accept orders to overseas and remote locations, and even administrative discharge. This is in addition to the time spent away from work, the lack of focus on the job, and the hours leaders spend dealing with financial problems of their crew.

Ombudsmen are likely to receive financial calls regarding:

- Insufficient funds.
- Pay problems.
- Non-support questions.
- Debt overload.
- Costs associated with military relocations or transitioning out of the military.
- The need for car repairs.

One of the newer challenges for military families is *payday lending* which is sometimes called a *cash advance*. Payday lending is the practice of using a post-dated check or electronic checking account information as collateral for a short-term loan. To qualify, borrowers need only personal identification, a checking account, and income from a job or government benefits, like military pay, Social Security, or disability payments. Payday lending is designed to keep borrowers in debt - not to provide one-time assistance during a time of financial need.

According to a study by the University of Florida, payday loan companies target military personnel and their families by clustering their businesses around military installations. They found that zip codes near military bases consistently had higher numbers of payday lenders than nonmilitary zip codes of similar population and demographic makeup. In almost every state, military towns ranked among the highest in number of payday lenders per capita. This could be because the military frowns on nonpayment of debt. Delinquent sailors can face demotion, loss of security clearances, and even discharge.

There are resources to educate and inform sailors and families from falling prey to the "debt trap" associated with payday lending. Two excellent web sites are:

- Center for Responsible Lending <http://www.responsiblelending.org/payday/index.cfm>.
- Consumer Federation of America <http://www.paydayloaninfo.org> .

4.5 National Resources

A number of national resources are available to assist military personnel and their families to effectively manage their finances and all other aspects of Navy life. The following list of resources provides a general overview of services available. Ombudsmen should contact the local branch of each of these organizations to learn about specific programs, services, hours, and requirements.

4.5.1 American Red Cross (ARC)

<http://www.redcross.org>

The American Red Cross (ARC) serves both civilian and military personnel. It sends communications on behalf of family members who are facing emergencies, or other important events, to members of the U.S. Armed Forces serving all over the world. These communications are delivered around-the-clock, seven days a week, 365 days per year. An ARC message is not required for emergency leave, but many commands may request it to verify the need for leave.

In addition to providing services to 1.4 million active duty personnel and their families, the Red Cross also serves more than 800,000 members of the National Guard, the Reserves, and their families who reside in nearly every community in America.

Red Cross offices are often located in military communities and sometimes on military installations. ARC staff brief deploying service members and their families regarding available support services and explain how the Red Cross may assist them during the deployment.

Through offices all over the world, the Red Cross, in partnership with Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, provides emergency financial assistance to those eligible when traveling and not near a military installation, after hours, or on days when NMCRS is not available.

Confidential counseling services may be available to military personnel and their families including active duty, National Guard, and Reserves. Counseling, guidance, information, referrals and other social services are available through a worldwide network of offices. Red Cross chapters are listed in local telephone books and at <http://www.redcross.org/where/where.html>.

4.5.2 Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS)

Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS) is a non-profit credit counseling organization. Under the auspices of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, it is part of a non-profit network of over 1400 agencies designed to provide assistance to people trying to cope with credit-related issues. CCCS merged with Money Management International (MMI); in some locations, the agency is known as CCCS and in others as MMI. Services include certified consumer credit counselors, online member agencies, and a national toll-fee number. In most communities, CCCS will work closely with FFSC and Command Financial Specialists (CFSs) to provide services.

Individuals and families who have severe debt may be eligible to enroll in a debt management plan coordinated by a local or state consumer credit counseling agency. A debt management plan is a systematic way to pay down outstanding debt through monthly deposits to the agency, which will then distribute these funds to creditors. Benefits of participating in a debt management program include reduced or waived finance charges, and fewer collection calls. Once debt is repaid, the agency can assist those in the program to re-establish their credit.

It typically takes approximately three to five years to repay debts through a debt management program. It is important to work with a non-profit organization. Refer families to the local Fleet and Family Support Center for the names of non-profit agencies providing debt management services in the local area.

To learn more, go to the National Foundation for Credit Counseling at <www.nfcc.org.>.

4.5.3 Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS)

<http://www.dod.mil/dfas/>

Family members often contact their command ombudsman because their service member's pay is wrong, they do not understand something on the service member's LES, or because of changes in pay due to promotion, demotion, PCS, or travel.

The Defense Finance Accounting Service ensures service members are paid. DFAS is the military's financial accountant. In FY 2005, DFAS:

- Paid 6 million military, civilian, retirees, and annuitants.
- Processed 14.2 million contractor invoices.
- Made $7.3 million in travel payments.
- Disbursed $532 billion.
- Recorded 2.7 billion accounting (general ledger) transactions.
- Accounted for 965 active DOD and FY appropriations.
- Managed $70.2 billion in military pay funds (active and reserve).
- Accounted for $9.9 billion in foreign military sales (reimbursed by foreign governments).

The MyPay feature of the DFAS web site allows service members to get real time information and to print a leave and earnings statement. They must log in with a service member created password. The web site also has information about:

- Split pay.
- Travel pay.
- Garnishment.
- Retired & annuitant pay.
- Taxes.
- And more.

MyPay is a good place for service members and their families to start when they have questions about their pay.

4.5.4 Federal Credit Unions

Most federal credit unions, such as Navy Federal Credit Union, offer members free and confidential personal financial counseling. Financial counseling can help individual's attain financial goals, avoid monetary pitfalls, or deal with a financial crisis. There is no charge for this service and assistance ranges from answering specific questions to developing a detailed money management plan, or even to the establishment of a debt management program. Counseling can be done via the telephone, online, or in-person.

4.5.5 Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC)

<www.ffsp.navy.mil>

Ombudsmen frequently refer to their local Fleet and Family Support Center. The FFSC provides a wealth of information and services that fall into three categories:

1. Information and referral.
2. Education and training.
3. Counseling.

Types of questions the FFSC can help with include:

- Where can I get help to find a job?
- How can I help my child deal with my spouse's deployment?
- Where can I get information about budgeting, car buying, or saving and investing?
- How do we prepare for my spouse's upcoming retirement?
- Where can I get information about relocating to our new duty station?
- My spouse and I are having marital problems; where can we get counseling?
- My spouse is physically abusing me; where can I get help?
- I need help managing stress; where can I go?
- Where can we get a speaker for the next family readiness group meeting?

All Fleet and Family Support Centers provide information, training, and counseling or coaching in each of the following areas:

- **Command Support** includes providing programs such as ombudsman training, workshops for leadership spouses, and training such as Family Violence Intervention, Sexual Assault Prevention, Suicide Prevention, Financial GMTs, Pre-deployment, Return and Reunion, Homecoming briefs, etc.
- **Counseling** is short term and solution focused. Active duty service members may have priority since they cannot use TRICARE for counseling services. Consultation with a counselor may provide referral to support groups or other community counseling agencies.
- **Deployment & Mobilization Support** provides educational briefings and print materials to prepare Sailors and their families for deployment. Programs and

materials are available to support family members during the deployment and to prepare Sailors and loved ones to reunite after the deployment. A Commander's Deployment Toolkit is available at the local FFSC to help leadership prepare families for deployment.

- **Family Advocacy Program** provides educational briefings to help identify and prevent domestic abuse. Once abuse has occurred, a variety of intervention services are available including individual and group counseling, education, and tracking of families who have recently experienced abuse or neglect.
- **Military Life Skills Education** includes classes and written materials about a wide range of topics including stress management, parenting, anger management, new military spouse orientation, etc. Classes vary according to the needs of each installation.
- **Personal Financial Management** is provided through the command financial specialist (CFS). He/she is a service member at each command who receives training through the FFSC. Information about financial planning, consumer awareness, checkbook management, using credit wisely, and more are available through the command CFS and through the FFSC financial educator.
- **Relocation Assistance Program** readies service members for a PCS move to a new duty station with individual consultations, written materials, Internet and audio-visual resources, and workshops such as Smooth Move and Overseas Transfer workshops. For Sailors, upon arrival to the new duty station, and departure from the current duty station, many FFSCs have lending lockers with basic household goods such as futons, tables, chairs, cribs, pots, pans, ironing board and irons, etc. available for use at no charge or for a nominal cleaning fee.
- **Family Employment Readiness Program** is available to anyone with an ID card including spouses, teenagers, retirees, and active duty reserve personnel. Workshops and individual assistance in creating a resume, doing a job search, preparing for an interview, working in the federal employment system, starting your own business, and more is available.
- **Transition Assistance Program (TAP)** is available through a multi-day class co-sponsored by the Department of Labor, the Department of Defense, and the Veterans Administration (VA). Information about the VA, medical, retirement pay, and other benefits and services is provided. Information about searching for a second career is also provided. Spouses are encouraged to attend the TAP for separating and retiring service members.

- **Volunteer Services Program** allows individuals to develop skills, maintain skills, and give back to the military community by volunteering at the FFSC or getting a referral for a volunteer opportunity on base or in the local community.
- **New Parent Support (NPS) Program** offers voluntary prenatal and postpartum education and support services. The Navy's NPS program is an early intervention home visiting program designed to promote healthy family functioning, child development, and positive parent-child interactions; and to provide advocacy and referral to other services.
- **Sexual Assault Victim Intervention (SAVI) Program** provides a comprehensive, standardized, victim-sensitive system to prevent and respond to sexual assault Navy-wide through awareness and prevention education, victim advocacy, and data collection.

4.5.6 MILITARYONE SOURCE

<http://www.militaryonesource.com>

Military OneSource is a support service sponsored by the Department of Defense providing phone consultation, counseling referrals and online access at no cost to military members and families. The web site provides information and resources about personal and professional topics. Users must register with the site to access some of the features. Resources are customized for Navy as applicable. The caller or online contact is asked for service affiliation and the information or resources are customized for Navy as applicable.

There are articles and links to a variety of topics including:

- Financial.
- Disability.
- Midlife and retirement.
- Addictions and recovery.
- Work.
- Health.
- Parenting and childcare.
- Relocation.
- Personal and family readiness.

- And more.

MilitaryOne Source has several useful features:

- The web site is available 24/7.
- Telephone numbers are available 24/7 for individuals to call and talk with a consultant.
- The staff will research a topic and send results.
- Referrals for private counseling sessions and legal consultations are also available.
- There are separate numbers for TTY/TDD service and to reach Spanish speaking consultants. Simultaneous translation in more than 150 languages is also available.

To talk to a MilitaryOne Source consultant:

Stateside: 800-342-9647
Collect from Overseas: 800-3429-6477(use applicable access codes, 122-001-010 for Japan, S-KT, Singapore and Thailand, 001 for Korea, S-Darcom and 00 for all others.)
Collect from Overseas: 1 484-530-5908
For Spanish (En español llame al): 1-877-888-0727
TTY/TDD: 1-866-607-6794

4.5.7 Navy Legal Services

<http://www.jag.navy.mil/html/NLSONCLegalassistance.htm>

The Department of the Navy legal assistance program provides free attorney assistance to uniformed service members, their family members and dependents, and other eligible clients regarding some types of personal legal matters. Family members or dependents are those persons identified in the sponsor's service record and/or who possess a valid United States Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card. All legal assistance services are provided subject to availability of staff legal resources. The legal assistance program is authorized, not mandated, by Congress.

Legal assistance is provided at all Navy Legal Service Offices (NLSO), regional legal service providers and at their Detachments and Branch Offices. Legal assistance services may also be available at other Navy or Marine Corps offices and from Navy

and Marine Corps Reserve personnel. The Commandant of the Marine Corps at certain Marine Corps installations designates Marine Corps legal assistance offices. Each NLSO has a geographic area of responsibility (AOR). Within each NLSO's AOR they may provide state specific legal information and advice.

Attorneys counsel clients on numerous topics, but not on any that involve military justice or actions against the United States government. Some of the types of information provided include:

- Adoption.
- Advance medical directives.
- Domestic relations.
- Immigration and naturalization.
- Consumer issues.
- Landlord-tenant issues.
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.
- Notary service.
- Powers of Attorney.
- Wills.

The Navy Legal Services Office (NLSO) offers no-cost consultation and services on a wide range of legal issues. Various legal issues have a financial component including divorce and non-support, leases, and contracts. NLSO provides counseling and assistance with personal legal problems, claims services, etc.

4.5.8 Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS)

<http://www.nmcrs.org/services.html>

Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS) is a private, non-profit organization staffed primarily by volunteers. It provides educational and emergency financial assistance. There are no fees for services.

Those eligible for services include:

- Active duty and retired Navy and Marine Corps personnel.
- Family members of the personnel listed above.
- Family members of Navy and Marine Corps personnel who died on active duty or in a retired status.
- Reservists on extended active duty (over 30 days).
- Indigent mothers (65 years or older) of deceased service members who have limited resources and no family to provide for their welfare.
- Ex-spouses "20-20-20" (un-remarried former spouses whose marriage to a service member lasted for at least 20 years while the service member was on active duty).
- Uniformed members of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Services provided include:

1. Interest-free loans or grants to deal with emergency needs such as:
    - Emergency transportation.
    - Funeral expenses.
    - Medical/dental bills (patient's share).
    - Food, rent, and utilities including deposits.
    - Disaster relief assistance.
    - Childcare expenses.
    - Pay problem or delay.
    - Essential vehicle repairs.
    - Unforeseen family emergencies.

    When the service member can afford to repay, financial assistance is provided as an interest-free loan. It is normally repaid by allotment. If repayment would cause a hardship, assistance may be provided as a grant, or a combination of grant and interest-free loan. NMCRS does not, however, assist with the purchase of non-essentials, nor does it supplement the income of persons who live beyond their means.

2. Education loans and grants are provided solely on the basis of the applicant's financial need, in accordance with policies established by the Society's Board of Directors. All applicants must have at least a 2.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale).

3. Lifetime benefits information assistance is available to the surviving spouse (or child if there is no spouse), of service members who die on active duty after January 1, 2004. The benefit is provided on behalf of NMCRS by the Armed Forces Service Corporation (AFSC) and entitles the surviving spouse or guardian to a lifetime of no cost benefits information support. No charges ever accrue to the survivor. The survivor receives an immediate analysis of the benefits available, tailored to his or her specific situation. Help is also available with claim processing, and to answer questions about survivor benefits and family assistance needs. Each year for the rest of the surviving spouse's life, AFSC sends updated entitlement information and notifies the spouse whenever changes occur.

4. Money management services such as developing a budget, and classes on budgeting and ways to save are offered.

5. Emergency food may be available via food lockers or vouchers to the commissary or local grocery store.

6. Layettes with over $100 worth of baby items are available. Check with the local NMCRS to see if there are income requirements or if recipients are asked to participate in a *Budgeting for Baby* workshop.

7. Thrift shops are available at many installations. They re-sell usable clothing, furniture, household goods, and uniforms at nominal cost. NMCRS volunteers manage these thrift shops.

8. Visiting nurse services are available by request at some local offices to check on a newborn, change bandages, or provide other medical advice and assistance to the homebound.

4.5.9 Naval Services FamilyLine

<www.lifelines.navy.mil/Familyline>

Naval Services FamilyLine is a volunteer, nonprofit organization, dedicated to empowering sea service families to meet the challenges of military lifestyle through information and resource assistance. Established in 1965 by and for Navy families, FamilyLine also supports Marine Corps and Coast Guard families. FamilyLine provides:

- Publications.
- Information and referral.

Naval Services FamilyLine distributes the following publications:

- *Social Customs and Traditions of the Sea Services* acquaints the spouse with some of the social customs, traditions, and organizations that are part of the sea services community.
- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Commanding and Executive Officers* contains information and helpful suggestions to assist the new CO or XO spouse.
- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Master Chiefs or Chiefs of the Boat* offers helpful hints and information for spouses of new CMCs and COBs.
- *Guidelines for the Spouses of Chief Petty Officers* was developed by senior enlisted spouses and printed by FamilyLine. It offers helpful hints and information for spouses of new CPOs.
- *Launching Clubs and Family Readiness Groups* gives suggestions on how to start a new club or readiness group, as well as ideas for activities and projects for those already established.
- *Military Families: Money and Mobility* is provided by the National Military Family Association and addresses the unique financial concerns of military personnel and their families.
- *IA Family Handbook* provides information on what to expect when your Sailor does an individual augmentation assignment.
- *The Naval Services FamilyLine Portfolio* for new spouses includes the following booklets and brochures: Welcome Aboard, Sea Legs, Money and Mobility, Social Customs and Traditions of the Sea Services, Navy Wives' Clubs of America, Helping Hand, TRICARE-at-a-Glance, Be Money Wise, COMPASS information sheet, and Federal Voting Assistance Program.

COMPASS, an orientation program to the Navy lifestyle where spouses mentor spouses, is also sponsored by FamilyLine. Information and Referral is provided by volunteers. They answer telephone calls and email to provide I&R services to sea service families.

Contact FamilyLine at:

Naval Services FamilyLine
1014 N Street SE, Suite 120
Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20374-5067

Toll Free: 1-877-673-7773
Fax: (202) 433-4622
Email: nsfamline@aol.com
Web site: <www.lifelines.navy.mil/Familyline>

4.5.10 NAVAL CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE (NCIS)

<http://www.ncis.navy.mil>

Naval Criminal Investigative Service is the primary law enforcement and counterintelligence arm of the Navy. It works closely with other local, state, federal, and foreign agencies to counter and investigate the most serious crimes including:

- Terrorism.
- Espionage.
- Homicide.
- Sexual assault.
- Certain instances of domestic abuse
- Child abuse.
- Arson.
- Procurement fraud.

NCIS is always involved when any of these crimes happen on an installation. When these crimes occur outside the gates, NCIS works closely with local civilian authorities.

NCIS maintains a worldwide presence with agents even stationed aboard large Navy ships. Special agents operate from 14 field offices, including one operational unit dedicated to counterespionage, and more than 140 individual locations around the globe. To locate the nearest NCIS office contact <http://www.ncis.navy.mil>.

4.5.11 Personnel Support Detachment (PSD)

<http://www.psasd.navy.mil/>

Ombudsmen frequently receive questions about DEERS and ID cards. The Navy's Personnel Support Activity (PSA) is the agency that provides administrative, personnel, pay, and transportation support including:

- Defense Eligibility Enrollment System (DEERS) support.
- Family and service member identification cards.
- Transportation services.
- Travel claim processing.
- Transition processing.
- Medical accession.

Each installation has a local Personnel Support Detachment to provide assistance to service members and their families. To get information about PSD, contact the web site listed above.

4.5.12 TRICARE

<www.tricare.osd.mil/>

TRICARE is the health care program for active duty military, active duty service families, retirees and their families, survivors, and other beneficiaries. Reservists and National Guardsmen are also eligible for TRICARE coverage when they are on active duty, and pre and post mobilization. It is a fully integrated system that brings together the health care resources of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard. TRICARE supplements these services with civilian health care professionals to provide better access and high-quality service, while maintaining the ability to support military operations.

The four most common TRICARE programs are:

- TRICARE Prime.
- TRICARE Extra.
- TRICARE Standard (formerly called CHAMPUS).
- TRICARE Reserve Select.

TRICARE provides a dental benefit, a pharmacy program, and TRICARE for Life for most Medicare-eligible uniformed service retirees. There is also a Program for Persons with Disabilities (PFPWD) that can help with some of the costs associated with specialized medical equipment and services. In addition, mental health services are available. Each TRICARE program has its own eligibility and enrollment requirements. Individuals must be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) to be eligible for any TRICARE benefits. Enrollment for TRICARE coverage is subject to location, eligibility category, and the specific program requirements. Costs and enrollment fees also differ by program.

A working spouse may still be eligible for TRICARE coverage even if they have other health insurance. However, they should inform their healthcare provider so that benefits can be coordinated.

Health benefits advisors are available at the local TRICARE Service Center (TSC) or military treatment facility (MTF) to help families with questions regarding health care services.

4.6 Summary

A wealth of resources is available to assist service members and their families. Providing information about these resources can be the most valuable service ombudsmen provide to those in need.

Chapter 5: Newsletters

By ensuring a consistent and accurate flow of information via a newsletter, ombudsmen can fulfill one of their major responsibilities - getting the right information to the right people at the right time. If approached in a logical and organized way, this task can be easily managed.

GET STARTED

This chapter covers:

- The Purpose of a Newsletter.
- Sources of Information.
- The Navy Mail Center.
- Formats and Design.
- Production Schedules.
- Rules for Using Copyrighted Materials.
- Writing Tips.
- The Importance of Proofreading.

5.1 Why Create an Ombudsman Newsletter?

Newsletters have many purposes. They include to:

- Transmit information from the command to family members.
- Inform family members of community and Navy services available to them.
- Keep family members informed of news of common interest (activities, special events, announcements).

- Express the command's interest in improving the morale and welfare of its family members.
- Encourage, inspire, and uplift.

The benefits of a newsletter to the command ombudsman are:

- Reduces the number of phone calls received.
- Reduces rumors by providing all families with firsthand, accurate information.
- Allows the ombudsman to reach the greatest number of people at one time.
- Establishes ombudsmen as a source of credible information.

Ombudsmen should discuss their ideas for the newsletter with their commanding officer. Ask about established guidelines, requirements, restrictions (length, content, frequency, command administrative support, etc.), potential contributors, and need for review and approval prior to publication. Ask about needed supplies, computer access, mailing deadlines, and procedures.

Ask the CO about maintaining the newsletter mailing list and providing updated copies of the list to the Navy Regional Mail Center. Ask if extended family (parents, grandparents, significant others) may be added to the list, if requested.

5.2 Content and Information Sources

Newsletters may be used to communicate official information. Official information relates to mission and readiness. Official information includes general command information, educational information, items that strengthen morale and unit cohesion, and dates of events such as FRG meetings. Unofficial information includes non-mission related items such as fundraisers, commercial ventures, advertisements, birthdays, etc.

Newsletter content varies depending on:

- Information that is available.
- Season of the year.
- Content and space restrictions.
- Command's status - in port, deployed, shipyard, changing homeport, shore based.

- Types of information requested by readers.

Most newsletter editors make plans for their newsletters several months in advance. When planning the newsletter, consider the needs and interest of families and any requirements, limitations and restrictions. Seasonal items of interest or predictable pieces that will be appropriate based on the command's status are the easiest starting point. News and current events are added later.

Establish a file for each of the subjects listed below. Begin collecting story ideas, news articles, clippings, photos, news source names, addresses, phone numbers, and artwork that relate to each subject:

- Seasonal features: Father's Day, vacation ideas, winter safety tips.
- Command activities: Pre-deployment briefings, picnics, holiday parties, charitable activities, new CPO Events, FRG calendar.
- Morale boosters: Family events, videotaping for deployed commands, home-coming activities.
- Informational needs: Change in clinic policy or hours, childcare resources, agency news such as FFSC, Red Cross, Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, etc.
- Command messages - messages from the CO, XO, Chaplain, or CMC/COB.
- Military monthly themes: April is Month of the Military Child. November is Military Family Appreciation Month.

All newsletters should include a personal message from the command ombudsman reminding the reader of the ombudsman's purpose, clarifying their role (as needed), and communicating a supportive and uplifting message. Name, phone number, designated phone hours for routine calls, and an expression of interest in communicating with family members should be included.

Like any responsible professional editor, an ombudsman must exercise good judgment about what type of material to include in the newsletter. All content must be conservative and carefully screened. Consult the command or installation Public Affairs Officers for guidance on appropriate newsletter content. Commanding officers have the ultimate authority within the Navy to determine official content of newsletters and whether they meet criteria for mailing with appropriated funds. The following types of information SHOULD NOT be included in the ombudsman newsletter:

- Classified information.
- Political or religious opinions.

- Services that require the payment of a fee.
- Advertisements.

5.2.1 Information Sources

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? These are the guiding questions for professional journalists. When collecting information to include in the newsletter seek answers to these questions. Gather newsletter information from the:

- CO, XO, CMC/COB, and their spouses, the chaplain, command financial specialist, or command career counselor.
- Ombudsmen assembly handouts, announcements, speaker's comments, etc.
- FFSC newsletters, flyers, staff members.
- Housing welcome center.
- MWR.
- Child development centers.
- Exchange and commissary.
- Naval hospital/clinics.
- Local and military newspapers.
- Local library.

Get into the habit of talking with members of the command support team to share information and ideas.

5.3 Navy Mail Center

The Navy Mail Center for each region has the ability to completely produce and mail newsletters, delivering a professionally produced newsletter, at a greatly reduced cost.

Procedures to use the Navy Mail Center include:

- Review Customer Reference Guide at <http://www.daps.dla.mil/DAPS%20Customer%20Guide%20full-page%20generic.pdf.>.
- Ensure a command account has been established.
- Produce newsletters using Microsoft Word.

- Go to the Document Automation and Production Services (DAPS) web site <http://www.daps.dla.mil> to locate the local DAPs.
- Attach an updated mailing list using Microsoft Excel. The list is forwarded to Navy Mail Center for the mailing process. Zip codes should be five digits for civilian addresses and nine digits for military addresses.
- Typically, each newsletter may be a maximum size of four 8½ X 11 pages, front and back. They are produced in black ink on white 20 lb. paper.
- The newsletter's cover page must include the command name or the command logo in the publication title, or be printed on official command stationery. The newsletter must be typed and each issue must be dated. The return address must be that of the command, not the ombudsman.
- Provide written directions for printing the newsletter. Include:
  - Quantity.
  - Preferred delivery date.
  - Page order.

The automated system will actually mail the ombudsman newsletter. However, if mailed by the command or ombudsman, newsletters must carry the command's return address and not the ombudsman's. Labels must also be typed in all capital letters. OPNAVINST 5218.7A provides guidance on the use of official mail. The command's administrative officer is a good source of information regarding questions about newsletter development and distribution.

5.4 Formats and Design

Over the years, ombudsmen have successfully produced newsletters in a variety of formats. The most common styles include:

- Letter.
- Newspaper.
- Combination.

Ombudsmen should choose the format they are most comfortable using. All three styles are effective means of communication. Newsletter format reflects the ombudsman's own personal approach to communication.

Letter Style

Letter style is the quickest and easiest to produce. Command letterhead stationery is usually used. Short paragraphs and the occasional use of emphasis type (boldface, italics) helps readers remain interested. The length is usually one to two pages.

Newspaper Style

Newspaper style is the most time-consuming style to produce. This style most closely resembles a professional publication. It contains larger bolder headlines, art work, calendars, news stories, special columns, and has a specially prepared banner. It is visually appealing and is capable of holding the reader's attention for longer periods of time. Most importantly, it is reader friendly (easy to scan for items of interest). The usual length is four to eight pages.

Combination Style

Combination style is just that - a combination of the letter style and newspaper style. It may be printed on letterhead stationery or on paper with a special newsletter banner. It is usually typed in six-inch paragraph widths with bold headlines separating stories to catch reader attention. Occasional pieces of artwork may be added to emphasize a special theme or to give a seasonal flair. Length is usually two to four pages.

5.4.1 CREATING A BANNER

The newspaper style format requires a banner. Typically, the banner includes the newsletter's title and a subtitle identifying the publisher or intended audience. The banner can also include publication information, such as the issue date, volume, and number. An example follows.

The* VICTORY *Voice

A newsletter for USS VICTORY family members

SEPTEMBER 2007

Consider the following when designing a banner:

- Choose a descriptive title and subtitle.

- Isolate or emphasize important words.
- Choose appropriate typography.
- Use secondary words to add graphic contrast.
- Carefully select banner size and position.

Banners provide issue-to-issue unity. Its size, shape, position, and color remain constant, even though the text and visuals on the front page change with each issue.

5.4.2 Columns

If space in the newsletter is at a premium, consider using two or three-column formats. Most word processing programs will automatically format columns.

A one-column format works well with the letter style newsletter. Use a six inch column to allow ease of reading. It is difficult for the eye to travel from the end of one line to the beginning of the next when wider columns are used.

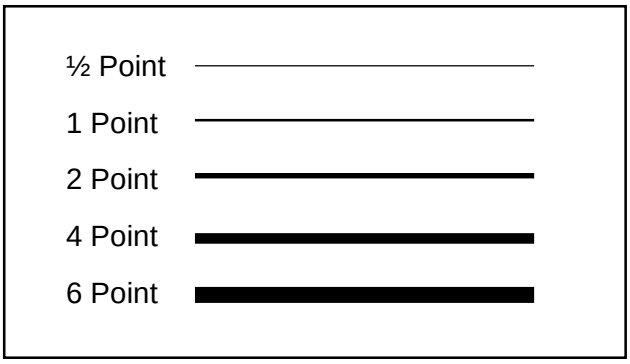
Using a two-column format allows more text per page than a one-column format. Multi-column layouts offer more flexibility for design. The text is easier to read since the eye only travels a short distance from the end of one line to the beginning of the next.

If using a multi-column layout, use a one-column article to emphasize the importance of its content. The headline of an article that spans more than one column should also span those columns.

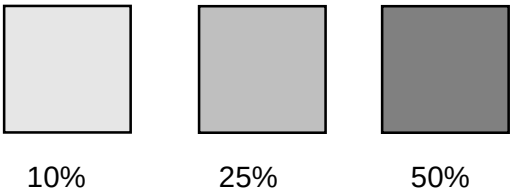
5.4.3 Artwork and Special Effects

Use artwork relevant to the adjacent text. Do not use artwork to use up white space. Size it proportionally. Ensure the artwork is not dated (outmoded hairstyles, clothing, etc.).

Lines and borders are the most effective graphic aids. They highlight text, give the page a sense of order, and direct the reader's eye to information you want to highlight. Beware of overly decorative borders; they tend to add clutter and detract from the information. Line size is measured by points.



Screening is an effective way to make areas of a newsletter appear to have more than one color. They enhance both the information and the appearance of the page. The darkness of the screen is identified by a percentage, for example 10% or 25%.



When using screens in the background of a text area, be certain the contrast between the text and screen does not decrease text readability.

5.4.4 Rules of Thumb for Effective Design

The following design tips keep your newsletter looking professional and inviting:

- Keep pages uncomplicated and the overall design clean. Put short items in groups. Use graphics only when they have a purpose. Keep heads and sub-heads consistent in style and size.
- Create unity on each page or two-page spread. All layout elements seen at one time should visually relate to one another. Art style and type should be harmonious. Put large layout elements toward the middle of the layout and smaller elements toward the edges. Try to make the eye flow easily from the top to the bottom of the page.
- Stimulate the reader by delivering layout contrast. Vary the size of artwork, photos, and headlines. Make boxes and screens around important items.

- Pay attention to proportion. Pages look more interesting when they are not repetitious in design. Rectangles are more interesting than squares. Odd numbers of photos or artwork are more inviting than even numbers. Photographs and artwork should look into the page rather than appear to gaze off the layout.
- Layout design is a creative activity. The paper is the canvas. The layout elements (block of text, artwork, photos, and headlines) are materials. To ensure good layout design, use common sense and intuition. Consider balance, size, visual weight, intensity, drama, and white space. White space is not what is left over - it is an active participant in design.

5.4.5 Type Styles

Serif types are highly readable. Serif's hooks, feet, and brackets and the differential between the thick and thin parts contribute to its legibility. In general, this results in a more legible and readable typeface. Serif fonts include:

- Times Roman.
- Garamond.
- Bookman.
- Book Antigua.

Sans Serif types are perceived as modern, cosmopolitan, scientific, and up-to-date. While people read sans serif type faster, they also tend to read it less accurately. Because readers are more motivated to quickly read headlines than body text and headlines tend to be short, using a recognizable font ensures text is quick and easy to read. Sans serif fonts include:

- Eras.
- Arial.
- Verdana.
- Century Gothic.

Variety within the same typeface family is fine (italics, bold, other point sizes). Variety among typefaces (mixing completely different families) creates a hodgepodge effect. Remember, a single typeface may come in:

- Standard face.

- **Boldface.**
- *Italic.*
- SMALL CAPS.

Typeface or fonts are available in different sizes, measured in points (72 points equal one inch). Good choices for headlines are 18 or 24 point and for subheads 14 or 12 point, depending on the style and layout of your newsletter. Choose simple type styles such as Arial, Times Roman, or fonts similar to those found in books, magazines, and newspapers.

Using all caps for body text is more difficult to read than using upper and lower case characters. Both of the following samples are the same font size and style.

- Text in all caps takes up to one-third more line space than lower case letters.
- TEXT IN ALL CAPS TAKES UP TO ONE-THIRD MORE LINE SPACE THAN LOWER CASE LETTERS.

5.5 PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

With the CO or command POC, decide if the ombudsman will produce a newsletter or if they will contribute to a newsletter produced by the command. An ombudsman has more control over the production schedule and content if they edit the newsletter. Also determine the distribution frequency and try to stick with that schedule as families will come to rely on the newsletter. Many ombudsmen do monthly newsletters – especially when the command is deployed. Shore commands may opt to do bi-monthly or quarterly newsletters. There are deadlines to consider when planning a newsletter. Be sure everyone involved with any part of the production process is aware of the entire deadline schedule. Make contingency plans for when others fail to keep their commitments.

Base deadlines on the goal of readers receiving their newsletter on time. The time allowances are in parenthesis.

Generally, it takes approximately two to three weeks to create and get a newsletter into the hands of readers.

Deadline	Task	Time Frame
Readers receive their newsletters!		(3-5 days)
At Printer	Newsletter delivered to the Navy Mail Center or to the command for printing.	(5-10 days)
Approval	Newsletter submitted for approval.	(1-3 days)
Layout and design	Newsletter compiled and proof read.	(1-2 days)
Writing	Articles, input from command, FRG, etc, submitted. (Set an established date. For example, all input to you by the 15th of the month for a newsletter that is distributed the first of each month.)	(2-5 days)
Information	Meetings, events, publications, dates, people.	(Ongoing)

5.6 Copyrighted Materials

Copyright means only the author has the right to copy or allow someone else to copy their material. Copyright is a monopoly, granted by the government, covering the expression of an idea, not the idea itself. (Facts may be freely copied; the expression belongs to the author.)

Look for the symbol ©, which should appear within the phrase copyright © (date) (name of owner). For a newsletter or magazine, the phrase would normally appear as part of the masthead; for a book, on the back of its title page; and for artwork, as part of the caption. In these cases, the phrase protects all material within the publication.

A copyright owned by a person lasts fifty years after the owner's death. Copyrights owned by companies or organizations are good for seventy-five years following the publication of the material. Different rules apply to material copyrighted before 1978.

To use copyrighted materials an editor has to ask for permission or publish under the fair use provisions. Publishers usually handle copyright requests for authors. Thus, a letter can be addressed to the publisher, even though an individual author is legally the

copyright holder. When requesting to use copyrighted materials:

- Describe content to be used.
- Attach a photocopy of the exact material.
- Tell about the newsletter - purpose, frequency, readers.
- Be sure to indicate the newsletter is associated with a non-profit activity.
- Use whatever credit line the copyright owner wishes.

The copyright owner is entitled to charge for using the material. In practice, permission to use at no cost is almost always given.

The copyright law says a small portion of copyrighted materials may be published without permission under specific circumstances. The most common circumstances are when content is quoted for the purpose of commenting or teaching about the material. Material may also be quoted when describing the material as news. There are no rules about how long the quotations may be or how many quotes may be used. Two or three excerpts of fifty words each should normally be no problem; neither should reproduction of one photograph or drawing.

Public domain is free access to material whose copyright has expired or was never secured. All government-produced materials are in the public domain and may be used. However, the source should be cited. FFSC newsletters are an example of public domain material.

For additional copyright information, call the Copyright Office Hotline and ask for Circular Two, Publications on Copyright. They can be contacted at:

(202) 287-9100
Copyright Office LM455
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20559

5.7 START WRITING

Analyze the reader to determine needs. Ask the following questions:

1. **Who?**
   Who is my reader?

2. **What?**
   What does my reader need to know about this subject?
   What will interest my reader most?
   What will help my reader to understand this subject?
   What do I want my reader to do?

3. **Where?**
   Where can I get the information my reader wants and needs?

4. **When?**
   When does my reader need this information?
   When will these events take place?

5. **Why?**
   Why is this subject important to my reader (and to me)?
   Why does my reader need this information?
   Why is my reader interested in this subject?
   Why is my reader not interested in this subject?

6. **How?**
   How much information does my reader need?
   How can I help my reader do what I ask?
   How does my reader feel about this subject?

Even professional writers say that sometimes the whole idea of putting words on paper or a computer screen leads to paralysis of the hand and brain. This condition is known as writer's block. Are there any cures? Yes... self discipline, perseverance, practice and deadlines... all of which are painful. Writer's block prevention is far more desirable.

5.7.1 Writing Tips

The following writing tips may help prevent writer's block:

- Grab readers' attention. Start with the most important information in the first paragraph and then add supporting information.
- Use simple, action-oriented verbs.
- Use familiar words.
- Keep it short and simple. Paragraphs of four to six sentences and stories of five or fewer paragraphs are ideal.

- Use active voice - subject first, then verb.
- Use present tense even though many events occurred in the past. To show the future, use infinitives such as *to award* or *to eliminate.*
- Speak directly to readers using a normal personal speaking pattern (except for slang, shorthand speech, or incorrect language).
- Ask: *If I had no knowledge of this topic, would I understand the message of this article? Did I answer the six basic questions of reporting: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How?*
- Writing is a learned skill. Write, rewrite, and then rewrite again.
- Welcome edits. Ask others to read articles to ensure they make sense.

5.7.2 Common Writing Errors

Try to avoid common writing errors:

- Expressing more than one point or idea per paragraph.
- Changing the verb tense in the same sentence.
- Capitalizing words that are not proper nouns.
- Connecting two sentences with a comma and creating a run-on sentence.
- Choosing a design, style, or format and failing to hold to it.
- Failing to put statements in a positive form.
- Including needless words.
- Using vocabulary or jargon that readers won't understand.
- Using either an abbreviation or acronym without telling the reader what it means the first time it appears in the article.

Other errors to avoid include using the following incorrectly:

then-than	stationary-stationery
to-too	personal-personnel
affect-effect	appraise-apprise
its-it's	regardless-irregardless
fewer-less	principle-principal
your-you're	there-their-they're

Using incorrect spellings of the following words:

a lot	absence	accommodate
all right	altogether	balloon
cannot	changeable	commitment
committee	conscience	conscientious
description	desirable	despair
develop	eligible	embarrass
envelope	exceed	forty
leisure	liaison	license
maintenance	miscellaneous	misspelling
necessary	pamphlet	parallel
privilege	psychiatry	psychology
pursue	receive	recommend
ridiculous	separate	sergeant
succeed	surprise	thorough
transferred	until	vacuum

5.7.3 Effective Headlines

Choose short, concise words for headlines. Express one thought only - the most important story idea. Capture the story. Do not be so brief that readers miss the idea or are misled. Write line for line, remembering the width of the typed story and where the headline will break. Is it understandable? Avoid standard, repeating headlines; artwork could say *Monthly Medical Tip* but a separate subheading is still needed to attract new interest. Be impartial. It is easy to express opinions when choosing verbs. Do not be cute; leave out puns and rhymes.

5.8 Proofreading

Proofreading is very difficult. It is difficult for the person who created the material to see errors because they are too familiar with the product. Always ask someone else to proofread the newsletter. A proofreader should read material one element at a time. Do all the body copy, then the headlines, then all the extra material such as page numbers. Many commands appoint a member of the CST to review newsletters before distribution. This person should be familiar with the guidelines outlined in this chapter as well as any legal issues that may apply.

Check for spelling. Just because headlines are big, do not assume they are spelled correctly. Check for consistency. Agree on rules of capitalization, grammar, and punctuation and then stick with them throughout. After everything else is done, read for content. Look especially for ideas that seem left out, signaling a sentence or paragraph that was overlooked.

Check for trouble spots when proofreading:

- Commas.
- Periods.
- Capitalization.
- Quotation marks.
- Apostrophes.
- Numbers.
- Headings.

5.9 Summary

The creative process of editing a newsletter from inception to production to being read by readers is very satisfying for many command ombudsmen. Families may never call because the information they need is routinely provided in the ombudsman newsletter. An accurate, professional newsletter reflects positively upon the ombudsman, command, and the entire Navy. It also provides reassurance that professional assistance is available through the command ombudsman, should it ever be needed.

Chapter 6: Crisis Calls

Although most of the calls ombudsmen handle are routine, they need to be prepared to handle individual crises. This chapter prepares ombudsmen to deal with families experiencing:

- The Death of a Loved One.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Sexual Assault.
- Suicide.

In this *Manual, Chapter 7: Natural and Manmade Disasters* provides information on the ombudsman's role during a large-scale command or community crisis.

6.1 Crisis Reaction

Crisis can entail a temporary loss of coping abilities. It can be defined as *an event* or *situation requiring an immediate response.* People live everyday within a normal range of equilibrium or balance. A person experiencing a crisis is in a state of disequilibrium. What one person might consider a crisis may not be considered a crisis by another. Although all people face stress as part of life, not all stressful experiences produce a crisis reaction. People react physically, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally to a crisis.

Physical responses include:

- Adrenaline begins to pump through the body.
- Body may relieve itself of excess materials - regurgitation, defecation, or urination.

- Heart rate, ventilation rate, and perspiration increase.
- Heightened sensory perception in at least one sense - smell, taste, sight, hearing, or touch.
- Trembling.
- Speech difficulties.

Heightened physical arousal associated with fight or flight cannot be prolonged indefinitely. Eventually it will result in exhaustion.

Emotional responses are a form of emotional self-protection. They include:

- Shock.
- Disbelief.
- Denial.

Cognitive reactions include:

- Confusion.
- Inability to make even simple decisions.
- Irrational thoughts.

Behavioral reactions include:

- Pacing.
- Locking doors.
- Inability to eat.
- Crying.
- Yelling.
- Swearing.
- Inability to sleep.

All of these reactions are NORMAL for someone experiencing a crisis. These initial crisis reactions may last for only a few moments or they may go on for weeks. As the reality of the crisis event becomes accepted, a cataclysm of emotions is experienced:

- Anger.

- Fear.
- Helplessness.
- Vulnerability.
- Guilt.
- Grief.
- Sorrow.

This next phase of crisis response may last a few days to years. Emotions are not experienced in any particular order. Many who have experienced a crisis describe this stage as an emotional roller coaster where they often feel loss of control of their feelings. At some point a new, different equilibrium is established for most people. The severity of the crisis reaction is affected by:

- Intensity and duration of the trauma.
- Suddenness of its occurrence.
- Stability of the person's life prior to the trauma.
- Personal history of prior losses and traumas.
- Availability and use of social support.
- Ability to understand what has happened.

6.2 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Long-term effects of a crisis can result in post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This can occur in individuals who have not been able to successfully integrate the crisis into their new equilibrium. Behaviors indicative of PTSD include:

- Excessive arousal and excitability (jumpy, nervous).
- Withdrawal and avoidance.
- Repetitive and intrusive memories of the trauma.
- Inability to function at work, school, home, etc.
- Increased use of alcohol or other substances.
- Sleep problems.
- Duration of symptoms for at least one month.

These individuals may experience crisis reactions in response to trigger events that remind them of the original crisis or trauma. Trigger events can be:

- Sensing something similar that was present during the trauma such as smelling soil if someone was sexually assaulted on the ground.
- Anniversaries of the trauma.
- Holidays and significant life events.
- Criminal justice proceedings.
- Media coverage of similar events.
- Sounds that trigger memories of the crisis.

People who experience extreme reactions need professional counseling. Command ombudsmen are not expected or equipped to do this type of counseling. Command ombudsmen need to know where to refer this person - most likely to the local Fleet and Family Support Center or to TRICARE for mental health services.

NOTE: Combat related stress is discussed in *Chapter Nine: Deployment.*

6.3 Crisis Intervention

Crisis intervention can be described as emotional first aid. The goals of crisis intervention are to:

- Restore individuals to their pre-crisis level of functioning.
- Cushion the impact of the stressful event by offering practical and emotional support.
- Identify and mobilize resources to cope with the crisis event.
- Understand events leading to the crisis.

Remember, not every problem may be an actual crisis by definition, but the individual may experience it as a crisis. Perception is the key! Do not alienate the individual by placing one's own definition of crisis on him or her. Crises are different for each person. The ombudsman's role is to assist, not to judge.

The National Organization for Victim's Assistance (NOVA) <http://www.trynova.org/>, suggests that helpers prepare in advance to experience distress when working with a crisis victim. Ombudsmen should:

- Be mentally available to a victim by putting their own thoughts and concerns aside.
- Be prepared physically by eating properly, getting enough sleep and exercise.
- Be aware of how they generally deal with stress.
- Make sure they have dealt with their own issues.
- Diversify activities. Make time for fun.
- Know resources.
- Educate themselves about reactions to crisis.
- Establish and nourish a meaningful belief system.
- Cultivate a support system.

In a crisis, it is tempting to try to take the problem away from the individual. However, it is important for the person experiencing the crisis to be able to deal with the trauma as it unfolds. Otherwise the trauma may never be adequately incorporated into the individual's overall life experiences. It can also damage the individual's self-esteem and increase feelings of helplessness and powerlessness.

A command ombudsman may take a more directive role if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The individual is in danger (i.e. if the attacker is still present).
- The individual is so overwhelmed they have limited or no capability to care for themselves.
- The individual is injured.

If these conditions do not exist, it is more appropriate to take a facilitative role. The individual can grow and gain valuable coping tools and a sense of accomplishment if he or she can explore and activate their own coping skills, resources to deal with the crisis, problem solving skills, and ability to tolerate frustrating, painful situations.

6.3.1 Crisis Intervention Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Make sure the individual is safe.
- Listen attentively, but do not force them to talk.
- Get the caller's name and phone number without becoming intrusive.
- De-escalate distressed clients by talking in a soft, calm voice and encouraging them to focus on what they are requesting.
- Show concern, support, acceptance, hope, and a positive attitude. This is wonderful medicine and has a more powerful impact than most people realize.
- Be tolerant of intense emotions. Be sensitive to the fact that a crisis brings a flood of emotions. Be careful not to take things personally.
- Be non-judgmental. The individual has to take the path that is best for them.
- Maintain confidentiality. Inform the individual of situations that may have to be reported.
- Listen. It seems so simple, yet so many of us are not very good at it! Sometimes a listening, concerned, understanding ear is all that is needed.
- Use caring words and phrases such as:
  - *I'm sorry that this has happened.*
  - *I cannot imagine how difficult this must be for you. I'd like to be with you for a while if you wish.*
  - *Would you like me to help you with....*
  - *It's not your fault.*
  - *What you're feeling is very normal.*
  - *I do not know how you feel, but I would like for you to please share your feelings with me.*

DON'T

- Use phrases such as:
  - *I know how you feel.*
  - *It's God's will.*
  - *You are so strong. I know you can handle this.*

  - *Tell me what I can do.*
  - *It was a blessing that....*
  - *You'll get over this.*
  - *Just be thankful that....*
- Give unofficial information concerning injuries or casualties.
- Use military phrases or acronyms when talking with families.
- Make physical contact unless permission is asked or they initiate it.
- Focus the conversation on one's self.
- Give advice or opinions unless asked.
- Offer false hope. No one has a magic wand to make everything better for an individual.
- Become a hero, or rescuer, or get in over one's head. Helpers should not bring people home, offer to take care of their children, or promise punishment for wrong doers.
- Fail to get assistance when needed. It is not a sign of weakness or ignorance to ask for help.

6.4 Individual Crisis

Ombudsmen are likely to be called upon to help individuals in crisis. Relationship problems, a direct deposit that is not posted, parent-child conflicts, etc., are the types of crisis calls ombudsmen receive. They may also receive requests for help with more challenging crises such as:

- The death of a loved one.
- Child abuse or neglect.
- Domestic abuse.
- Suicide.
- Sexual assault.

Since ombudsmen may deal with these types of calls infrequently or perhaps never, they may feel anxious or unsure about how to handle them. Ombudsmen should remember the importance of the I&R role. Being a caring listener and referring to appropriate resources are the initial steps to helping an individual to recover.

6.5 Death of a Loved One

An ombudsman may be contacted to help a family member deal with the death of a loved one. The death of a parent, child, spouse, or even pet can be devastating. Many Sailors and their families are young and have not experienced the death of a loved one before. According to Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, a psychiatrist who wrote extensively about death and dying, there are five stages associated with grieving:

1. Denial.
2. Anger.
3. Bargaining.
4. Depression.
5. Acceptance.

Not everyone goes through all of them or in a prescribed order. These stages are often experienced in sequence, but individuals can cycle through these feelings in a different order, and can return to previous phases as grief is processed.

1. **Denial**

   Upon hearing bad news, the most common reaction is shock and disbelief:

   - *That is not possible.*
   - *There must be some mistake.*
   - *You must have the wrong person.*

   Time seems to briefly suspend itself, at least until the cruel reality of the truth sets in.

2. **Anger**

   Anger may quickly set in. It may be directed at the messenger who delivers the news, the doctor, the person who caused this pain, even at God. There is a need to know why this happened and whether the loss could have been prevented – who is at fault? Some may turn their anger inwards and blame themselves for what happened.

3. **Bargaining**

   People in crisis will make attempts to negotiate the situation, either with another person involved or with God:

- *Please give me one more chance and I promise things will be better.*
- *I will change.*
- *If you will reverse this, then I will ___ in return.*

No matter what is said or done, things will not go back to the way they were before. And that is when the next phase hits.

4. **Depression**

   Although Dr. Kübler-Ross called this phase *depression*, it is more accurate to describe it as a combination of loss and loneliness. The crisis survivor may experience remorse, regret, or guilt that they are still able to enjoy life while their loved one no longer can. This intense sadness can leave an individual with sparse energy for work, chores, childcare, or outside activities.

5. **Acceptance**

   In time, and with support, individuals come to terms with the reality of the situation, recognize it as a fact of their new life, and gradually let go of the intense grief and move beyond suffering. Even with their new circumstances, they can find peace.

   There is no timetable for bereavement. Each person's experience with grief is unique. For some, a few weeks or months time brings a sense of peace and renewed hope; others experience wave after wave of grief for years on end, with varying frequency and intensity.

6.5.1 Individuals Whose Loved Ones are Killed in Action

Those whose loved ones died as a result of combat, training exercise or other military related cause may also:

- Be preoccupied with how their loved one died - did they feel pain, were they conscious, how long did the pain last?
- Be angry at others who survived and find it difficult to talk to their significant others. They may wish that other people had died, not their loved one, and these wishes make them feel guilty.
- Encounter practical problems in body identification, death notification procedures, funeral arrangements, body transportation, and reclaiming the

deceased's property. In some disasters, it is impossible to reclaim a body and they may only reclaim body parts, or have nothing to bury or to cremate.

- Feel guilt at something they did or did not do when last seeing or talking with their loved one before he or she died. For example, they may have had an argument or marital problems.
- Blame the victim for his/her own death, particularly if there was a warning before the event or the service member volunteered for duty.

6.6 SUICIDE

Take all threats of suicide seriously. Threats are especially lethal if the caller has a:
1. Plan.
2. Method.
3. Time frame.

Suicide is often described as a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Ombudsmen may get a call from a person who is so overwhelmed by their current situation they are considering suicide.

Conditions associated with increased risk of suicide include:

- Death or terminal illness of relative or friend.
- Divorce, separation, broken relationship.
- Loss of health.
- Loss of job, home, money, status, self-esteem, personal security.
- History of alcohol or drug abuse.
- Depression that seems to quickly disappear for no apparent reason is cause for concern. The early stages of recovery from depression can be a high-risk period for suicide.
- Difficult times include holidays, anniversaries, and the first week after discharge from a hospital; just before and after diagnosis of a major illness; just before and during disciplinary proceedings.

Emotional changes associated with risk for suicide include:

- Overwhelming pain that threatens to exceed the person's pain coping capacities.
- Hopelessness or the feeling that the pain will continue or get worse; things will never get better.
- Powerlessness - the feeling that one's resources for reducing pain are exhausted.
- Feelings of worthlessness, shame, guilt, self-hatred, no one cares.

- Person becomes sad, withdrawn, tired, apathetic, anxious, irritable, or prone to angry outbursts.

Behavioral changes associated with risk for suicide include:

- Giving away possessions or making a will.
- High-risk behaviors that may include speeding and reckless driving.
- Explicit statements of suicidal ideation or feelings.
- Self-inflicted injuries such as cuts, burns, or head banging.
- Inappropriately saying goodbye.
- Declining performance in school, work, or other activities.
- Social isolation or association with a group that has different moral standards than those of the family.
- Declining interest in sex, friends, or activities previously enjoyed.
- Neglect of personal welfare, deteriorating physical appearance.
- Alterations in either direction in sleeping or eating habits.

6.6.1 How to Assist Individuals at Risk for Suicide

Ombudsmen should not worry about using the right words if they get a call from a potentially suicidal person. A concerned voice tone and knowledge of resources to get the caller the help they need is what is most important.

Listen

Let the person unload despair and ventilate anger. If given an opportunity to do this, he or she may feel better by the end of the call. No matter how negative the call seems, the fact that it exists is a positive sign - a cry for help. Be sympathetic, non-judgmental, patient, calm, and accepting. The caller has done the right thing by getting in touch with another person.

Ask: Are you having thoughts of suicide?

Asking the question does not put the idea in someone's head. This demonstrates to the caller that they are being taken seriously, that it is okay to talk about his or her pain, and help is available. Avoid arguments, problem solving, advice giving, quick referrals,

belittling, or making the caller feel that he or she has to justify suicidal feelings.

Many times the caller will simply say they are not thinking about harming themselves. If the caller says they are contemplating suicide ask:

- *Have you thought about how you would do it?* (PLAN)
- *Do you have what you need?* (MEANS)
- *Have you thought about when you would do it?* (TIME FRAME)

Ninety-five percent of all suicidal callers will answer "no" at some point in this series of questions, or indicate that the time is set for some date in the future. Simply talking about their problems for a length of time gives suicidal people relief from loneliness and pent up feelings, awareness that another person cares, and a feeling of being understood. They also get tired - their body chemistry changes. Talking about their emotional pain takes the edge off their agitated state.

If drugs are ingested

Get the details (what, how much, alcohol, other medications, last meal, general health) and call 911. Keep the person on the phone and use another phone line (if available) to call.

Notify the command

Ombudsmen should keep the situation confidential within Navy regulations and the law, but notify the command as directed by the commanding officer.

6.7 Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes:

- Rape.
- Non-consensual sodomy.
- Indecent assault.
- Attempts to commit such acts.

Sexual assault is a crime where the majority of the crime scene is the victim's body; therefore, if the victim chooses to report the crime and seek justice they must make some decisions while most likely they are still in shock.

Most often the victim of a sexual assault is acquainted with their attacker. The attacker may be a friend, neighbor, co-worker, or even their spouse (marital rape). This type of rape is called *acquaintance rape.* Other types of rape include *stranger rape* and *gang rape.* There are many misperceptions about sexual assault. It is not the ombudsman's job to determine whether or not an assault occurred, but to be supportive and provide whatever assistance is necessary.

6.7.1 Assisting Victims of Sexual Assault

When an ombudsman receives a call from a sexual assault victim, they can follow the PACT model as discussed in *Chapter Four: Information and Referral.* Some additional steps also need to be taken. Unlike professional victim advocates who must first establish a relationship when working with a victim, ombudsmen are a step ahead in the initial contact in that the caller contacted them. Therefore, the caller already sees the ombudsman as someone who can help.

It will be important to the caller to link them with a sexual assault victim advocate as soon as possible. Victim advocates are FFSC staff, rape crisis center staff, volunteers, and active duty personnel who have been trained to assist a sexual assault victim though the initial trauma, investigative, medical, and legal procedures associated with the crime of sexual assault. When talking with the sexual assault victim, use the communication skills listed in section 7.3.1 *Crisis Intervention.*

Problem

If the caller identifies him or herself as a recent victim of a sexual assault, ask:

- *What is your name (if unknown)?*
- *Where are you now?*
- *Are you safe?*
- If currently in danger, *Can you get to a safe place?* If the caller is in danger, get their location and call 911 or the police.
- *Are weapons involved?*
- *Do you need medical attention?*

It is important to get as much identifying information as possible in case the telephone connection is interrupted or the police need to be contacted.

Assess

Ask open-ended questions to get information about:

- *What happened?*
- *When did it happen?*

This is important because the assault may have just occurred or it may have occurred several weeks ago. Knowing what the current situation is allows one to proceed appropriately.

Inform the caller that sexual assault is a crime. As a crime victim, one has rights:

- They can report the crime and make a statement, or not.
- They can have a professional advocate, chaplain, or friend with them during the police interview.
- They can seek medical treatment, or not.
- They can allow physical evidence to be recovered from their body, or not.
- They can have a professional advocate, friend, or family member with them during the medical exam.

Ombudsmen should ask if the caller wants them to contact the police. If the assault victim does not want to prosecute the offender, encourage them to seek medical treatment. Even if they do not believe they are injured, they are at risk for sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, and need medical evidence should they later choose to proceed with legal options.

If the victim wants to proceed with legal actions, they should be instructed to preserve potential evidence. This means the victim should be instructed not to:

- Bathe or shower.
- Brush their teeth.
- Change clothes.
- Drink or eat.
- Smoke a cigarette.

- Use the bathroom.

Choose

Explore options by asking questions. Help an assault victim restore their power by encouraging them to make decisions. Strongly encourage them to at least accept a referral to a professional advocate. Advocates are available through the FFSC or local rape crisis center (whose number is listed in the local phone book).

Ask:

- *Do you have a friend or neighbor who can be with you?*
- *Is there a family member you would like me to notify?*
- *Do you need a ride to the emergency room for medical treatment?*
- *Do you want me to call the police or do you have anyone there who can call?*
- *Do you have children? If so, where are they now? Who can take them for a while?*

Try

Ombudsmen should close a call by agreeing to the actions to be taken by the caller and by the ombudsman. At minimum, the ombudsman should get the caller to agree to either contacting a victim advocate or allowing the ombudsman to contact a victim advocate. The caller is most likely in shock and will need assistance once the reality of the assault is realized. Offer to contact the caller later in the day or the following day to demonstrate concern and to ensure contact with the advocate was made.

6.7.2 Restricted Reporting of Sexual Assault

Restricted reporting allows a service member who is sexually assaulted to disclose his or her assault to specifically identified personnel without triggering an investigative process. To make a restricted report, a victim must notify the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), victim advocate, healthcare provider, or chaplain. The victim will have the choice of receiving medical treatment, the option for a sexual assault forensic examination, advocacy services, and referrals for counseling. Neither law enforcement nor NCIS will be informed of the report, thus eliminating the opportunity for offender accountability. The SARC will inform the command that an assault occurred without providing any identifying information regarding the victim or alleged offender.

6.8 Child Abuse

Not all information a person provides will be able to remain confidential. This is especially true when dealing with crises such as domestic abuse, suicide, and sexual assault. Child abuse definitions vary by state. Child abuse is defined by the Department of Defense as the following when done to a child by an individual responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating that the child's welfare is harmed or threatened:

- Physical injury.
- Sexual maltreatment.
- Emotional maltreatment.
- Deprivation of necessities (food, shelter, clothing, medical care).
- Combinations of these.

6.8.1 Risk Factors for Child Abuse

Stress is a major risk factor to trigger child physical abuse. Parents may be frustrated and this frustration, combined with other stressors, may lead some parents to lash out at their children. Stress factors that can lead to child abuse include:

- Marital problems, separation, and divorce.
- Serious or extended illness/hospitalization.
- An unplanned or unwanted pregnancy.
- Lack of adequate opportunity to bond with one's infant.
- Having a child with special needs.
- Financial problems.
- Substance abuse.
- Lack of support from extended family.
- Failure to be promoted.
- Relocation.

A second major risk factor is the parent's experience of child abuse in his or her family of origin. If someone grew up in a household where abuse was commonplace, it may be their practice to raise their children as they were raised; not understanding the damage and consequences that may occur.

6.8.2 Reporting Child Abuse

When allegations of child abuse or neglect come to the attention of a command, a counselor for the Family Advocacy Program shall be notified. The counselor shall inform the member's command and law enforcement officials. Child abuse is defined as the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation, or negligent treatment of a child. It does not include discipline administered by a parent or legal guardian to their child, provided it is reasonable in manner and moderate in degree and otherwise does not constitute cruelty.

A child's safety and well-being are protected by law. All States and U.S. territories have mandatory child abuse/neglect reporting statutes. All Department of Navy personnel, as well as ombudsmen, must report any incident or suspected incident of child abuse occurring on a military installation or involving persons eligible for Family Advocacy Program (FAP) services, to a counselor for the local FAP. The threshold for reporting is very low in that even the suspicion of child abuse/neglect must be reported. Suspected child abuse incidents that do not involve individuals eligible for FAP services should be reported to the nearest local law enforcement authorities and State Child Protective Service Agency.

When making a report the following information is helpful:

- Names of those involved.
- Type of abuse.
- Information about the situation – What happened? Were weapons used? Is there a history of violence? Were threats to harm or kill made?
- Some way for FAP to contact the family such as name, address, social security number, or command.
- Ombudsmen must inform the family member of the requirement to report domestic abuse.

6.8.3 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is:

- Domestic Violence or
- A pattern of behavior resulting in emotional/psychological abuse, economic control, and/or interference with personal liberty when such violence or abuse is directed toward a person of the opposite sex who is:

  - A current or former spouse;
  - A person with whom the abuser shares a child in common; or
  - A current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile.

Domestic violence is:

- An offense under the United States Code or the Uniform Code of Military Justice that involves the use, attempted use, or threatened use of force or violence against a person of the opposite sex, or
- A violation of a lawful order issued for the protection of a person of the opposite sex, who is:
  - A current or former spouse;
  - A person with whom the abuser shares a child in common; or
  - A current or former intimate partner with whom the abuser shares or has shared a common domicile.

6.8.4 Risk Factors for Domestic Abuse

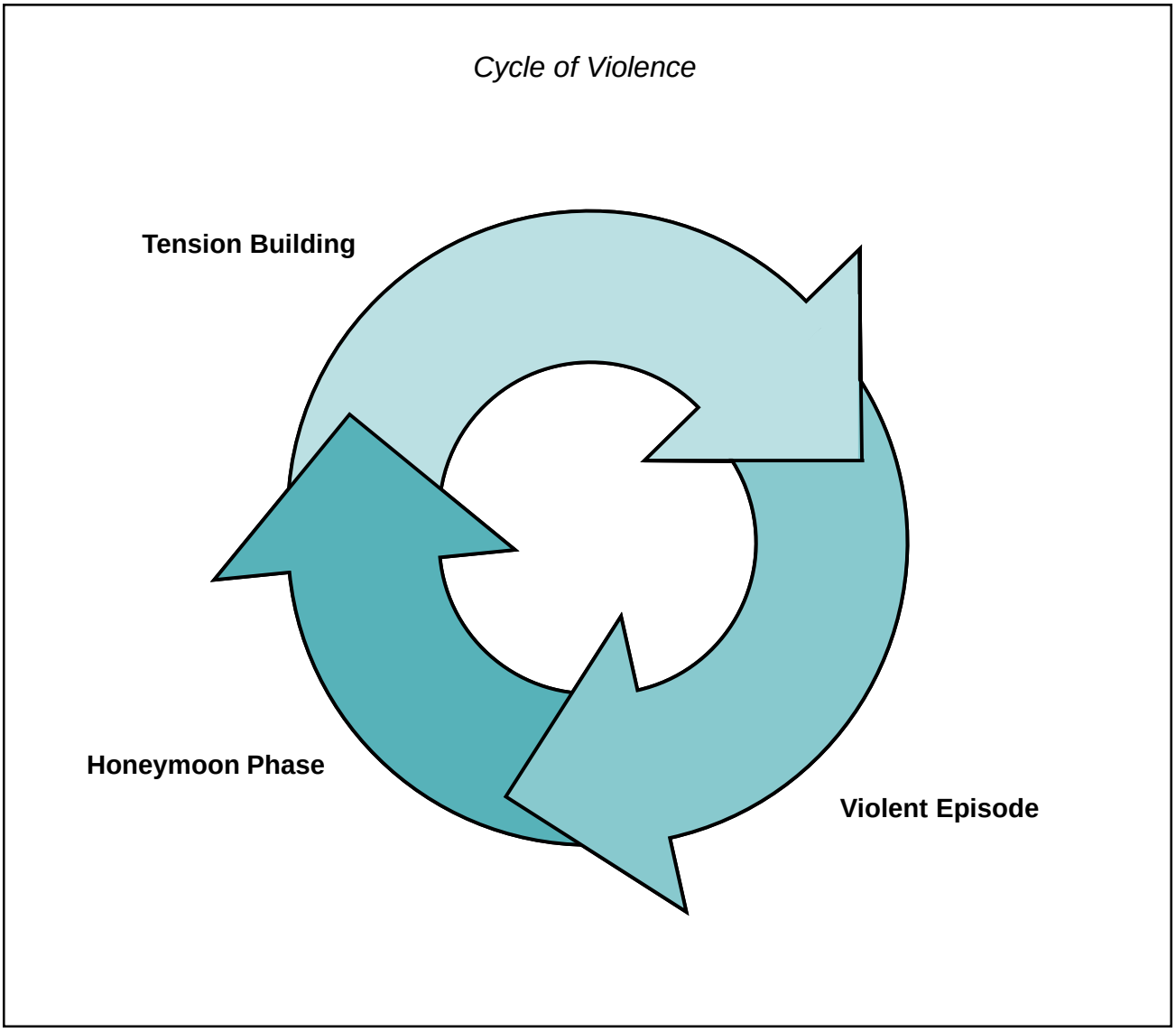
Individuals who abuse their spouse or partner choose to be abusive or use violence. The following are some risk factors:

- Cultural tolerance for violence against women.
- Rigid beliefs about gender roles.
- Childhood experiences of witnessing family violence.
- Poor communication and anger management skills.
- Financial problems.
- Deployments and reunions (can heighten the risk if other risk factors exist).
- Marital conflict and instability.
- Desire for power and control in relationships.
- Exhibits anger and hostility towards partner.

Spouse/partner abuse often occurs in conjunction with alcohol or drug abuse, but violence is not caused by substance use. Eliminating substance abuse does not eliminate the abuse.

6.8.5 Cycle of Violence

The cycle of violence explains the dynamics of how domestic abuse often, but not in all cases, becomes a pattern. It encompasses the following three stages:



1. Tension building:
   - Stress builds.
   - Victim senses danger.
   - Minor conflicts may occur.
   - Victim hopes that things will get better.
2. Violent episode:
   - Abuser blames victim for the abuse.
   - Victim may escape and return after the abuse is over.
   - Serious injury or death may occur.
3. Honeymoon phase:
   - May last days, months, or years.
   - Family in shock.
   - Batterer feels remorseful, ashamed, and guilty.
   - Batterer seeks forgiveness and may be very kind and loving.
   - Victim denies and minimizes the abuse in order to cope.

6.8.6 Safety Planning

Safety planning is helping a victim of domestic abuse think through and prepare for possible future incidents of abuse. It includes:

- Planning an escape route from the victim's home.
- Thinking of ways to stay out of the kitchen or bathroom during a violent incident to reduce the risk of serious injury from hard surfaces and knives.
- Having a safe place to go after the victim leaves.
- Gathering important documents such as birth certificates, marriage certificates, check cards, credit cards, cash, an extra set of car and house keys, school immunization records, etc.
- Teaching children how to call 911 and going to a safe place when violence begins.
- Planning for someone to take the victim's pet until they get settled.

A victim of domestic abuse is at greater risk and more likely to be killed when they leave the violent relationship. All domestic abuse shelters have safety plans. Local FFSCs can help domestic abuse victims through the Navy's Family Advocacy Program.

6.8.7 Family Advocacy Program

The position of the Navy on family violence as stated in OPNAVINST 1752.2A:

> *Spouse and child abuse has a negative effect upon military readiness, effectiveness, and good order and discipline. Accordingly, response to spouse and child abuse is a leadership issue. Commanding officers will undertake a continuous effort to reduce and eliminate child and spouse abuse at every level of the command. When suspected child or spouse abuse by a service member comes to the attention of the member's Commanding Officer, he or she will take prompt action to include holding the member accountable for his or her behavior. Additionally, Commanding Officers shall undertake measures to prevent further violence to the victim(s), and promote victim safety.*

The Family Advocacy Program was implemented to provide continuous efforts to reduce and eliminate child and spouse abuse. The tenets of the Family Advocacy Program are based on the following assumptions:

- Family violence occurs within all communities, including the Navy community.
- Family maltreatment and abuse interferes with the work performance of the service member, and thus, with the Navy's mission.
- Family maltreatment is incompatible with the high standards of professional and personal discipline expected of Navy members.
- Most offenders can be rehabilitated.
- Victims and families benefit when the offender is placed in treatment and available to participate in the family's rehabilitation.
- Offenders must be held accountable for their behavior and that swift and certain intervention is an effective deterrent.
- Rehabilitation of a valued service member is beneficial to the Navy.

6.8.8 Reporting Domestic Abuse

Physical and sexual assaults occurring within the family merit the same concern and level of intervention as any assault between unrelated persons. All allegations of domestic abuse should be reported to a FAP counselor, who will advise on appropriate action. The ombudsman must inform the family member of the importance to report cases of domestic abuse. Ombudsmen should consider domestic abuse to have been alleged if the spouse discloses to the ombudsman an incident of abuse, a third party (e.g., a child) discloses to the ombudsman that they witnessed domestic abuse, or the ombudsman has first-hand knowledge of an incident of domestic abuse. Trained professionals should determine the validity of allegations, not the ombudsman or the command.

An ombudsman who suspects that domestic abuse might be occurring should advise the individual that support is available and provide information on available FAP or community resources. If at any time the ombudsman feels that the life, health, or safety of an individual is in imminent danger, the ombudsman is required to report the situation immediately to a FAP counselor and appropriate command. Safety is the ultimate concern for anyone involved in an abusive situation.

If the Family Advocacy Program is not located at a Navy installation or no Family Advocacy Representative is assigned, the domestic abuse incident should be reported to the nearest Service FAP, if available in the area, or to State Child Protective Services (CPS).

6.8.9 Restricted Reporting

A DoD memorandum of 22 January 2006 addresses the subject of restricted reporting for incidents of domestic abuse. It applies only to adult victims of domestic abuse and allows them to obtain medical treatment and victim advocacy services without the incident being reported to the alleged offender's command.

This restricted reporting allows adult abuse victims to access medical and advocacy services without triggering a legal investigation or command involvement. Ombudsmen who believe an adult Navy family member is being abused should refer the individual to a victim advocate and/or medical treatment BEFORE the victim discloses abuse. Once abuse is disclosed to the command ombudsman the abuse must be reported to the appropriate authorities. Ombudsmen can also educate command family members who may be victims of abuse about the restricted reporting option by running articles about domestic abuse and resources available in their ombudsman newsletter.

6.9 Summary

Command family members may look to their command ombudsman when experiencing a crisis. It is imperative that ombudsman provide adequate crisis intervention, or emotional first aid, to appropriately intervene and assist family members in getting needed assistance.

Chapter 7: Disasters

In addition to assisting family members to cope with individual crises, ombudsmen may be called upon to assist in a larger scale crisis involving a command emergency or a community, state, or national disaster. This chapter introduces ombudsmen to:

- Disaster Preparedness.
- Possible Ombudsman Disaster Assistance Roles.
- Disaster Assistance Organizations.
- Dealing with the Media.

7.1 Disaster Preparedness

Disasters can strike quickly and without warning. They can force families to evacuate from their neighborhoods or be confined to their homes. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they cannot reach everyone right away. Ombudsmen can help command families prepare for a disaster by:

- Publishing short articles about the need for disaster preparation in the ombudsman newsletter and periodically listing web sites that provide tips for family disaster readiness.
- Using the careline to provide notice of impending crises and command or installation guidance. Include command instructions/reporting phone number if evacuation is advised. Provide out of state or cell phone number for ombudsmen.
- Distributing print materials about disaster preparedness at FRG meetings and at the command.

- Drafting periodic notices to remind Sailors to prepare their homes and families for disaster, and asking the XO to include them in POD/POW/POM.

Many web sites have information about disaster preparedness that include checklists or booklets that can be downloaded and personalized for families. Three excellent sites include:

1. Homeland Security <http://www.ready.gov/ >.
2. Federal Emergency Management Agency <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>.
3. The American Red Cross <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/>.

Additional ombudsmen efforts to prepare families for potential disasters may include:

- Helping families who are new to the area become familiar with the types of disasters most likely to occur in their locale and how to best prepare for them.
- Suggesting families develop an emergency communication plan.
- Providing lists of items to include in a disaster supply kit.
- Publicizing evacuation routes, emergency public shelters, caring for animals, and information specific to people with disabilities before disasters occur and when a disaster is imminent.

7.2 COMMAND EMERGENCIES

Command emergencies are incidents that impact the command. Command crises may include:

- Death of Sailor(s) in a vehicle accident.
- Helicopter or plane crash.
- Accident at sea.
- Terrorist attack.
- Training incident.

Ombudsmen are often called upon to provide information to command families during a command crisis. Ombudsmen may also have specific roles in command disaster preparedness drills. They should check with their POC to discuss their role during a command crisis. Regardless of the kind and extent of the command emer-

gency, the ombudsman is never to act independently or without explicit guidance from the command. The ombudsman should be thoroughly aware of the commanding officer's policies and expectations in the event of a crisis or natural disaster occurring where the command families live. Roles ombudsmen have taken on during a command crisis include:

- Initiating the phone tree to inform family members of an incident.
- Coordinating meal delivery for a grieving family.
- Representing command families with local and national media.
- Arranging a group meeting of family members to provide information and support.
- Arranging transportation and accommodations for out-of-town guests.
- Sending flowers to a funeral on behalf of the command.
- Arranging emergency childcare.
- Posting up-to-the minute information on the careline.

7.3 Natural and Man-made Disasters

Installation, community, state, or national crises have a broader impact. They may include natural disasters such as:

- Hurricanes.
- Wildfires.
- Earthquakes
- Toronados.
- Extreme Winter Storms
- Volcanic eruptions.
- Floods.
- Pandemics such as avian or bird flu.

Man-made disasters include:

- Terrorists attacks.
- Civil unrest.

- Nuclear meltdowns.

During a major crisis such as Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, or the USS COLE terrorist attack, Ombudsmen have:

- Served as the POC for evacuated families to get information about the crisis, and for Sailors to get information about the status of their families.
- Staffed family assistance or community support centers - facilities set up by the Navy to provide information and support services to those impacted by a major crisis.
- Coordinated food and clothing drives.
- Answered 1-800 lines established by the Navy for families from out of the area to get information.
- Taken telephone calls from family members.

Ombudsmen are not immune to crisis. They cannot provide comfort to others when they are in need themselves. In most areas, written protocols are in place to remove the ombudsman from their volunteer role when a crisis directly affects them. Ombudsmen will experience the same emotional roller coaster as any other crisis victim. It is not fair to them, their families, and their command families for them to try to be a helper when they are a victim. If an ombudsman is not contacted by their local FFSC or ombudsman assembly chair, they should contact them, tell them of the situation, and ask for help. In the event contact cannot be made to the FFSC or ombudsman assembly chair they should contact the Ombudsman Resource Center at 1-866-345-8179 or the FFSC 24/7 hotline at 1-800-372-5463.

Ombudsmen from other commands or FFSC staff can:

- Respond to calls and emails from command family members.
- Update the command careline.
- Respond to requests for interviews by media.
- Help the command ombudsman coordinate their own personal needs such as childcare, work requirements, etc.
- Work with Navy and community resources to ensure the ombudsman and command families receive needed support.

7.4 Family Disaster Assistance

Assistance is available to families involved in a disaster. Before the need arises, it is helpful for ombudsmen to be familiar with the following organizations/programs that provide assistance during crises:

- Local Military Installation.
- Affected Navy Family Assistance / Ombudsman Resource Center (ORC).
- State Emergency Management.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- The American Red Cross.
- Casualty Assistance Calls Officers.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.
- United Services Organization.

7.4.1 Local Military Installation

Each Navy installation has a disaster response plan in place. The plan is operationalized when a crisis occurs that affects a number of Sailors, Marines, and/or their families. A family assistance center may be opened on the installation to provide:

- A place for those affected by the crisis to gather or seek safe haven.
- Information as it becomes available.
- Notification of the status of loved ones involved in the disaster.
- Services such as food, shelter, and financial assistance.

Ombudsmen not affected by the crisis may be asked to help at a family assistance center by:

- Answering phones.
- Operating a check-in desk.
- Rendering assistance to family members.
- Staffing childcare area.
- Assisting with food/comfort services.
- Documenting donations.

7.4.2 Affected Navy Family Assistance

Affected Navy Family Assistance evolved from a program called Task Force Navy Family, a program stood up by the CNO as a result of severe hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region in 2005. The purpose of Affected Navy Family Assistance is to restore Sailors and their families affected by disaster to a stable, independent condition.

Services provided include:

- Health Care.
- Educational needs
- Chaplain Assistance
- Language Assistance
- Temporary/permanent housing.
- Legal assistance.
- Financial assistance.
- Pay and benefits.
- Employment assistance.
- Child development and school enrollment.
- Clinical Counseling.
- General Transportation.
- Pet Care/Boarding

Ombudsmen who volunteer to staff the Ombudsman Resource Center and military personnel provide administrative support and outreach to families affected by a disaster. To learn more go to <http://www.cnic.navy.mil/cnic_hq_site/ANFA/index.htm>.

7.4.3 State Emergency Management

Each state has an emergency management agency responsible for coordinating the state's response to a major disaster. This includes supporting local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). During an emergency, the agency is likely to report directly to the governor of the state.

Most state agencies:

- Research, write, implement, and review emergency plans and procedures.
- Hold drills with agencies and departments statewide such as police, rescue, and fire departments.
- Maintain a comprehensive telecommunications network among an emergency operations center, local and federal governments, weather services, etc.
- Coordinate public information and awareness efforts.
- When the governor declares a state of emergency, coordinate efforts with FEMA to request a Presidential Disaster Declaration. This allows the flow of money and services to begin.

7.4.4 Federal Emergency Management Agency

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is part of the Department of Homeland Security. FEMA is in charge of helping people before and after a disaster. FEMA is called in to help when the President declares a disaster. Disasters are declared after hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes or other similar events strike a community. Before FEMA can respond, the governor of the state must ask for help from the president.

FEMA workers help disaster victims find a place to stay if their homes were damaged or destroyed. FEMA also helps provide resources to repair homes and works with city officials to fix public buildings that have been damaged.

FEMA helps people before a disaster so they will be ready. FEMA teaches people how to prepare for a disaster and how to make their homes as safe as possible. FEMA works with communities to help them construct safer buildings that are less likely to be damaged. FEMA also trains firefighters and emergency workers, and runs a flood insurance program.

7.4.5 American Red Cross

The American Red Cross responds to about 70,000 disasters each year. Most of these responses are to house or apartment fires. They also respond to large scale disasters such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, hazardous materials spills, transportation accidents, explosions, and other natural and man-made disasters.

The American Red Cross is not a government agency; however, its authority to provide disaster relief was formalized in 1905. Congress authorized the Red Cross, *"to carry on a system of national and international relief in time of peace and apply the same in mitigating the sufferings caused by pestilence, famine, fire, floods, and other great national calamities, and to devise and carry on measures for preventing the same".*

Red Cross disaster relief focuses on meeting people's immediate emergency, disaster-caused needs. When a disaster threatens or strikes, the Red Cross provides shelter, food, and health and mental health services to address basic human needs. In addition to these services, the core of Red Cross disaster relief is the assistance given to individuals and families affected by disaster, enabling them to independently resume their normal daily activities.

The Red Cross also feeds emergency workers, handles inquiries from concerned family members outside the disaster area, provides blood and blood products to disaster victims, and helps those affected by disaster to access other available resources.

7.4.6 CASUALTY ASSISTANCE CALLS PROGRAM

The mission of the Navy Casualty Assistance Division is to provide timely, compassionate, and caring assistance for Navy families in times of need. The Navy Casualty Assistance Division consists of:

- Primary Response.
- Survivor Benefits and Entitlements.
- Casualty Case Settlement.
- Prisoner of War/Missing in Action.

FYI

Navy Casualty Assistance personnel are available via a toll free phone number: 1-800-368-3202. In the event of a mass casualty situation, an Emergency Coordination Center is staffed by active duty and personnel from Navy Personnel Command at Millington, TN and provides assistance by:

- Answering telephone inquiries.
- Providing family members in the casualty assistance area with information and referral with problems.
- Acting as a clearinghouse for information in mass casualty scenarios.

The Casualty Assistance Calls Program trains Navy personnel to make death and injury notification visits. This program is managed regionally by Casualty Assistance Calls/ Funeral Honors Support (CAC/FHS) Program Coordinators. Casualty Assistance Calls Officers (CACOs) not only make notifications, but also work with the family to:

- Provide immediate financial death benefits.
- Make funeral arrangements.
- Coordinate military honors.
- Process insurance and other financial claims.
- Ensure personal effects are returned.

The CACO may work with the family as long as necessary. For more information go to <http://www.npc.navy.mil/CommandSupport/CasualtyAssistance/>.

7.4.7 Navy-Marine Corp Relief Society (NMCRS)

The American Red Cross (ARC) is the nation's designated disaster relief agency for large-scale disasters. In the event of a disaster, ARC provides food and shelter at designated locations. They also provide some immediate subsistence funds by check or debit card. However, NMCRS also assists service members and their eligible family members promptly and with compassion.

NMCRS provides:

- Assistance with gas, food, and lodging to support a pre-disaster evacuation that has been ordered by the base commander or other local authorities.
- Once danger has passed, assistance with immediate basic living expenses of families whose homes are uninhabitable or who have lost their food supply due to loss of electricity can be provided.
- Once the client knows what his/her insurance and/or government reimbursement will be, and, if there is a shortfall, he or she may be eligible for additional assistance from NMCRS.

7.4.8 United Services Organization (USO)

The USO is chartered by Congress and is a nonprofit, charitable corporation. The USO relies on donations from individuals, organizations, and corporations to support its programs. The mission of the USO is to provide support to military service mem-

bers and their families. During disasters, USO centers located in the United States and throughout the world provide a variety of services. They:

- Accept donations from individuals, organizations and corporations who want to assist military families.
- Expand hours and services provided at the centers to accommodate the needs of those impacted by disaster.
- Provide food and a place to relax to service members and their families.
- Assist families to locate temporary housing, clothing, and food.
- Offer emotional support and encouragement.

7.5 MEDIA

During a military crisis and anytime the media makes a request of the Navy to talk with military family members, an ombudsman may be the "go to" person to represent Navy families. Ombudsmen are asked to represent Navy families because they:

- Are articulate and aware of appropriate responses to questions.
- Are knowledgeable about the Navy and resources.
- Have a professional appearance.
- Have a positive outlook.

Using the media is a good way to:

- Get accurate information to Navy families.
- Provide reassurance.

During a crisis, print, radio, and television media may want to talk with family members impacted by the crisis. Ombudsmen should always work with their Public Affairs Officer (PAO) when talking with the media. When in front of the media, ombudsmen are not simply representing themselves; they are representing other Navy families and the Navy as a whole. Ombudsmen should review key points with the PAO. Ask for a practice session. Get feedback and tips for improvement.

Ombudsmen should always work with the Public Affairs Officer.

Many polished media personalities treat media interviews like short briefings or presentations. The media presentation consists of:

- Introductions.

- Content.
- Contact information.

When a reporter is questioning an ombudsman, it is okay for the ombudsman to say they do not know the answer to the question. The ombudsman can then provide information about what they do know. For example:

Reporter: *When will the crippled ship return?*

You: *We don't have that information at this time, but families can call the careline at.....as the information will be available there as soon as I have it.*

When talking with the media have a clear message. Ombudsmen should have no more than three points they want to communicate. One of the three points should be a telephone number for individuals to contact for more information. Print media is usually the least intimidating. The PAO may even be able to get an agreement to review the story before it goes to press.

7.5.1 Television Tips

Ombudsmen should prepare for a television appearance so that the audience is focused on their message and not their physical appearance. The PAO should be able to help. Consider the following tips.

- Know the color of the set background. If not, take two different color jackets. For example, if the set background is royal blue and the ombudsman wears royal blue clothing, their body will fade into the background. They will look like a talking head!
- Remove large, gaudy, noisy, and shiny jewelry as it is distracting to the audience.
- Keep answers short. Have two or three main points and talk in sound bites, not long- winded sentences.
- Remove eye glasses unless the lenses are non-reflective.
- Look at the interviewer. Do not let eyes wander around the set or shift back and forth to the camera.
- Powder nose, cheeks, and forehead. Even males need a matte finish so they do not look like they are sweating (even though they very well may be).

- Use gestures if this is normal behavior, but keep them more contained.
- Manage facial expressions all the time so as not to be caught off guard when the camera starts rolling. Smile as appropriate and assume a live microphone unless told otherwise. Smiling makes a speaker seem more approachable and believable, and helps the interviewee feel confident and in control.
- Ask the interviewer to post contact information on the screen during the interview.
- And remember, even if the television interview is not an Oscar performance, all publicity is good if it helps command families.

7.5.2 Radio Tips

Unlike television, appearance is relatively unimportant on the radio. A radio interview is often done via the telephone. The interviewer will typically ask the interviewee their name and the command they represent. The interviewer will ask a series of questions and finally they will ask for contact information.

Since the ombudsman knows their name and contact information, they simply need to focus on their message. Again, the three point rule applies. What is the message that needs to be conveyed? Also:

- Remember to talk slowly and clearly.
- Try to delete the annoying filler words such as *"um"* and *"you know"*.
- Have water handy to prevent dry mouth.
- Talk in short sentences.
- Sound confident and calm.

7.6 Crisis Checklist

Crisis Checklist

Upon notification of a command incident or crisis, consider the following:

Self Care

- ❑ Shower and dress professionally, yet comfortably.
- ❑ Alert your family and your spouse's family of incident.
- ❑ Arrange your childcare. If your children are older, leave money in case they need to order out for food (pizza) later in the day. Leave phone numbers of neighbors and close friends.
- ❑ Contact your support system and ask them to assist you if needed.

Crisis Response

- ❑ Begin a notebook or log to note all information gathered and disseminated.
- ❑ Establish a POC at squadron, group, or Immediate Superior in Command (ISIC). Identify expectations such as who will call whom, how often, type of information to be shared, etc.
- ❑ Contact CO, XO, and CMC spouses and establish plans for communication.
- ❑ Activate emergency call tree.
- ❑ Update careline.
- ❑ Contact PAO if needed.
- ❑ Get command roster and any emergency data forms you might have.
- ❑ Keep your cell phone charger nearby.
- ❑ Work with squadron or group regarding informational meeting for families. Contact: PAO, FFSC, Chaplain or others as appropriate.
- ❑ Identify a command spouse or other Ombudsman to act as Volunteer Coordinator. Work with Volunteer Coordinator to determine needs of families and identify resources.

After Care

- ❑ Contact squadron/group and CACO regarding visitations/needs of casualty families.
- ❑ Possibly visit families in conjunction with CO, XO, or CMC spouses.
- ❑ Attend memorial service.
- ❑ Contact FFSC to coordinate a Critical Incident Stress Debrief, if needed.
- ❑ Follow up with casualty families.
- ❑ Follow up with Volunteer Coordinator.
- ❑ Follow up with squadron/group.

7.7 Summary

Dealing with a crisis may seem overwhelming. It is important to:

- Remain calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Take notes as needed.
- Provide information.
- Report as required.

Navy families in crisis deserve compassion and support. By being level-headed and using common sense, ombudsmen can lead command families through a trying time.

Chapter 8: Mobilization

The Navy Reserve is a full partner with the active duty Navy. Navy Reservists serve side-by-side with their active duty counterparts in support of the fleet. This chapter describes:

- Challenges of Mobilization for Families.
- Family Preparation.
- The Ombudsman's Role.
- Remote Family Support.
- Re-employment Rights.

8.1 Overview of the Navy Reserve

The focus of the U.S. Navy Reserve Force is to provide mission-capable units and individuals to the Navy and Marine Corps throughout the full range of operations during times of peace or war. In today's environment, this mandate takes on added meaning and responsibilities as the Navy Reserve plays an increasingly active role in the day-to-day planning and operational requirements of the active Navy. It is a significant force multiplier, enabling the fleet to meet growing global commitments.

Reservists may be:

- Former Sailors.
- From other branches of the service.
- Non prior military personnel.

When individuals join the Navy, they must commit to eight years of service. All of it does not have to be served as an active duty Sailor. Part of the eight years may be spent in the Reserve force.

The Navy Reserve force consists of the:

- Ready Reserve.
- Standby Reserve.
- Retired Reserve.

The Ready Reserve is made up of Selected Reserve personnel and members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

Selected Reserve Personnel
The Selected Reserve (SELRES) is the Navy's primary source of immediate mobilization manpower. Separating service members may voluntarily affiliate with the Selected Reserve.

Individual Ready Reserve (IRR)
If the service member released from active duty does not affiliate with the Selected Reserve, he/she is assigned to the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). The IRR consists of individuals who have been trained and previously served on active duty.

8.2 Challenges of Mobilization for Families

Mobilization brings service members into readiness for immediate service in time of war or crisis. With a downsized Navy, there is a greater need to immediately deploy service members and/or to activate SELRES in time of war, crisis, or in support of a mission.

Mobilization brings challenges to service members and their families. For Sailors with no prior Navy service or those who were active duty in another service branch, mobilization can be a particular challenge.

These challenges include:

- Reservists may mobilize with little notice or time for preparation.
- Reservists and their families may be unprepared practically, emotionally, and financially for separation.

- Family members may have no prior experience with and do not understand military life.
- Military support services may be unavailable locally.

8.3 Mobilization Preparation

To meet these challenges, mobilized personnel that are not located near a fleet concentration area, host a family day event. Typically, family days are held on the day the service member must travel to the command. This allows the service member and their family to travel together. An activation/mobilization checklist is provided that requires the service member to ready their:

- Pay and direct deposit.
- Service record.
- Security clearance.
- Legal matters.
- Medical records.
- Personal concerns.

NOTE: A sample mobilization checklist is found in section 8.3.1.

A family day consists of providing services that families need for readiness. Representatives from the following are typically present:

- Administrative personnel to complete Service Member Group Life Insurance election forms and to update page twos.
- Personnel support detachment to allow family members to obtain ID cards.
- A representative who can address the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994.
- Legal services to complete simple wills and powers-of-attorney.
- A TRICARE representative.
- A Red Cross representative.
- The command ombudsman.
- A chaplain.

- A Fleet and Family Support Center representative, if available in the area.

Other agencies are represented as invited by the command.

8.3.1 Sample Activation Mobilization Checklist

Activation Mobilization Checklist

DOCUMENTS YOU MUST BRING FOR ACTIVATION/MOBILIZATION
(As applicable for you and your family members)

Pay/Direct Deposit/Allotment

- ❑ Voided personal check or deposit slip (displaying bank address/telephone, bank routing/account numbers).
- ❑ Bank account information (bank address/telephone, bank routing/account numbers) for each desired allotment.
- ❑ Copy of current mortgage(s) (with principal/interest/tax/insurance breakdown) and documentation of one month's average utilities, OR copy of house or apartment rental agreement and documentation of one month's average utilities.
- ❑ Copy(s) of current child support agreement(s).
- ❑ If [Medical Corps (MC), Dental Corps (DC), Medical Service Corps (MSC) (Clinical), Nurse Corps (NC)] certified copies or proof of the following:
    - ❑ Current license/certificate
    - ❑ Current BCLS, ACLS, PALS, etc.
    - ❑ Current demographic information if MC
    - ❑ Internship
    - ❑ Residency
    - ❑ Board certification in specialty or board certification qualifications.

Service Record/PSD

- ❑ Certification of discharge/separation (DD-214) for all former periods of active duty.
- ❑ Birth certificate or passport (for those deploying OCONUS).
- ❑ Birth, adoption, or guardianship certificates for dependents.
- ❑ Social Security Numbers for self and dependents.
- ❑ Certified copy of marriage certificate for present marriage.
- ❑ Certified copies of documentation terminating any previous marriage (divorce/annulment/spouse's death certificate).
- ❑ Certification of full-time enrollment for self and college-age dependents (from school registrar).
- ❑ Signed statement from licensed physician for dependent parent/children over twenty-one years of age who are incapacitated.
- ❑ Current DON Family Care Plan Certification (NAVPERS 1740/6).

Security Clearance

- ❑ Certified copy of naturalization papers.
- ❑ Names/addresses of personal/professional references (minimum of three each required).
- ❑ Names/addresses/dates of employment for the past ten years (or since graduation from high school).
- ❑ Names/addresses/dates of high school and college.
- ❑ Addresses and dates of all previous residences.
- ❑ Names/dates/places of birth for your parents and your spouse's parents.

Legal

- ❑ Location of current valid will.
- ❑ Copy of current power(s) of attorney (business arrangements/tax filing/childcare/ dependents medical emergency care/household goods, and POV storage).
- ❑ Documentation to support potential legal issues, such as loss of college tuition assistance, loss of security deposit on lease, loss of employee medical benefits, etc.

Medical

- ❑ Copy of most recent eyeglass prescription and extra set of eyeglasses. (**NOTE Contact lenses may not be authorized depending upon duty assignment.)
- ❑ Extra hearing aid/batteries.
- ❑ Documentation of significant medical/dental conditions not documented in military medical/ dental records.
- ❑ Copy of prescription(s) issued by physician (or other documentation of approved medications). Minimum 90 days supply of medications.
- ❑ Documentation to support enrollment of exceptional family member in available Navy/DOD programs.
- ❑ Documentation of enrollment in TRICARE SELRES Dental Program (TSRDP).

Personal

- ❑ Driver's license (to support issuance of government license).
- ❑ For those authorized POV travel, vehicle registration/insurance documentation.
- ❑ Documentation to support any claim delay and/or exemption.

8.4 Ombudsman Support to Navy Reserves

Providing information and referral to Navy Reserve family members can be a challenge. The Navy Reserve Ombudsman may be remotely located from most of the command/unit family members. This makes the use of technology critical for the timely distribution of information important for family members. Toll-free phone numbers, telephone answering machines, computers, etc., should be used if available and authorized by the CO.

In addition, the ombudsman must thoroughly research resources available in the areas where their command/unit family members live. Assistance can often be available for authorized benefits at other military installations. Information on resources can be found on the Navy Reserve Force website at <http://navyreserve.navy.mil/Public/Staff/WelcomeAboard/default.htm> and the Military OneSource web site at <www.militaryonesource.com>.

Entitlement to some services can change based on the duration of periods of active duty served. The local Navy Reserve Activity will be able to provide specific eligibility information. Another good source of information can be found at <http://www.dod.mil/ra//> in the mobilization section and at the Navy Family Ombudsman Program web site, <www.ffsp.navy.mil>. The local command career counselor or personnel office staff can provide additional information regarding reserve categories and entitlements. The Navy Reserve Ombudsman will mostly deal with drilling reservists and their family members.

When Navy Reservists are recalled to active duty for an extended period, family members usually do not relocate with them. This same situation may pertain for service members leaving family members at a former duty station and going as "geographic bachelors" to the new command. The gaining command now assumes responsibilities for the Sailors and their family members. This can be a challenge for the gaining command's ombudsman. To ensure the Reservist's family receives services to which they are entitled, the Navy Reserve Ombudsman should contact the gaining command's ombudsman to coordinate services. At the discretion of the respective COs, the two ombudsmen may agree to share responsibility for those family members who do not accompany the Sailor to the area of the active duty assignment.

Once activated, reservists are no longer reservists but active duty Sailors. They and their families are eligible for all benefits and services. However, families typically remain at home. The active duty ombudsman and the reserve ombudsman (who may know the family better), should work together to provide support and assistance.

To be better equipped to serve newly activated Sailors and their families, ombudsmen should:

- Work with the command support team to establish and administer family readiness programs. Educate reservists and their families to use a mobilization checklist, get dependent identification cards, complete wills, powers of attor-

neys, or guardianship agreements. These programs should be conducted on an ongoing basis to adequately prepare reservists and their families for mobilization BEFORE it happens.

- Understand the command's mobilization plans and processes. Ensure both the reserve and supported, or receiving, command's ombudsman's contact information is included in mobilization packages.
- Be able to refer reservist families to mobilization information such as the Mobilization Toolkit on the Department of Defense Reserve Affairs web site - <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/>.
- Network with the Navy Reserve Force ombudsman and other ombudsmen to be able to serve mobilized families who live all over the country. To locate an ombudsman for a specific command, go to the Navy's Ombudsman Registry at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

8.5 Remote Families

Factoring in the selected reserve community, it is highly likely that a large percentage of the families served by a command ombudsman will live outside of the local area. It can be challenging to help them feel a part of the command family and the Navy family. Some things ombudsmen can do to maintain a connection with remote families include:

- Keep them informed.
- Maintain a current careline message.
- Distribute newsletters at least monthly during a deployment.
- Maintain an email distribution list. Send short notices and uplifting messages on a regular basis.
- Be available to respond to calls.
- Have a toll-free 800 number so remote families can contact the ombudsman at no cost.

It is imperative to get approval from service members to provide information to individuals who are not listed on the official command roster. There may be a reason the service member does not want to maintain contact with family members.

8.6 Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) clarifies and strengthens the Veterans' Reemployment Rights (VRR) Statute.

USERRA protects civilian job rights and benefits for veterans and members of reserve components. USERRA establishes the cumulative length of time that an individual may be absent from work for military duty and retain reemployment rights to five years. There are important exceptions to the five-year limit, including initial enlistments lasting more than five years, periodic National Guard and reserve training duty, and involuntary active duty extensions and recalls, especially during a time of national emergency.

USERRA:

- Establishes that reemployment protection does not depend on the timing, frequency, duration, or nature of an individual's service as long as the basic eligibility criteria are met.
- Provides protection for disabled veterans, requiring employers to make reasonable efforts to accommodate the disability. Service members convalescing from injuries received during service or training may have up to two years from the date of completion of service to return to their jobs or apply for reemployment.
- Ensures that returning service members are reemployed in the job that they would have attained had they not been absent for military service. They maintain the same seniority, status, and pay, as well as other rights and benefits determined by seniority.
- Requires that reasonable efforts (such as training or retraining) be made to enable returning service members to refresh or upgrade the skills that would help them qualify for reemployment.
- Provides that while an individual is performing military service, he or she is deemed to be on a furlough or leave of absence. This entitles the individual to the non-seniority rights accorded other individuals on non-military leaves of absence.
- Requires that service members provide advance written or verbal notice to their employers for all military duty unless giving notice is impossible, unreasonable, or precluded by military necessity. An employee should provide notice as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances. Additionally,

service members are able (but are not required) to use accrued vacation or annual leave while performing military duty.

- Clarifies pension plan coverage by making explicit that all pension plans are protected.

Health and pension plan coverage for service members is provided for by USERRA. Individuals performing military duty of more than thirty days may elect to continue employer sponsored health care for up to twenty- four months; however, they may be required to pay up to 102% of the full premium. For military service of less than thirty-one days, health care coverage is provided as if the service member had remained employed. The period an individual has to make application for reemployment or report back to work after military service is based on time spent on military duty.

The Department of Labor, through the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), assists all persons having claims under USERRA including Federal and Postal Service employees. To learn more, go to the U.S. Department of Labor's web site at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/userra_fs.htm>.

8.7 SUMMARY

This chapter covered the challenges that Navy Reserve personnel face upon mobilization and resources available to assist.

Chapter 9: Deployment

The business of the Navy is to go to sea. Throughout history, Sailors were single, young men. That remained true until the last quarter of a century when the face of the Navy began to change. Today the Navy still has young, single men, but there are also young women, single parents, and for the first time, more married Sailors than single. Few other occupations require the rigors of extended periods away from home of six months or more, duty nights, sudden and unplanned deployments, and war. This chapter provides an overview of:

- Navy Communities.
- The Fleet Response Plan.
- The Traditional Cycle of Deployment.
- The Ombudsman's Role during Deployment.

9.1 Navy Communities

Within the Navy, there are several types of communities or TYCOMS. Each has a similar structure, but has a different mission and culture. Type communities in the Navy include:

- Surface.
- Aviation.
- Submarine.
- Reserve commands.
- Construction battalions.
- Special warfare.

- Shore commands.
- Training commands.
- Recruiting commands.
- Pre-construction units.

Each Navy community has a unique deployment cycle based upon their specific mission. All members of the family feel the effects of deployment in their own unique way, and all have to cope with their own tasks and emotions. The length of deployment, the mission, presence or absence of communication, and the level of danger affect service members and their families.

9.1.1 Surface Community

The surface community consists of ships that sail the surface of the seas, with the exception of aircraft carriers that belong to the aviation community. Characteristics of the surface community include:

- Communications are variable. Email, Sailor phones, and mail are available, but not always on a regular basis. It is however, possible to communicate with the deployed service member.
- Crews on many surface ships consist of both male and female sailors.
- The Navy is experimenting with "sea swapping" - leaving the ship deployed and rotating complete crews.
- Missions vary from showing the flag to combat.
- Naval amphibious vessels transport Marines.
- Ships can make port calls.
- Ships vary in the number of personnel from less than one hundred to almost three thousand.
- Examples include: USS ARLEIGH BURKE (DDG 51), USS AUSTIN (LPD 4) and USS WHIRLWIND (PC 11).

9.1.2 Air Community

The aviation or air community consists of both aircraft and aircraft carriers. Characteristics of the air community include:

- The deployment cycle is similar to that of the surface community.
- Some aviation squadrons deploy on ships, while others deploy to land-based locations.
- Missions may be classified.
- Some squadrons have detachments, or dets, which are a small number of the crew who are separated from the rest of the squadron.
- Communications are variable. Email, Sailor phones, and mail are available, but not always on a regular basis. It is however, possible to communicate with the deployed service member.
- Examples include: USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN (CVN 72), Navy Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 82 and Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 115.

9.1.3 Submarine Community

The submarine community consists of two types of submarines - fast attacks and TRIDENTS, also known as boomers. Characteristics of the submarine community include:

- Crews are all-male and specially selected.
- Missions are often classified.
- Fast attack subs have one crew that deploys irregularly for six to eight months at a time.
- Tridents have blue/gold crews on rotating 90-day deployment cycles. However, there is no down time between deployments.
- It is almost impossible to communicate on a regular basis. Email is inconsistent. Family grams (incoming messages from family members) are limited to 40 words and only a limited number are allowed per deployment.
- There may or may not be any port calls.
- Examples include: USS ASHEVILLE (SSN 758), USS WYOMING (SSBN 742), and USS COLUMBUS (SSN 762).

9.1.4 Reserve Commands

Reserve commands are covered in detail in *Chapter Eight: Mobilization.* In general, reservists:

- Are a source of trained, mission capable individuals and units to the active duty Navy.
- May or may not have prior active duty military experience.
- Do not necessarily live near a Navy port.
- Currently comprise 20% of the active duty force.
- May be called to active duty service as individuals or an entire unit.

9.1.5 Construction Battalions

Construction battalions are more frequently known as CBs or "Seabees". Characteristics of the CB community include:

- Deploy to sites throughout the world to complete construction projects for both the military and civilian communities.
- May deploy as a battalion (full group) or as dets (small groups).
- Normally fly to their deployment site.
- As indicated in their name, the mission of CBs is to build or construct. Often they construct a base, field hospital, etc. in advance of other troops.
- Often deploy for seven months and are home for seven months.
- Examples include: Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB 1), Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), and Seabee Readiness Group (SRG).

9.1.6 Special Warfare

Special warfare communities include SEALS (Sea, Air, Land Specialists), Explosive Ordinance (EOD), etc. Characteristics of these communities include:

- Small groups of highly trained Sailors operating as a very cohesive unit on sea, air or land.
- Although SEAL's are all male, female support personnel may be deployed as part of a squadron.

- Often on highly classified missions.
- For security purposes, family members are generally not aware of the service member's whereabouts.
- Communication is minimal or non-existent.
- Generally fly to and from their deployment site.
- Deployment can occur with little or no notice for an unspecified period of time.
- The work-up is an intensive training schedule that takes the sailors away from their families. On average, a SEAL is away from his family 223 days a year.
- Examples include: Explosive Ordinance Disposal Group Two (EOD - 2), Naval Special War Group One (NSWG – 1), and Naval Special Warfare Operational Support Group (OSG).

9.1.7 Shore Stations

Shore stations are communities whose mission is to support seagoing units. They do this through providing services such as piers, tugs, medical facilities, maintenance facilities, supplies, etc. Some shore communities have deploying detachments; the entire command does not deploy at the same time. Small groups of service members may deploy together. This affects unit cohesiveness since the entire unit is rarely together. Naval Station Norfolk and Naval Station San Diego are examples of shore stations.

9.1.8 Recruiting Commands

Navy recruiting commands generally cover a large geographic area or region. Within the region, one or two active duty Sailors are assigned to a smaller territory where they are responsible to attract and encourage civilian men and women to join the Navy. Personnel assigned to recruiting duty have recruitment goals and often work long hours to achieve these goals. They may be physically housed with recruiters from other service branches and are often in locations far from Navy installations. Family members are isolated from other military families and installation services.

- Primary task of recruiters is to encourage civilians to join the Navy.
- Often long work hours.

- Families frequently isolated from military installations and other military families.
- Ombudsmen are appointed for each Navy Recruiting District Headquarters.

9.1.9 Pre-construction Units

While a ship or submarine is being built it is not referred to as a ship or boat, but as a pre-construction unit or PCU. A PCU has leadership assigned, but generally does not have a full crew until the ship becomes habitable. PCUs:

- Are housed in buildings until boat/ship is habitable.
- Are generally not fully manned.
- Crew are attending training.
- Crew, families and ombudsman may be geographically separated.
- Programs, protocols and procedures must be developed.
- Funding is not in place for all programs and services.

9.2 Fleet Response Plan (FRP)

The Fleet Response Plan was implemented in 2003 to improve the Navy's ability to deploy where needed, when needed. The previous inter-deployment readiness cycle (IDRC) approach made it difficult and expensive to swiftly surge to a crisis, conflict, or for homeland defense.

Under the guidance of Commander Fleet Forces Command (CFFC), a revised IDRC was developed to meet the demand for a more responsive force. With changes to maintenance, manning, and training, the fleet can now have at least six surge-capable carrier strike groups and two additional strike groups able to deploy within approximately ninety days of an emergency order. Parallel to this, the Navy Reserve Force made changes to the process of transforming reservists to active duty.

Instead of predictable, six month deployments to pre-determined regions, the FRP allows units that have attained high readiness to embark on deployments of varied duration in support of specific national priorities such as homeland defense, multinational exercises, security cooperation events, and deterrent operations.

The goal of the FRP is flexibility in deployments.

9.3 Individual Augmentees (IAs)

Individual augmentees are Sailors with needed skills that are sent temporarily from their current command to assist or augment another command.

The Navy tries to use volunteers, but when there are no volunteers with the required skills, non-volunteers are sent. Individual augmentee assignments are not new to the Navy as the Navy has always used service members to support another command as needed. For example, if a destroyer was getting ready to deploy and the independent corpsman could not get underway for some reason, then an independent corpsman from another command would be assigned to deploy with the destroyer – generally until the assigned corpsman could meet the ship or until another corpsman was permanently assigned.

One of the new twists to the concept of Sailors augmenting other commands is that they are augmenting other branches of the services – primarily the Army and Marine Corps. Another difference is Sailors are supporting Soldiers and Marines on the ground most often in Iraq or Afghanistan. Other Sailors are supporting ground efforts in Africa and in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, but Sailors can be sent anywhere they are needed in support of the Global War on Terror (GWOT).

The Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center (ECRC) is part of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command. The ECRC provides support to IA Sailors and their families. It:

- Provides training on services available for families.
- Is the primary stateside POC for all theater related family issues.
- Is the conduit for communications with COMNAVCENT for family issues.
- Moderates Navy Knowledge Online "Family Community of Practice" site.

Contact the ECRC at (877) 364-4302 or http://www.ecrc.navy.mil.

Navy Knowledge Online's web portal www.nko.navy.mil has the most current information for Sailors and their families regarding IA tours. A deployment checklist is posted that is mandatory for all IA Sailors to complete. Fleet and Family Support Centers publish handbooks for IA Sailors, commands and families. Handbooks and more are available at www.ffsp.navy.mil.

9.4 Combat/Operational Stress

Combat and operational stress is the mental, emotional, or physical tension, strain or distress resulting from exposure to combat and/or operation related conditions. Combat stress is any stress that occurs during the course of combat-related duties, whether due to enemy action or other sources. Stressors may include:

- Unit leaders.
- Mission demands.
- Member's home life.
- Environment.
- Death of unit members or others.

Combat and operational stress are not medical or psychiatric illnesses. In fact, service members on the homefront who work in support of GWOT may face operational stress.

Positive combat stress behaviors are adaptive responses to combat and promote unit cohesion. Examples of positive responses include:

- Strength and endurance.
- Increased tolerance to hardship, discomfort, and pain.
- Loyalty to buddies, leaders, and unit.
- Courage and heroic acts.

9.4.1 Stress Injuries

Stress injuries occur when an individual is under too much stress. How much stress is too much stress varies by individuals. There are some simple, basic factors that can improve an individual's ability to deal with combat and operational stress. These protective factors include:

- Eating nutritious meals.
- Getting enough sleep.
- Exercising.
- Having positive, supportive relationships.
- Having a meaningful belief system.

Individuals are subject to three types of stress injuries:

- Trauma.
- Fatigue.
- Grief.

Trauma injuries are impact injuries caused by events involving terror, horror or helplessness. Fatigue injuries are wear and tear injuries due to the accumulation of stress over time. Grief is a loss injury due to the death, injury or transfer of people who the service member cares about.

9.4.2 Stress Injury Damages

Stress injuries create damage just as do physical injuries. Biological changes to the brain include:

- Messenger chemicals get depleted.
- Set points in control systems get shifted.
- Excessive and persistent "fear conditioning".
- Physical damage to control centers in the brain.

Mental changes include:

- Important beliefs are damaged.
- Self-worth and self-confidence are shaken.
- Important attachments to others are lost.
- Ability to make sense of memories is damaged.

Spirit and relationship changes include:

- Life doesn't make sense like it once did.
- Ability to forgive and feel forgiven is damaged.
- It may be difficult to trust in others.

Prior to returning from deployment, service members participate in a Warrior Transition or Return and Reunion brief and complete Post Deployment Health Assessments that may identify the need for ongoing support.

9.4.3 Recognize Stress Injuries in Returning IAs

Combat stress is generally dealt with in theater, but residual effects of stress may not appear until weeks or months after an IA Sailor's return from combat. It's important for the command's IA Coordinator to maintain frequent contact with returning IA Sailors, to ensure IA Sailors complete all required post deployment health assessments, and to encourage IA Sailors to seek assistance for a stress injury just as they would a physical injury. In addition, family members of IA Sailors should be made aware of resources available to treat stress injuries as they may be the first to recognize their loved one is in need of assistance. They may also suffer from secondary stress by trying to support a loved one.

Some of the many possible indicators of stress injuries include:

- Sleep disturbances - inability to go to sleep, stay asleep or sleeping too much.
- Nightmares.
- Flashbacks.
- Inability to connect socially.
- Avoiding situations that remind the IA of a traumatic event including crowds and loud noises.
- "Self-medicating" with alcohol or drugs.
- Angry outbursts.
- Tearfulness.
- Sadness.
- Withdrawal.
- Poor work performance.

Anyone concerned about their loved one's adjustment after an IA tour should be referred to the Fleet and Family Support Center, a chaplain, Military OneSource, or to the Department of Veterans Affairs for assistance.

9.5 Sudden Deployments

With the advent of the Fleet Response Plan, unexpected deployments are more common in response to world events. Families may be thrown into a crisis mode. It is critical for commands to urge constant readiness for Sailors and Marines. Constant

readiness simply means always being prepared to deploy rather than only preparing for expected, pre-planned deployments. Married and single service members should always ensure the following important paperwork is current:

- Wills.
- Service Members' Group Life Insurance — be sure the beneficiary is current.
- Page two emergency data form — provides the names and contact information of who is to be notified in case of an emergency.
- Written dependent family care plans and guardianship agreements for dual military duty couples and single Sailors with dependents. This ensures world-wide availability of service members.
- Identification cards and DEERS enrollment.
- Specific Power of Attorney — a legal document that allows someone to act on behalf of another. They are often used to complete taxes, buy a house or car, or to make other major decisions while a Sailor is deployed.

In addition, a system should be in place to ensure money is available and bills are paid while a service member is deployed. The system could be:

- Allotments.
- Split pay option.
- Online banking.

Single service members have more details to manage since they do not have a spouse to manage for them. Singles need to have a plan for their:

- Vehicle.
- House or apartment.
- Pets.

Active duty single parents have even more to manage, as they also need to have a plan to ensure their children are cared for when they are deployed. This often involves uprooting children and sending them to stay with extended family members during a deployment.

Maintaining a posture of constant readiness can make unexpected deployments somewhat easier to manage. If the practical matters are kept up to date, the service member and his or her family can focus on preparing emotionally.

9.6 Traditional Cycle of Deployment

The Emotional Cycle of Deployment, by Kathleen Vestal Logan, was first published in 1987 in *Proceedings,* a U.S. Naval Institute publication. It has long been the basis for information about extended Navy deployments. The information is based on women's reactions to deployment as it was written at a time when males routinely deployed and women did not. It was also written prior to the widespread use of email and telephones at sea. It is still the most commonly used model to explain the emotional reaction to separation from a loved one. Although the effects of deployment are different for everyone, many families can identify with all, or part, of the cycle.

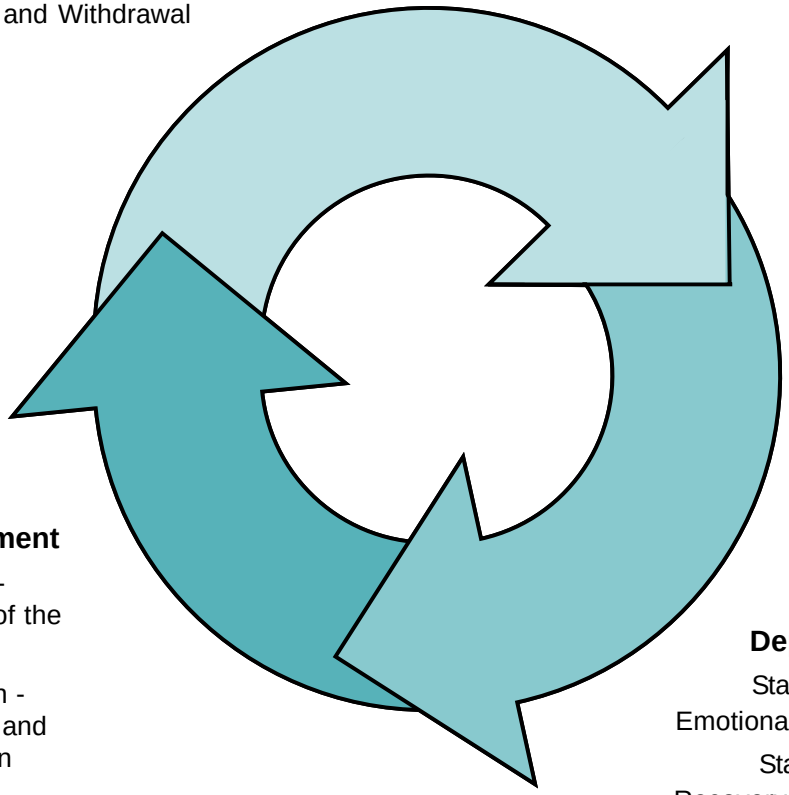
The Emotional Cycle of Deployment model was originally based on changes in Navy wives' behavior and emotions during deployments of three months or more. Conversations with male spouses indicate the cycle also applies to them.

The Emotional Cycle of Deployment

Predeployment

Stage One -
Anticipation of Loss

Stage Two -
Detachment and Withdrawal



Post Deployment

Stage Six -
Renegotiation of the Marriage

Stage Seven -
Reintegration and Stabilization

Deployment

Stage Three -
Emotional Disorganization

Stage Four -
Recovery and Stabilization

Stage Five -
Anticipation of Homecoming

Stage One - Anticipation of Loss

This stage occurs four to six weeks before a planned deployment. It is a time of tension and confusing emotions.

Couples: Partners may be angry and resentful of the increased hours the service member spends preparing for the deployment. Service members feel guilty that they are leaving their families. Arguments and bickering are common. Although irritating, it can be a useful way for a couple to distance themselves emotionally in preparation for the separation.

Children: Parents must be sure to tell their child about the upcoming deployment and reassure children that they will be cared for in the deployer's absence.

Singles: Unattached Sailors may eagerly anticipate the opportunity to put their training into action. They may also be concerned about the unknown aspects of the deployment.

Stage Two - Detachment and Withdrawal

Occurring in the final days before deployment, in many ways this can be the most difficult stage.

Couples: Both partners stop sharing their thoughts and feelings with each other. This is a natural response as separation is imminent. Although physically together, they have separated emotionally. This can be especially difficult if it is seen as rejection rather than as a reaction to trying circumstances. Often the non-deploying spouses think, *"If you have to go, go."* And Sailors think, *"Let's get on with it!"*

Children: Children may be confused and upset with the deploying parent. Younger children may feel their behavior caused their parent to leave.

Singles: Singles are often working extremely hard and trying to get their affairs in order before deploying.

Stage Three - Emotional Disorganization

This stage varies in length from the actual time of deployment and up to six weeks after.

Couples: The non-deploying partner may feel an initial sense of relief followed by guilt. Many feel disorganized, depressed, or restless. Old routines have been disrupted and new ones not yet established. They often feel overwhelmed as they face total responsi-

bility for family affairs. A few are stuck in this stage, which can cause problems throughout the remainder of the deployment and beyond.

Children: Children may show signs of emotional upset. School work may suffer. Behavior may regress.

Singles: Both service members in a relationship and single service members are usually excited at first, then, may become lonely or angry at the command for having to be separated from their families and homeport.

Stage Four - Recovery and Stabilization

At some point during the deployment and after Stage Three, new routines are established for much of the deployment.

Couples: Those at home have begun to feel more comfortable with the reorganization of roles and responsibilities. New sources of support and a new sense of independence and freedom are developed.

Children: Children too, with time, settle into more comfortable and adaptive behavior.

Singles: Service members may be at a point where the newness and adventure of the deployment has worn off and monotony sets in.

Stage Five - Anticipation of Homecoming

Homecoming preparation begins at different times for those at home and those on deployment.

Couples: Approximately four to six weeks before the command is due back, spouses and partners who remained at home realize that they have not finished everything they wanted to during the separation. There is a feeling of joy and excitement in anticipation of being together again. Feelings of apprehension surface as well at the prospect that the service member may not like some of the changes and decisions made during his/her absence. Service members in relationships are excited and anxious, too, wondering if they will be accepted or needed by their families and if their children will remember them.

Children: Younger children take their cues from their caretaker. Older children may have similar feelings as their parents. They will be excited, joyous and may feel anxious if they believe they did not live up to their deployed parent's expectations.

Singles: Many service members indicate their anticipation of homecoming does not begin until they are sure they are actually returning to homeport. They are eager for some time away from the command and concerned that friendships developed with their married colleagues may change upon homecoming.

Stage Six - Renegotiation

Renegotiation of relationships occurs at homecoming.

Couples: It takes time together, with shared feelings and experiences, to really become a couple again. Many spouses feel a loss of freedom and independence, and resent the partner making decisions that should be made together. Service members often feel like strangers in their own homes. During this stage, the couple has to make major adjustments in roles and responsibilities; the marriage cannot and will not be exactly the same as before the deployment. Each partner has had varied experiences and has grown in different ways, and these changes must be accommodated. Being aware of each other's needs is crucial at this point. There is, however, an opportunity offered to few civilian couples; the chance to evaluate what changes have occurred within themselves, to determine what direction they want their growth to take, and to meld all this into a renewed relationship.

Children: Just as parents need time to reestablish relationships, so do children. It is best for the returning parent initially not to make drastic changes to the children's routine, rules and responsibilities. Children will likely go to the parent who has remained at home with them for the first few days upon their deployed parent's return for permission, questions, and assistance.

Singles: Singles may need to renegotiate relationships with roommates, friends, and family. They may also choose to develop new relationships.

Stage Seven - Reintegration and Stabilization

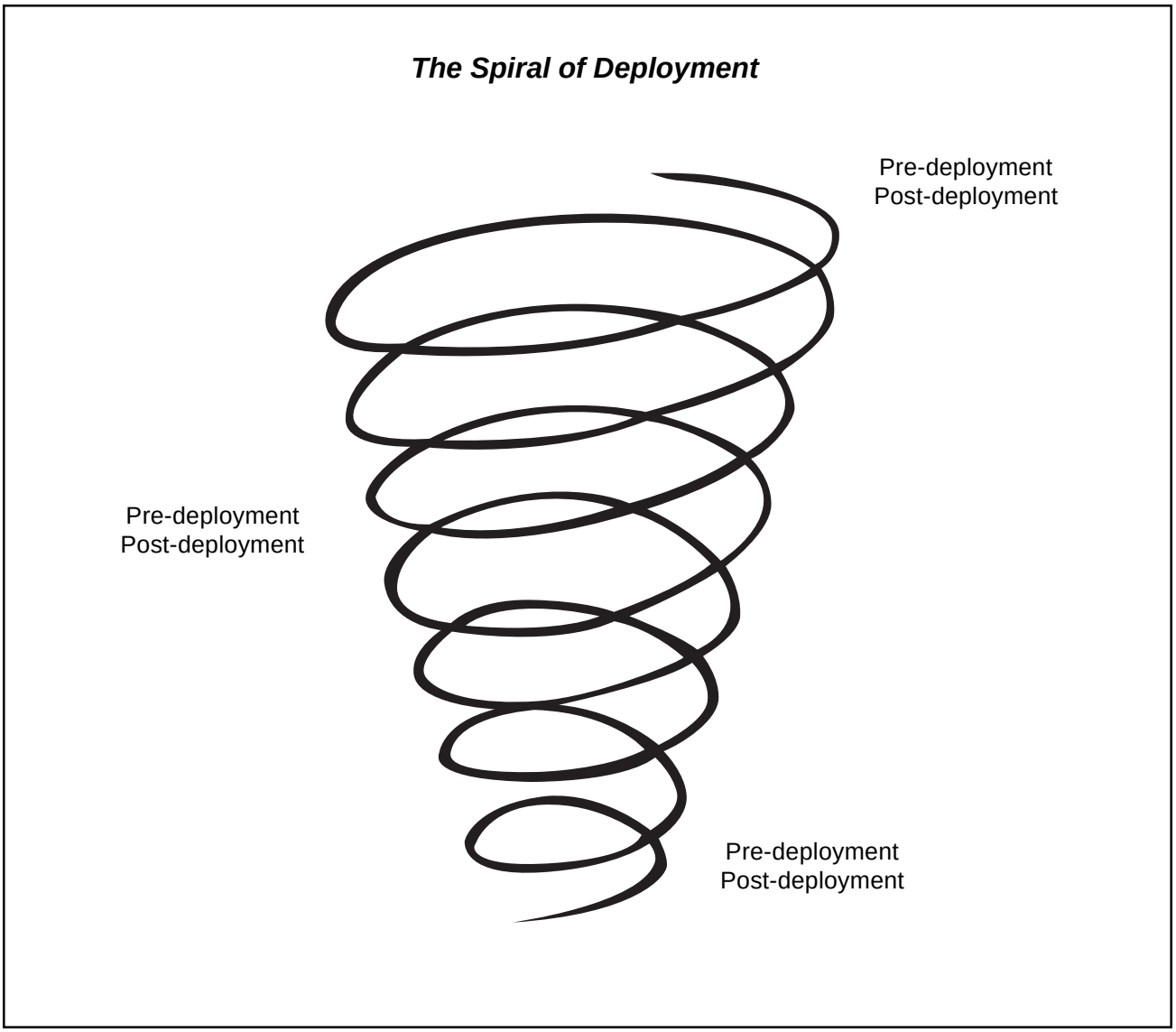
Within four to six weeks after homecoming, new routines have been established.

Couples: Spouses feel more relaxed and comfortable with each other. There is a renewed sense of being a couple and a family. They are back on the same track emotionally and can enjoy the warmth and closeness of being a couple again.

Children: Young children may worry that their parent will leave again. Duty nights can be challenging. Older children are usually delighted that their family is reunited even though they may, at times, resent the discipline enforced by having two parents at home.

Singles: Singles are pursuing interests away from work such as athletics, college, hobbies and developing relationships.

9.7 The Spiral of Deployment



Since the fleet response plan was implemented, many aspects of the deployment cycle have changed. According to a 2006 survey of military families conducted by the National Military Family Association, unlike the traditional cyclical model of pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment, now families do not return to the same place they started prior to a deployment. Instead, when entering the second or third deployment of their spouse's sea tour, along with the skills they have gained, families carry unresolved anxieties and expectations from previous deployments. Thus, the cycle of deployment has become a spiral of deployment. According to the survey, many families report they are tired, stressed, and worried.

Sailors and family members still report that many of the emotions described in the cycle of deployment are applicable; however, the time periods may be compressed. Of course, Navy families are resilient. They generally return to their pre-sea tour or higher level of functioning when their Sailor transfers to shore duty.

9.8 Deployment Preparation

Prior to a planned extended deployment, most commands host a series of events to prepare Sailors and their families. A lawyer is usually brought to the command to prepare wills and powers of attorney. Families are invited to attend pre-deployment briefs hosted by the command. Small commands typically host one pre-deployment brief on a weekday evening for married Sailors and ensure all are able to attend; and host two briefs for single Sailors during the workday so that all can attend. A typical agenda for a pre-deployment brief follows.

Sample Pre-deployment Program Agenda	
Welcome	CMC
Mission Schedule Emergency Leave Policy	Commanding Officer
Ombudsman Role and Functions	Ombudsman
Family Readiness Group Activities	FRG Chair
Preparation	FFSC Representative or Chaplain
Summary	CMC
Programs for couples generally last about two hours and for singles one hour.	

9.8.1 Deployment Readiness Checklist

The following checklist covers the practical, financial, and personal preparation needed to be deployment ready.

Deployment Checklist

Legal Considerations

- ❑ Do you have a will?
- ❑ Is your Record of Emergency Data (page #2) current?
- ❑ Do you need to leave powers of attorney with anyone?
- ❑ Do you need to leave a medical authorization with the person who is caring for you dependent children?
- ❑ Are all ID cards/DEERS enrollments current?

Financial Planning

- ❑ Do you have a written monthly spending plan?

Does your spending plan include amounts for:

- ❑ Port visits?
- ❑ Phone calls?
- ❑ Gift/souvenir purchases?
- ❑ Utility bills?
- ❑ Savings?

Does your spending plan include amounts for:

- ❑ Sea pay?
- ❑ Family Separation Allowance?
- ❑ Possible promotion during deployment?
- ❑ Reenlistment bonuses or other special payments?

- ❑ Do you/your spouse have access to MyPay?
- ❑ Are you enrolled in the Thrift Savings Plan?
- ❑ If married, do you both understand and agree to how finances will be handled during the deployment?

Taxes

- ❑ If you plan to do your taxes while deployed, do you have all the records you will need?
- ❑ Do you have a specific power of attorney if someone else will be doing your taxes?

Banking Decisions

- ❑ Is your pay set up the way you want? (DDS to correct account(s)? Split pay? Any allotments or automatic check drafts?
- ❑ If married, have you considered establishing separate checking accounts?
- ❑ Have you considered joining a credit union?

Bills

- ❑ How will you be making payments to your creditors? Do they all have your correct address?
- ❑ How will you be paying your rent/mortgage/utilities?
- ❑ Are there any annual expenses due while you are deployed? If so, how will they be paid?
- ❑ If married, have you decided who will be using which credit cards during the deployment?
- ❑ Is your renter's/homeowner's insurance current?

Vehicles

- ❑ If single, do you have a safe place to store your vehicle or is someone taking care of it for you?
- ❑ Are vehicle insurance, tags, registration/title and base/inspection stickers current?
- ❑ Is all routine maintenance current?
- ❑ Have you left the name of a trusted mechanic/repair garage with your family?

Emergency Plans

- ❑ Do you have a least one month's pay saved in case of financial emergency?
- ❑ If married, have you considered signing a pre-authorization form with Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society?
- ❑ If married, does your spouse know how to access the TRICARE health care system, particularly when outside the local area?
- ❑ Does your family know your complete official mailing address, command name, and your social security number?
- ❑ Does your family know to use the American Red Cross in case of an emergency?
- ❑ Does your family have the name and number to the command ombudsman?
- ❑ Does your family have a disaster preparedness plan and place to meet/call?

Protect Your Identity During Deployment: Members of the military who are away from their usual duty station may place an "active duty alert" on their credit report to help minimize the risk of identity theft while deployed. When a business sees the alert on the credit report, it must verify the member's identity before issuing new credit.

The business may try to contact the service member directly, but if he or she is on deployment, that may be impossible. As a result, the law allows the service member to use a personal representative to place or remove an alert. Active duty alerts on the report are effective for one year, unless the service member requests that the alert be removed sooner. If the deployment lasts longer, the service member may place another alert on the report.

To place an "active duty" alert, or to have it removed, call the toll-free fraud number of one of the three nationwide consumer reporting companies: Equifax, Experian, or Trans Union. The company will require appropriate proof of identity, which may include Social Security number, name, address, and other personal information:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; <http://www.equifax.com/>
Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); <http://www.experian.com/>
TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; <http://www.transunion.com/>

Contact only one of the three companies to place an alert. The company called is required to contact the other two, which will place an alert on their versions of the individual's report, as well. It is important to maintain up to date contact information while these alerts are in place. When the service member places an active duty alert, his/her name will be removed from the nationwide consumer reporting companies' marketing lists for prescreened offers of credit and insurance for two years—unless he/she asks that their name be placed on the lists before then. Prescreened offers—sometimes called "preapproved" offers—are based on information in credit reports that indicate meeting certain criteria set by the offeror.

To learn more about identity theft and credit rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, visit ftc.gov/credit. (Source: Federal Trade Commission Consumer Alert <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/alerts/dutyalrt.htm>.

9.9 Family Emergencies During Deployment

A service member may or may not be able to return to the states during a family emergency. For this reason, many submariners opt not to get bad news such as the death of a parent while submerged. It is recommended that families follow command procedures for notifying a service member of an emergency while deployed. Commands usually recommend families contact the American Red Cross who will verify the emergency and contact the command.

Families may also contact the command ombudsman. Depending on the direction from the CO, ombudsmen may instruct family members to contact the Red Cross or the ombudsman may contact the command. Emergency messages are delivered to the Sailor by a chaplain, command master chief, or commanding or executive officer who can assure the service member has support.

An ombudsman should discourage a family from telling the service member directly about an emergency. If a family member sends an email or tells the service member of an emergency during a telephone call, then no one at the command is aware and available to provide emotional support.

9.10 Integrating Command Personnel Component Families

Individuals who may not normally be assigned to the command – a squadron, an air wing, midshipmen, foreign Navy personnel, activated reservists, etc. - may become a part of it during a deployment. Check with the CO to determine his or her expectations of integrating the families of these individuals. Most will want the ombudsman to:

- Respond to the calls for information or emergencies.
- Provide the careline number and encourage use by all.
- Send copies of the ombudsman newsletter.
- Invite families to command and FRG functions.
- Keep families informed of homecoming events.

Many times when groups of commands deploy together, one or more leadership spouses will organize a meeting or a luncheon, and invite leadership spouses from each command. This allows everyone an opportunity to meet, plan social activities, and coordinate homecoming festivities. Teamwork is key, as all are part of the Navy family.

9.11 Maintain Command Communication

The days and weeks prior to deployment are hectic. Before the command deploys, it is essential to have a plan for communication. Command ombudsmen should make sure they:

- Are familiar with the CO's emergency leave policy and expectations for verification.
- Are aware of the types of situations in which the CO and command POC want to be informed.
- Create a plan for regularly scheduled email communication.
- Have a telephone number for the command that generally is not made available to others.
- Have the command's mailing address.
- Develop a plan to receive updated official command rosters.
- Arrange for the CO or CMC to provide regular verbal or written updates for the careline.
- Know their POC at the squadron, group, or other command who can assist while the command is deployed.
- Arrange funding for printing/distribution of the ombudsman newsletter.

9.12 Homecoming

Return and Reunion briefs for deployed service members generally take place aboard ship at the request of the command. FFSC staff members meet the ship and present programs during the transit home. For submarines and land-based air squadrons, return and reunion briefs can be provided at their last in-port availability.

The command's family readiness group usually plans homecoming festivities. The ombudsman, FRG leader, or a senior spouse may be asked to relay plans to the CO for approval. FRG leadership, or another member of the command support team, should contact the FFSC or chaplain to have an educational homecoming discussion for command families.

The focus of homecoming programs is:

- Planning for homecoming.
- Realistic expectations.
- Dealing with change.
- Children's reactions.
- Resources for additional help.

9.13 Deployment Success Strategies

Being separated from loved ones is hard, yet most Navy families manage to remain strong. What are their success strategies? Although each family develops their own ways of successfully managing extended separations, some common themes of successful families include:

- Being adequately prepared in such areas as finances, home, and vehicle maintenance.
- Ongoing communication during the course of the separation.
- Goal setting and achievement.
- Maintaining trust.
- Maintaining physical and emotional health.
- Developing a support system.
- Using available resources – including their command ombudsmen.

9.14 Summary

Command leadership focuses on maintaining command readiness for deployment – training, equipment, and safety. Ombudsmen can help the command ensure service members and their families are also prepared. Ensure:

- The command emphasizes that wills, insurance documents, ID cards, etc. are current.
- Pre-deployment briefs are scheduled and participation by all is highly encouraged.
- The official command roster is updated.
- The family readiness group has leadership and has been provided guidance by the CO.

Preparation is the key to deployment success for the command, Sailors, and their families.

Chapter 10: Program Management

As with most jobs, some reporting and documentation of services is required. This chapter describes the administrative requirements of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program including:

- Protections afforded to ombudsmen as a government volunteer.
- Budgeting and expense reimbursement.
- Safeguarding private information.
- Routine reporting requirements.

10.1 Volunteer Protection

A requirement included in OPNAVINST 1750.1F Navy Family Ombudsman Program, requires command ombudsmen to complete a *Volunteer Agreement for Appropriated Activities or Non-appropriated Fund Instrumentalities DD 2793.* A sample of this form follows:

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT FOR

☐ APPROPRIATED FUND ACTIVITIES ☐ NONAPPROPRIATED FUND INSTRUMENTALITIES

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

AUTHORITY: Section 1588 of Title 10, U.S. Code, and E.O. 9397.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE(S): To document voluntary services provided by an individual, including the hours of service performed, and to obtain agreement from the volunteer on the conditions for accepting the performance of voluntary service.

ROUTINE USE(S): None.

DISCLOSURE: Voluntary; however failure to complete the form may result in an inability to accept voluntary services or an inability to document the type of voluntary services and hours performed.

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. TYPED NAME OF VOLUNTEER *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	2. SSN	3. DATE OF BIRTH *(YYYYMMDD)*
4. INSTALLATION	5. ORGANIZATION/UNIT WHERE SERVICE OCCURS	
6. PROGRAM WHERE SERVICE OCCURS	7. ANTICIPATED DAYS OF WEEK	8. ANTICIPATED HOURS
9. DESCRIPTION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES		

PART II - VOLUNTEER IN APPROPRIATED FUND ACTIVITIES

10. CERTIFICATION

I expressly agree that my services are being provided as a volunteer and that I will not be an employee of the United States Government or any instrumentality thereof, except for certain purposes relating to compensation for injuries occurring during the performance of approved volunteer services, tort claims, the Privacy Act, criminal conflicts of interest, and defense of certain suits arising out of legal malpractice. I expressly agree that I am neither entitled to nor expect any present or future salary, wages, or other benefits for these voluntary services. I agree to be bound by the laws and regulations applicable to voluntary service providers and agree to participate in any training required by the installation or unit in order for me to perform the voluntary services that I am offering. I agree to follow all rules and procedures of the installation or unit that apply to the voluntary services I will be providing.

a. SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER		b. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*
11.a. TYPED NAME OF ACCEPTING OFFICIAL *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

PART III - VOLUNTEER IN NONAPPROPRIATED FUND INSTRUMENTALITIES

12. CERTIFICATION

I expressly agree that my services are being provided as a volunteer and that I will not be an employee of the United States Government or any instrumentality thereof, except for certain purposes relating to compensation for injuries occurring during the performance of approved volunteer services and liability for tort claims as specified in 10 U.S.C. Section 1588(d)(2). I expressly agree that I am neither entitled to nor expect any present or future salary, wages, or other benefits for these voluntary services. I agree to be bound by the laws and regulations applicable to voluntary service providers, and agree to participate in any training required by the installation or unit in order for me to perform the voluntary services that I am offering. I agree to follow all rules and procedures of the installation or unit that apply to the voluntary services that I am offering.

a. SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER		b. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*
13.a. TYPED NAME OF ACCEPTING OFFICIAL *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*	b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

PART IV - TO BE COMPLETED AT END OF VOLUNTEER'S SERVICE BY VOLUNTEER SUPERVISOR

14. AMOUNT OF VOLUNTEER TIME DONATED				15. SIGNATURE	16. TERMINATION DATE *(YYYYMMDD)*
a. YEARS *(2,087 hours = 1 year)*	b. WEEKS	c. DAYS	d. HOURS		
17.a. TYPED NAME OF SUPERVISOR *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*				b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED *(YYYYMMDD)*

DD FORM 2793, FEB 2002 PREVIOUS EDITION IS OBSOLETE. Reset Exception to Standard Form 50 granted by Office of Personnel Management (OPM) waiver.

This form is also available online:

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd2793.pdf> or <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

A copy of the signed agreement should be given to the ombudsman prior to commencing volunteer services. Part IV of the form is completed at the end of the term of service. A copy of the completed agreement should be given to the ombudsman upon termination of service.

While performing their duties, command ombudsmen are considered employees of the government. They are afforded certain protections.

- If an ombudsman should be injured or killed while performing official duties, the United States government will pay disability or death compensation unless:
    1. Injury or death was caused by misconduct.
    2. The ombudsman inflicted harm upon themself.
    3. The ombudsman was under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Ombudsmen are protected from personal liability. If they make a mistake and another person is injured while they are performing command ombudsman duties, they are not liable. However, this does not prevent an ombudsman from being charged with a crime.

Ombudsmen and their command should keep copies of their Volunteer Agreement Form (DD 2793), Appointment Letter, and Training Record.

Following the termination of volunteer service, volunteer records are to be retained for three years by the command that received the service.

10.2 Appointment Letter

In addition to a copy of the *Volunteer Agreement,* when an ombudsman is appointed they should also receive a copy of OPNAVINST 1750.1F, a copy of this *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual* (that includes a copy of OPNAVISNT 1750.1F), an ombudsman pin, nametag, and an appointment letter. The appointment letter should include information about:

- Duties the commanding officer expects the ombudsman to perform.
- Upcoming Ombudsman Basic Training class dates and registration/contact information.

- A requirement for the ombudsman to report back to the command upon completion of OBT.
- The availability of Online Orientation in the event the ombudsman cannot attend Ombudsman Basic Training within the first six weeks of assignment. Go to <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.
- The Fleet and Family Support web site <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.
- The ombudsman's POC at the command and the POC's contact information.
- The length of the appointment and whether or not there is a probationary period.
- Expectation for attendance at local assemblies and advanced training.

FYI

Once the command has appointed an ombudsman, they should register the new ombudsman with the Navy's Ombudsman Registry at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>. This allows the ombudsman's name and contact information to be distributed as needed.

10.3 TRAINING RECORD

The command is required to maintain a training record for each command ombudsman. Ombudsmen should discuss with their POC how they want to manage this record. Ombudsmen should also maintain their own copy of their training record, as the command is only required to have documentation of training related to the ombudsman position. Ombudsmen will attend a variety of training throughout their lifetime and should be encouraged to maintain a record of all types of training attended. This information can be useful in updating a resume and applying for future jobs.

There is no standardized training form. Many professionals maintain a training log. Feel free to create your own format or utilize the following sample log.

10.3.1 SAMPLE TRAINING LOG

Sample Training Log for _____

Training	Sponsoring Organization	Length	Date	Certificate of Completion (Yes/No/Not Applicable)

It is important for the ombudsman and the CO to discuss the budget allocated to the program and determine what support can be provided.

10.4 FUNDING AND BUDGETING

Commands may use appropriated funds (APF) or non-appropriated funds (NAF) in support of the Command Ombudsman Program. It is important for the ombudsman and the CO to discuss the budget allocated to the program and determine what support can be provided.

Items that may be funded include:

- The CO may use NAF for individual ombudsman appreciation dinners, plaques, and awards. The NAF limitation is $50 per ombudsman per year, not to exceed a total of $500 (multiple ombudsmen) per year per command. Cash awards are not authorized.
- Administrative support such as paper, envelopes, pens, copier service, clerical assistance, command telephone cards, and government vehicle transportation should be budgeted and may be provided from APF or NAF, as command resources permit.
- The command assumes all costs for production and delivery of ombudsman newsletters. Newsletter content must be approved by the command prior to distribution. If the newsletter is produced solely within the command, the command is responsible for providing technical and administrative support, paper, printer access, and delivery costs (stamps/bulk mail, etc.). If it is printed and delivered by Document Automation and Production Service (DAPS), the command must approve and provide funding. The local printing officer can provide guidance.

10.4.1 REIMBURSEMENT

Based on the authorized budget, the command may reimburse ombudsmen for specific, pre-agreed expenses. To receive reimbursement, ombudsmen must document expenses and submit a Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business (SF 1164) and appropriate receipts to the command.

FYI

SF 1164 can be found at:
<http://contacts.gsa.gov/webforms.nsf/0/4366F7D7DC67B9AC85256A720047DB33/$file/SF1164.pdf> or <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

A hard copy follows:

CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENDITURES ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS

1. DEPARTMENT OR ESTABLISHMENT, BUREAU, DIVISION OR OFFICE

2. VOUCHER NUMBER

3. SCHEDULE NUMBER

Read the Privacy Act Statement on the back of this form.

5. PAID BY

4. CLAIMANT

a. NAME *(Last, first, middle initial)*

b. SOCIAL SECURITY NO.

c. MAILING ADDRESS *(Include ZIP Code)*

d. OFFICE TELEPHONE NUMBER

6. **EXPENDITURES** *(If fare claimed in col. (g) exceeds charge for one person, show in col. (h) the number of additional persons which accompanied the claimant.)*

Show appropriate code in col. (b):
A - Local travel
B - Telephone or telegraph, or
C - Other expenses *(itemized)*
D - Funeral Honors Detail
E - Specialty Care

(Explain expenditures in specific detail.)

DATE (a)	CODE (b)	(c) FROM	(d) TO	MILEAGE RATE ¢ / NO. OF MILES (e)	AMOUNT CLAIMED: MILEAGE (f)	FARE OR TOLL (g)	ADD PERSONS (h)	TIPS AND MISCELLANEOUS (i)
If additional space is required continue on the back.			SUBTOTALS CARRIED FORWARD FROM THE BACK					
			TOTALS					

7. **AMOUNT CLAIMED** *(Total of cols. (f), (g) and (i).)* ▶ $

8. This claim is approved. Long distance telephone calls, if shown, are certified as necessary in the interest of the Government. *(Note: If long distance calls are included, the approving official must have been authorized in writing, by the head of the department or agency to so certify (31 U.S.C. 680a).)*

Sign Original Only

APPROVING OFFICIAL SIGN HERE ▶

DATE

9. This claim is certified correct and proper for payment.

Sign Original Only

AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICER SIGN HERE ▶

DATE

10. I certify that this claim is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and that payment or credit has not been received by me.

Sign Original Only

CLAIMANT SIGN HERE ▶

DATE

11. CASH PAYMENT RECEIPT

a. PAYEE *(Signature)*

b. DATE RECEIVED

c. AMOUNT $

12. PAYMENT MADE BY CHECK NO.

ACCOUNTING CLASSIFICATION

DoD Overprint 4/2002

Reset

STANDARD FORM 1164 (Rev. 11-77)
Prescribed by GSA, FPMR (CFR 41) 101-7

6. EXPENDITURES - *Continued*

DATE 19 ___ (a)	CODE (b)	*Show appropriate code in col. (b):* A - Local travel; B - Telephone or telegraph, or; C - Other expenses *(itemized)*; D - Funeral Honors Detail; E - Specialty Care *(Explain expenditures in specific detail.)* (c) FROM	(d) TO	MILEAGE RATE ¢ NO. OF MILES (e)	AMOUNT CLAIMED: MILEAGE (f)	FARE OR TOLL (g)	ADD PERSONS (h)	TIPS AND MISCELLANEOUS (i)

The CO may allow reimbursement for the following when the command ombudsman is acting in an official capacity:

- *Childcare* from any provider not to exceed the rate that would be charged by the local child development center (CDC).
- *Mileage, parking, and tolls* paid at the current government privately owned vehicle rate. Mileage must be documented. Parking and tolls require receipts. Go to General Services Administration to learn the current per mile rate for mileage reimbursement <http://www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/contentView.do?contentId=9646&contentType=GSA_BASIC>.
- *Communication equipment* such as computers, cell phones, pagers, or other electronic devices. If it is decided that the Command Ombudsman Program will function more effectively, command-owned equipment may be issued to the Command Ombudsman at the discretion of the CO. This equipment must be accounted for and returned when the ombudsman leaves the position. Use of these items must be limited to execution of official duties.
- *Internet service* can be authorized if the CO determines it is important and economically efficient for the ombudsman and command families to stay electronically connected.
- *Telephone lines* and any necessary telecommunication equipment may be installed in an ombudsman's home. In the case of equipment installed under this authority, COs may pay the charges incurred for the use of the equipment for authorized purposes, using APF or NAF. Installation of such equipment must not be done routinely, but only after careful consideration and subsequent decision that to do so is necessary for the Command Ombudsman Program to function effectively.
- *Travel expenses* incurred during command-directed or authorized participation in training, conferences, etc., will be reimbursed. The expense report (SF 1164) and receipts must be submitted as required. Invitational Travel Orders must be issued before travel takes place for authorized reimbursement.

Commands may issue Invitational Travel Orders for out-of-area travel, reimburse expenses and may authorize a travel advance for anticipated expenses. If reimbursement of travel expenses will cause hardship for an ombudsman's family, the command may provide a travel advance. The ombudsman will need to file a travel voucher with receipts upon completion of travel. Since many commands use automated travel order programs, the ombudsman's POC or command administrative officer can advise on the necessary procedures and/or forms.

10.4.2 Tax Deductions for Volunteering Costs

As a volunteer, ombudsmen may be eligible to claim tax deductions from the federal government for any un-reimbursed costs associated with volunteering such as:

- Transportation costs to attend non local Ombudsman Basic Training.
- Automobile mileage (at the standard IRS rate that changes annually).
- Parking and tolls.
- Telephone bills.
- Supplies purchased in support of volunteer duties.
- Dues or fees to a qualified organization.
- Non-cash contributions of property.

Ombudsmen are required to keep track of their own expenses. Many command ombudsmen find it useful to have a specific file folder for this purpose. Please note that in many cases these costs may be covered by the command - such as phone service. In that case, ombudsmen are not eligible to deduct items paid for or reimbursed by the command.

10.5 Data Collection

Command ombudsmen maintain and report certain types of data. Generally ombudsmen should try to maintain as little personal data about individuals as possible as indicated by *The Privacy Act.*

10.5.1 Privacy Act

Privacy is a cherished American value, closely linked to concepts of personal freedom and well-being. Mindful of the potential for misuse of federal records on individuals, the United States government adopted laws to protect privacy.

The Privacy Act of 1974 is a law passed by Congress to safeguard individuals against the invasion of personal privacy, to limit the government's collection, use, and disclosure of personal information, and to allow individuals access to any government records pertaining to them. The Privacy Act was updated in 1988 with the *Computer*

Match and Privacy Protection Act, and again in 1995 with *Privacy Principles* that were developed under the Clinton administration.

The Privacy Act does allow the disclosure of information without the consent of an individual if there is a compelling need to know by selected officers and employees of DOD who have a need for information in the performance of their duties.

Appropriate Disclosure Examples

- The contact information for a primary next of kin whose service member has been severely injured is not current. The command is deployed and the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer contacts the ombudsman to see if they have more current information. This is an authorized disclosure of personal information as personnel from the Department of Defense have a need to know.
- Providing information to the Family Advocacy Program Representative or to the local Child Protection Agency to report suspected child abuse is an authorized disclosure of personal information.
- Contacting the police and providing the name, address and telephone number of a spouse who tells the ombudsman she has taken a drug overdose in a suicide attempt is an appropriate disclosure of personal information.
- Informing the command and the local police that one of the command's family members has a gun and is planning to kill her husband's girlfriend is an appropriate disclosure of personal information.

See <http://www.privacy.navy.mil> to learn more.

Most individuals associated with the military are familiar with the requirements of *The Privacy Act.* However, to protect the individual's rights and to establish and maintain credibility within the Navy community, it is imperative that the strictest standards of confidentiality be adhered to in regard to families contacting the command ombudsman. Some problems family members disclose can place the service member's professional standing, social acceptance, and career progression in jeopardy. These include substance abuse by the service member, severe financial problems, or involvement with child pornography. It is important for the ombudsman to be knowledgeable about the Navy's and the CO's reporting requirements. Ombudsmen should ensure families are informed of these requirements. Some command ombudsmen periodically publish the types of items that must be reported in their newsletter.

10.5.2 Official Command Roster

The Official Command Roster is a list of all personnel at a command. It is a document that contains protected information. The confidentiality of information contained in an official command roster must be maintained as described in The Privacy Act.

There is no standard Department of Defense or Navy-wide roster format. The information an ombudsman may need on a roster includes:

- Service member's name.
- Last four digits of the Social Security number (in case there are multiple individuals with the same name which can be common at a large command).
- Rate/rank.
- Date of birth.
- Primary next of kin names, telephone numbers, addresses, and email address (Spouse and children, if married. Parents or others the service member lists if, single).
- Phone number where family members would evacuate to in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.
- Present Rotation Date (PRD) may be helpful.

10.5.3 Contact Log

In order to gather data needed to complete required reports, most ombudsmen document calls on a telephone log. A telephone log is useful as it enables an ombudsman to:

- See trends in types of calls such as a number of requests for emergency financial assistance, childcare resources, or spouse employment.
- Follow-up with people who have contacted the ombudsman for information or about a problem.
- Note if the ombudsman repeatedly provides the same types of information to the same individual.
- Demonstrate workload.

Many ombudsmen do not ask for the name and telephone number of each individual who contacts them about a ship's return date, time, and location, as there can be many,

many calls near the completion of a deployment. Most ombudsmen combine all of these calls into a category called *deployment* or *command schedule* and try to refer these callers to the command's careline, if one is available.

10.5.4 Sample Ombudsman Contact Log/ Matrix Sheet

Ombudsman Contact Log/MatrixSheet

DATE: FROM _____ TO _____

	Date	Name	Telephone/ E-mail	Type of Call	Follow-up
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					

10.5.5 Individual Contact Form

For in-depth calls that require research or multiple referrals, some ombudsmen prefer to use a separate document for each contact. This keeps all the information about a situation in one place rather than scattered among multiple notes. Most create a form similar to the following:

Ombudsman Individual Contact Form

Date: _____

Caller's Name: _____

Telephone/E-mail: _____

Situation

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Referrals Provided

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Follow-up

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10.6 Routine Data Collection Requirements

Ombudsmen are required to keep a daily log of telephone and email contacts. Ombudsmen are required to submit a monthly worksheet to the commanding officer or POC. The commanding officer may assign the ombudsman or command POC the responsibility of entering the data into the ombudsman database that can be found at http://www.ffsp.navy.mil. All commands are required to register their ombudsmen in order for them to submit their monthly reports. The database is found on the privatized side of the web site and requires login to access. Instructions on how to register are located on the public side of the web site under the tab titled "Ombudsman." The worksheet format follows:

Ombudsman Monthly Worksheet

Command _____ UIC/RUIC: _____

Deployed: ❑ yes ❑ no (if No # of months since last deployment) or _____ Shore Command (Non-Deploying)

Ombudsman Name _____

Command Type (Air, Surface, Submarine, Shore, Other) _____

Total Contacts		Contacts By	
_____	Email (Sent/Received)	_____	Family Member/Parent
_____	Phone	_____	Spouse/Legal Guardian
_____	In-person	_____	Significant Other
		_____	Other

Types of Calls	Number of Calls	Time Spent
Childbirth		
Childcare		
Deployment (Include ship's arrival contacts here.)		
Emergency (ARC, NMCRS, Accidents)		
Employment		
FRG		
Financial		
Housing		
Pay		
PSD/Legal		
Relocation		
Reportables (Abuse, suicide, homicide)		
Transportation		
TRICARE/DENTAL/DEERS		
Other		

Number of Presentations Given _____ Hours _____

Number of Trainings Attended _____ Hours _____

10.7 Safeguarding Information

Every effort should be made to protect an individual's personal information. Rosters, logs, contact forms, and other information that contains an individual's identifying information should be kept in a secure area. Official Command Rosters should not be made available to anyone without the command's permission. Identity theft is prevalent. Official Command Rosters can make individuals particularly vulnerable if they are not kept in a safe place. No one, including the ombudsman's spouse or children, should have access to information about families who contact their command ombudsman in the ombudsman's official capacity.

Ombudsmen may not release any of the information contained in the Official Command Roster to any group or individual without the express direction of the commanding officer. This includes the command readiness family support group, leadership spouses, the media, FFSC, and local businesses.

Electronic rosters and other computer files that contain personal identifying information should not be maintained on a computer's hard drive, but should be stored on a disc that can be safeguarded.

At the end of each month ombudsmen submit their Monthly Ombudsman Worksheet to the Commanding Officer for input into the ombudsman registry database located at http://www.ffsp.navy.mil. The command may designate the ombudsman to enter this information into the database. The command would retain a copy of the monthly worksheet and the ombudsman will destroy her/his copy. Additionally, ombudsmen should also destroy any copies of Individual Contact Forms, Contact Logs, and any other personal notes for that reporting month. Navy Reserve ombudsmen should submit their worksheets on a quarterly basis to Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command, Family Support Program Manager.

10.8 Summary

Routine paperwork and reporting requirements are minimal for command ombudsmen. Maintain a phone log and a monthly worksheet near the telephone and document contacts as they are received. At the end of a month, tally the information, document contacts and enter this information into the Ombudsman Monthly Worksheet for submission.

Chapter 11: Outreach

According to a 2006 Navy Inspector General Report to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO):

Approximately 75% of survey respondents indicated their command had an Ombudsman Program and over 80% percent stated that a fully supported program improves family and mission readiness. The vast majority of command leadership thought that their ombudsman was a key player in resolving family issues before significant command intervention was required. Additionally, those service and family members that utilized the information and referral services of their ombudsman overwhelmingly felt that he or she was effective in resolving their issue. Given that fact, it was surprising to find that less than 20% of service members/family members claimed they had utilized the assistance of their ombudsman. This dichotomy and apparent under-utilization may be attributed to the following main reasons: service and family members are either unfamiliar with the full extent of ombudsman capabilities, do not know their ombudsman, do not know that an ombudsman exists, or simply choose not to utilize their services.

One of the recommendations of the study was to:

Develop a comprehensive outreach and marketing plan to educate service and family members.

Ways to increase awareness of the Command Ombudsman Program at the local level are addressed in this chapter including how to:

- Identify Potential Target Audiences.
- Develop Outreach Messages.
- Review Outreach Tools and Strategies.

11.1 Target Audiences

Outreach is simply extending services to those who may be unaware of the functions of an ombudsman. Young military spouses, family members of single Sailors, or childcare providers of single parent service members may not be familiar with the military structure, resources, and communication techniques. Service members and their families may be unsure of ombudsman functions. A call to the command ombudsman might prevent or reduce the severity of a problem, so it is important to educate family members about the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

Ombudsmen should have the CO's concurrence as to who is served by the Command's Ombudsman Program. Once it is determined who the target audiences are, there are a variety of techniques that can used to reach them. Potential target audiences include:

- The command support team.
- Officers, chiefs, and enlisted personnel at the command.
- Spouses.
- Finance(e)s/girl/boyfriends of command service members.
- Parents and family members of service members attached to the command.
- Childcare providers for children of single parents.
- Families of Sailors temporarily assigned to the command.

There are a variety of ways to get the word out about services to each of these different groups.

11.1.1 Command Support Team

For this group, target information to what is in it for active duty personnel and their families rather than to the CST directly. When command personnel and their families are doing well, the service member is able to concentrate efforts on achieving the command's mission. A well accomplished mission reflects well on command leadership.

Try the following methods to reach this group:

- Invite leadership to attend OBT.
- Provide information on ombudsman accomplishments via in-person meetings and through a brief monthly report.

- Give a brief on the goals and accomplishments of the Command's Ombudsman Program at leadership meetings.
- Make yourself available to problem-solve or provide information.

11.1.2 Officers

The most effective way to provide information to officers is by attending wardroom meetings. Ask to brief the wardroom. Provide an overview of the Navy's Ombudsman Program, talk about how the program is implemented, and how the Command's Ombudsman Program has assisted command families.

11.1.3 Chief Petty Officers (CPO)

Chiefs are tasked with taking care of and training the Sailors who work for them. They may or may not be familiar with the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. The most effective way to market to the CPO community is through the Chief's Mess. The Command Master Chief or Chief of the Boat can be an ombudsman's strongest ally. Ask to brief the Chief's Mess. This group will be less interested in the overall Navy program and statistics, and more interested in ways the ombudsman can assist the Sailors and the families of Sailors who work for them.

While CMCs and COBs read message traffic and emails, take phone calls, and use other forms of communication, most indicate they prefer in-person contact.

11.1.4 Enlisted Personnel

Enlisted personnel vary in age and experience from the Sailor right out of boot camp to individuals with years of experience. This group of Sailors is generally mandated to attend indoctrination training (indoc) when reporting to the command and to attend periodic routine military training. These training opportunities are an ideal time for the command ombudsman to introduce themselves, explain the Command's Ombudsman Program, provide contact information, and get contact information from new arrivals.

Command personnel are also required to read the command's plan of the day/week/month. Most commands include the contact information for the ombudsman in this document. Talk with the XO about having a weekly or monthly ombudsman message in the POD. A description of the ombudsman program as well as tips and items of interest to active duty personnel could be included. Many of these items can be taken from the ombudsman newsletter.

When at the command stop and chat briefly with Sailors, introduce yourself, ask, *"How's it going?",* and provide a business card. Demonstrate your approachability.

11.1.5 Spouses

At larger installations, younger spouses may not utilize the many installation services, perhaps due to lack of awareness. They may not subscribe to a local newspaper or watch the television stations that run public service announcements, such as local cable channels. Information directed to the active duty service member may or may not reach the spouse at home.

Command ombudsmen are the best tool the Navy has for getting information to new spouses.

Command ombudsmen are probably the best tool the Navy has for reaching new spouses. Ombudsmen should be given contact information and can be proactive in reaching out to the new spouse. They do not have to wait for the spouse to contact them or other Navy organizations.

Ombudsmen for smaller commands may be able to contact each new spouse and welcome them as their Sailor reports. Ombudsmen also provide information through the newsletter, phone or email trees, and careline.

Experienced military spouses are often familiar with the ombudsman program and may contact the ombudsman for information even before their spouse reports to the command. They tend to use installation services and to read the installation newspaper and community newspaper. Briefings to wardroom spouses and family readiness groups are another effective way to outreach to spouses. A letter from the ombudsman should be included in the sponsor packet sent by the command to each Sailor prior to arrival. It is an excellent way to get information to spouses by mailing it directly to their home address.

11.1.6 Fiancé(e)s/Girl/Boyfriends

Guidance from the CO is needed before serving fiancé(e)s, girlfriends, or boyfriends. This group does not have military ID cards and therefore are unable to access military resources; however, community resources or referral information can be given if available. Many times the service member does not see these relationships as a long term commitment. Contact information for significant others may or may not be included on the official command roster; the service member would need to provide the ombudsman with the information and give permission for their significant other to be contacted.

11.1.7 Parents

Seek guidance from the CO or command POC about working with parents of Sailors. Most commands are fine with them receiving the ombudsman newsletter, having the number to the careline, and being invited to command functions if the Sailor gives permission. It is the Sailor's responsibility to provide the ombudsman with contact information. Use indoc briefs and the POD to let Sailors know they can add family members to the Official Command Roster.

11.1.8 Childcare Providers

Active duty single parents should provide ombudsman contact information to their childcare providers as well as giving a brief explanation of the command ombudsman's role. This is especially true for deploying commands. Civilian childcare providers often do not understand Navy structure, mission, resources, etc. They need a POC to address questions should the need arise. Ombudsmen can educate single parents through the POD, at indoc, pre-deployment briefs, and through a letter included in the sponsor packet.

11.1.9 Temporarily Assigned Personnel

Personnel may be temporarily assigned to commands for a variety of reasons. They may include:

- Hundreds of personnel in a carrier air group - multiple squadrons deploying on an aircraft carrier.
- The pilots, aircrew, and maintenance personnel assigned to a helicopter deploying with a single ship.
- Personnel who are augmenting a department at the command such as medical, engineering, or religious programming.
- Sailors from another country's Navy working collaboratively with U.S. forces.
- Midshipmen or others in training.
- Activated reservists.

Work with the command POC to identify temporarily assigned (TAD) personnel and families. Get directions from the CO regarding ombudsman responsibilities associated with TAD personnel. Most commands want to be good hosts and encourage the ombudsman to provide supportive services to these temporary command members. It

is especially helpful to provide information such as the number for the command ombudsman, careline, and ombudsman newsletter.

11.2 Define the Message

When communicating with others, it is important to have a clear message. Messages may be very simple such as providing the ombudsman's telephone number and telling people to call if they need assistance. Messages can change. Ombudsmen may want to send a message to define their role, to instruct callers to use the careline, if available for routine messages, or to advertise a community program or service.

When defining the message, it is important to address the question of, *"What's in it for me?"* People are more likely to listen to a message when they feel it is targeted specifically to them.

11.3 Tools and Strategies

Ombudsmen can use a variety of tools and tactics to provide information about the Command's Ombudsman Program. However, remember that today's consumers are inundated with messages everywhere they go. Select tools and tactics that are appropriate for the message and the audience. For example, a great deal of detailed information works better in a brochure than on a flyer, and emails are ineffective if the target audience lacks Internet access.

The range of tools is as unlimited as the imagination; but there are real world considerations against which brainstormed notions should be weighed. Among the criteria are:

- Budget.
- Return on Investment
- Ease of implementation.

Renting a blimp to fly outside the gate advertising the Command's Ombudsman Program may be a terrific attention-getter, but the cost is too high. Choose tools that can be accommodated within a budget. Also, choose tools and activities that are practical, and require minimum time and energy to put into place.

Some ideas may be relatively inexpensive, but may not reach target audiences with the necessary consistency or impact. Marketing tools fall into four broad categories:

1. Audio-visual.
2. Internet.
3. Print media.
4. In-person.

11.3.1 Audiovisual Outreach Strategies

Audiovisual tools include:

- Video tapes.
- 1MC (command's internal intercom) announcements.
- Bulletin boards.
- PowerPoint presentations.

Try the following audiovisual strategies:

- Work with the command or base personnel to produce Public Service Announcements (PSA)s about the Navy Family Ombudsman Program. This PSA can be used at command indoc when the ombudsman is unavailable.
- Ombudsmen for a ship can periodically go to the command and make a 1MC announcement.
- Ask to have a bulletin board dedicated to the Command's Ombudsman Program. In addition to ombudsman contact information, post information about military and community resources. Make the board colorful and change it often. This can be particularly effective if the board is posted in a passageway where Sailors have to wait (i.e. in the food line, outside medical, dental, or the ship's store.)
- Create a brief PowerPoint presentation that could be shown before movies or during command training.

Produce a short Public Service Announcement (PSA) about the Navy Family Ombudsman Program to use at command indoc. This can be used when the ombudsman is unavailable to be there in person.

11.3.2 Internet Strategies

Use the Internet to:

- Post a web page and/or link to command's web site.
- Create electronic newsletters.

- Email.
- Instant message.

Web Page

Many commands have a web page. Consider including a section for information about the Command Ombudsman Program, or ombudsmen can create their own web page. The challenge with web pages is that they are passive – people have to be trained to go to them. Take into consideration the following materials for online content:

- Comply with OPSEC requirements.
- Have all material approved by the command.
- Ensure the page is uncluttered, easy to navigate, and loads quickly even on slower computers.
- Post contact information including phone numbers, address, directions, and hours for any programs or services posted on the web site.
- Announce program dates and times for workshops and classes advertised on the site.
- Provide links to articles of interests to command families. Make sure all web links are command approved prior to listing
- Post any relevant newsworthy items.
- Provide links to sites such as NMCRS, FFSC, Red Cross, etc. However, do not post so many that it is overwhelming.
- Be sure the web site is regularly maintained and updated.

Electronic Newsletter

More and more ombudsmen are producing an electronic newsletter because it is less expensive to produce, saves on postage, appeals to the Internet savvy, and the distribution list is easy to update. Hard copy and electronic newsletters can be used to:

- Announce command events.
- Provide information about family readiness group events.
- Introduce agency and community services.
- Welcome new arrivals.
- Ensure deployment readiness.

- Motivate and encourage.

Keep sentences and paragraphs short. Use color and graphics sparingly to make the newsletter easy to open and to read. Remember, most people do not scroll down to completely read a long newsletter, so put the most important information at the top and keep it short! It is better to send a short, simple, electronic newsletter that people are more likely to read, than a long newsletter that seldom is opened. See *Chapter 5: Newsletters* for more information on newsletter development.

Email

Customized emails are another great way to use the Internet. They are also an excellent way to keep in contact with the command support team, colleagues, family readiness group leaders, community organizations, etc.

- Create distribution lists and send information about topics of interest.
- Remember to keep it professional looking and easy to open.
- Do not send attachments. Many sites can no longer receive them due to security concerns, and many who do receive attachments report that they do not take the time to download them.
- Keep messages short. The receiver should never have to scroll down to read a message.
- Promptly remove anyone who requests to be removed from the distribution list.
- When sending out emails use blind copy correspondence (BCC) to avoid Privacy Act violations.

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging is a way for remote families to feel connected. Some web sites host chat rooms that allow people from a command to "virtually" meet for information and support. This tool can be useful, but be careful as IMs are real time and not prescreened so OPSEC can be easily violated. It can also be hard to keep track of more than a handful of instant messengers at once.

11.3.3 Print Media Strategies

Ombudsmen can use a variety of print media including posters, flyers, newsletters, and business cards to reach out to others. In addition, the installation and community newspapers can expand print outreach efforts. Whatever the media, the quality of print products is critical. Whether a command has trained graphics staff to produce materials or the ombudsmen produce them, there are several key elements in producing quality materials:

- The information must be accurate.
- High-quality graphic design integrates words and images.
- The product must be attractive, professional, and easy-to-read. It must grab the reader's attention at a glance.
- The look and quality of all materials should be standardized so it is easily identifiable. Think trademark, logo, and/or slogan.
- Include a call for action. How is the reader to respond? *Contact* is an example of a call for action.

Posters at the command, flyers, letters to new command personnel, and the ombudsman newsletter are excellent ways to get a message out. Create and carry business cards. On the front of the business card, list contact information; on the back provide a brief overview of services or list the *Ombudsman Code of Ethics.*

11.3.4 In-person Strategies

The public relations concept is rooted in the delivery of a consistent pattern of information to target audiences through direct contact. In-person strategies Ombudsmen are likely to use include:

- Personal networking.
- Briefings.
- Attendance at installation functions.

Networking

Networking means establishing relationships with key target audience members. It is outreach by wandering around - meeting with the chain of command, lunching with spouses, participating in FRG meetings, attending award ceremonies, and command social events.

A picture is worth a thousand words. The more visible ombudsmen are within the command the more likely they will be kept informed, utilized, and supported.

Briefings

Briefings are another excellent public relations tool. Briefings are simply prepared presentations to target audiences. Successful briefing techniques include:

- Conduct briefings in small groups for greater impact.
- Provide written material for participants to take with them. Use quality, designed graphics (slides, charts) for added interest. Package them in an attractive manner so they can be easily accessible for future reference.
- Keep the presentation concise; leave time for questions and answers.
- Hold the briefing in a comfortable, well-arranged room, whenever possible.

Briefings enable ombudsmen to gain support for their program and build referrals while disseminating accurate, and current information.

Outreach

Occasionally, set up an information table at the command. Create an eye catching display. If funding is available, purchase inexpensive token items to use in your outreach efforts. A magnet with the careline number, pencils, rulers, emery boards, and sticky notes can be purchased relatively inexpensively. Obtain free materials from the FFSC, MWR, NEX, and Military OneSource. The command FRG may be willing to purchase give-away items for the ombudsman's use from their account. Something as simple as a bowl of candy can attract attention. Be warm and friendly. Ask and answer questions. An ombudsman who takes the time to do outreach within the command will be perceived as someone who cares and who could be called upon for assistance when needed.

11.4 Summary

Command ombudsmen are a wonderful resource. However, if family members are unaware of services the ombudsmen's potential is minimized. Use a sampling of the strategies covered in this chapter to inform command families of the Navy Family Ombudsman Program.

Chapter 12: Ombudsman Readiness

It is important for ombudsmen to maintain good emotional health and some sort of balance in their life. There must be a portion of an ombudsman's life in which they can take, rather than give. This chapter focuses on preventing ombudsman burnout. It also provides a checklist to ensure ombudsmen have everything they need to begin their role as command ombudsman. Specifically, this chapter covers:

- The Difference between Temporary Stress and Burnout.
- Strategies for Preventing Burnout.
- A Checklist to Assess Readiness to be a Command Ombudsman.

12.1 Burnout or Compassion Fatigue

An ombudsman's willingness to volunteer is admirable and of great value to the Navy. COs do not want or expect ombudsmen to invest so much time and energy volunteering, that their own family is negatively impacted or that their personal health suffers. Obviously, ombudsmen must have the support of their family if they are to succeed. It is unreasonable to cause one's family to feel neglected by taking on the role of command ombudsman. Also of concern is the possibility of burnout, a common phenomenon in professions that help or care for people. Anyone working too hard can experience burnout, but people working in human services, including ombudsmen, are prone to focus on those they serve and overlook their own needs.

Some believe the term compassion fatigue has replaced the more familiar term burnout. Others believe the two terms are not synonymous. Burnout is associated with stress and hassles involved in one's work. It is cumulative, is relatively predictable, and frequently a vacation or change of job helps a great deal; while compassion fatigue can occur within a short period of time when working with people who have been severely traumatized.

12.2 Symptoms

The results of minor cumulative events over a long period of time or more significant events over a short period of time are similar. Both burnout and compassion fatigue refer to a physical, emotional, and spiritual fatigue or exhaustion that takes over a person. It causes a decline in his or her ability to experience joy, or to feel and care for others. Both are a one-way street, in which individuals are giving a great deal of energy and compassion to others, yet are not able to get enough back to reassure themselves that the world is a hopeful place. The human body reacts in three stages:

Stage 1: Alarm

This is the initial stimulus. The body's physical reactions are automatic. The body recognizes stress and prepares for fight or flight. This response was a survival technique in primitive people to protect them from danger. Whatever the stimulus or stressor is, the body readies itself for potential harm.

During this stage, physiological reactions include:

- Respiration increase.
- Breathing quickens and is shallow.
- Heart beats faster.
- Stomach muscles release hormones and chemicals in increasing amounts.
- Pupils dilate.
- Perspiration increases.
- Tiny capillaries constrict.

Psychological reactions include:

- Restlessness.
- Anxiety.
- Fear.
- Anger.

Chronic stress develops when the body is unable to fight or flee and remains in a powerless situation.

Step 2: Resistance

The body tries to cope and adapt to stress, and begins the process of repairing any damage caused by stress. If the stress can be overcome, the body repairs the damage, the physical signs of stress disappear, and resistance to the source of stress is increased. If the stress continues, a person may:

- Deny feelings.
- Become emotionally isolated.
- Narrow interests or lose interest in everything.

If the stress is not dealt with, a person is very likely to progress into stage three.

Stage 3 - Exhaustion

If there is no relief from stress, and the body and mind cannot repair the damage, the result can be emotional and physical problems including:

- Chronic feelings of frustration, anger, depression.
- Interpersonal problems with co-workers, friends, and family.
- Health problems.
- Declining performance.
- Substance abuse.
- Feeling of meaninglessness.

12.3 Preventing Burnout

There are literally hundreds of books and articles about stress management and preventing burnout. The following ideas are adapted from <http://www.coping.org/>, a web site that has information on managing a variety of life's stressors. The information is authored by James J. Messina, Ph.D. and Constance M. Messina, Ph.D. Some tips to prevent burnout include:

- Start the role as volunteer command ombudsman with the information and tools needed to do the job. Be informed of the expectations, scope of responsibilities, training opportunities, supervision if any, job description, workload, and benefits.
- Create goals and measure success. Goals such as updating the careline each week, documenting phone calls, producing a monthly newsletter, improving

public speaking skills, and submitting monthly report data on time are all measurable and achievable.

- Maintain personal growth through hobbies, religion, taking classes, and through paid and volunteer work.
- Develop an active life with a variety of interests.
- Surround oneself with uplifting colors, pictures, and treasures.
- Set limits and know how involved to become with extended family, colleagues, command families, other volunteer roles, etc.
- Encourage and practice good communication skills.
- Find ways to decompress such as meditation, exercise, or a warm bath.
- Maintain good physical health.
- Build a support system with those who can help find solutions.

12.4 RESOURCES

Whatever burnout prevention strategies are used, ombudsmen should always keep in mind that help is available. Do not hesitate to contact any of the following for assistance:

- Fleet and Family Support Center.
- Chaplains.
- The command support team.
- Co-ombudsmen.
- Squadron, regional, fleet, and force ombudsmen.

FYI

To learn more about stress management, burnout, and compassion fatigue, check out the following web sites:

- America's Continuing Education Network <http://www.ace-network.com/index.html>.
- American Academy of Family Physicians <http://www.aafp.org/fpm/20000400/39over.html>.
- Department of Defense Stress Awareness <http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/stressawareness03/>.

- Military OneSource <www.militaryonesource.com/>.
- Navy Knowledge Online <https://www.nko.navy.mil/>.

12.5 Readiness Checklist

The following checklist assesses readiness to be a command ombudsman.

Readiness Checklist

1. Do I know my ***Commanding Officer's priorities?***

   ❑ No
   ❑ Yes. They are: _____

   _____

2. Do I know the name, telephone number and email address of the ***Command POC*** for the ombudsman program?

   ❑ No
   ❑ Yes. It is: _____

   _____

3. Have I completed a ***volunteer agreement*** *for Appropriated Activities or Nonappropriated Fund Instrumentalities* (DD 2793). Access at: <http://www.dior.whs.mil/forms/DD2793.PDF>.

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

4. Do I have an ***appointment letter***? Does it include information about:
   a. Ombudsman Basic Training dates and who to contact to register.
   b. The availability of the Commander Naval Installations Command (CNIC) online orientation.
   c. The Fleet and Family Support website <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil/>.
   d. The length of appointment and whether or not there is a probationary period.
   e. Duties and responsibilities.

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

   I need information on the following: _____

5. Have I been registered by the command at the ***ombudsman registry***? <www.ffsp.navy.mil>. Telephone number 866-345-8179.?

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

   Notes: _____

   _____

6. Have I written an ***introductory letter*** to include in the ombudsman newsletter?

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

   Notes: _____

   _____

7. Do I have the codes, know how to change the ***careline message,*** and have I drafted my first message for recording?

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

   Notes: _____

   _____

8. Do I know the telephone number of the ***ombudsman telephone line*** and have I recorded a professional message on it?

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

   Notes: _____

   _____

9. Do I have an ***ombudsman pin***? Pins are available at the Navy Exchange Uniform Shop if the command does not provide one.

   ❑ No ❑ Yes

10. Do I have an ***ombudsman name tag*** which should be provided by the command?

    ❑ No ❑ Yes

11. Do I have ***ombudsman business cards?*** Is the command providing them or am I going to make my own? What information will you include on your card?

    ❑ No ❑ Yes

    Notes: _____

    _____

12. Do I have access to a ***computer*** and the ***Internet***?

❑ No ❑ Yes

13. Have I taken the CNIC ***online orientation*** if it will be more than six weeks before taking Ombudsman Basic Training? Information is available at <www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

14. Do I have a ***resource list*** that includes telephone numbers and basic services provided by local military and community agencies?

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

15. Do I know what types of information I am ***required to report*** and to whom? See *Chapter Six: Crisis Calls* in the *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.*

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

16. Have I discussed ***confidentiality*** requirements with my commanding officer?

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

17. Can I abide by the ***Ombudsman Code of Ethics***? See *Chapter Two: Professionalism* in the *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.*

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

18. Do I have my own copy of the ***Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual?***

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

19. Have I read ***OPNAVINST 1750.1 F Navy Family Ombudsman Program?*** The instruction is included in *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual.*

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

20. Within the last three years, have I attended, or am I registered to attend, ***Ombudsman Basic Training?*** Contact the local Fleet and Family Support Center or <www.ffsp.navy.mil> to get class dates and locations.

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

21. Do I know when and where my local or regional ***ombudsman assembly*** meets? Contact the local Fleet and Family Support Center to get this information.

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

22. Do I know how to complete an ***expense form*** (SF ll64) and when and where to submit it? Forms can be found at <http://www.dior.whs.mil/forms/SF1164.PDF>.

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

23. Do I have a current ***command roster*** and do I know how often and from whom I will receive updates?

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

24. Am I ***excited*** and maybe a bit ***nervous*** about taking on the important role of command ombudsman? Great! I understand the importance of this position and I will do a wonderful job!

❑ No ❑ Yes

Notes: _____

_____

If you have a fair number of *no's* on your checklist, continue to do your homework and preparation before you execute your command ombudsman duties.

12.6 Summary

Many military spouses identify being a Command Ombudsman as the single most effective way of learning about the Navy and understanding the challenges of their spouse's chosen career. They describe their volunteer experience as extremely satisfying and often opt to again take on the role at their spouse's next command. It is one way *the Navy takes care of its own.*

Chapter 1: FFSC/Ombudsmen Working Together

Local command ombudsmen can serve as a strong and informed link between the Fleet and Family Support Center and Navy families. Conversely, ombudsmen can benefit from the guidance, assistance, and interaction with the FFSC's professional staff. SECNAVINST 1754.1 series lists support for command programs such as the ombudsman program as a core program and service of Fleet and Family Support Programs and authorizes ombudsmen to request services from FFSCs. This chapter highlights this collaborative working relationship. Topics covered include:

- FFSC Roles with the Navy's Family Ombudsman Program.
- Ombudsman Roles with the FFSC.

1.1 Fleet and Family Support Center's Roles with the Navy Family Ombudsman Program

The Navy Family Ombudsman Program and the FFSC enjoy a relationship that serves as a source of program creativity, enthusiasm, and mutual support and appreciation. There are many ways the FFSC can facilitate this optimal collaboration.

A member of the FFSC staff is assigned as the ombudsman program coordinator. The coordinator serves as an advisor/consultant to local ombudsmen, the ombudsman assembly, and to commands, in addition to coordinating Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT). The FFSC ombudsman coordinator does not serve as the chairperson for the local assembly. Additionally, other FFSC staff members will provide advice to ombudsmen regarding interventions and approaches to be used with families.

In support of the ombudsman program, the FFSC shall:

- Maintain a current roster of local ombudsmen, including Navy Reserve ombudsmen and Navy Recruiting ombudsmen.
- Provide space for ombudsmen assembly meetings, if available.
- Provide personal support and counseling for ombudsmen, if needed.
- Provide office space, supplies, and assistance with newsletter preparation for ombudsmen, if requested.
- Coordinate advanced training for ombudsmen assemblies that support the ombudsmen's educational and informational needs.
- Consistent with other FFSC priorities, provides assistance to local ombudsmen.
- Provide program guidance, policy clarification, and recommendations for ombudsmen recognition to commands, if requested.
- If issues arise that appear to be negatively affecting the local program/family members, the FFSC director/FFSC ombudsman coordinator can notify the respective command. By providing accurate and timely information, the respective commanding officer (CO) may take the appropriate action.
- Provide information and forms regarding Navy and community resources, including updates and changes.
- Be a source of many services for Navy families, thereby serving as a major referral resource for ombudsmen.
- Refer command families to their ombudsmen and provide information to new arrivals about the Navy Ombudsman Program.

In addition the FFSC may:

- Include the ombudsman assembly chair or representative in new FFSC staff members' orientation.
- Invite commanding officers, executive officers, command master chiefs and their spouses to attend FFSC orientation meetings with their ombudsmen.

1.2 Ombudsmen Roles with the Fleet and Family Support Center

Ombudsmen can assist the FFSC to better serve command families in a variety of ways. They can:

- Promote a positive image of the FFSC among command and family members.
- Disseminate information about FFSC programs and services through the command careline, ombudsman newsletter, email, and at meetings with command leadership and family members.
- Provide a screening function with families and handle many of the minor problems, especially information requests.
- Provide feedback on FFSC programs as well as how the local FFSC is perceived, in general, by command families.
- Identify needs which may serve as the basis for new programs or services developed by the FFSC.
- Serve as focus group or panel members when information about Navy families is requested by organizations.
- Provide media interviews when the FFSC is asked to coordinate such interviews with Navy family members.

Ombudsmen are also:

- Encouraged to develop a working relationship with their local FFSC ombudsman program coordinator.
- Encouraged to schedule an orientation tour of the FFSC to meet the staff and familiarize themselves with the local FFSC's programs and services.
- Welcome to contact an FFSC counselor to discuss personal or professional concerns regarding their role as command ombudsmen.

Chapter 2: Training Ombudsmen

Training command ombudsmen is a key function of the FFSC. This chapter outlines the variety of training available to command ombudsmen including:

- Orientation.
- Ombudsman Basic Training.
- Advanced training.
- Ombudsman assemblies.

2.1 Orientation

A strong orientation to the roles and responsibilities of a command ombudsman provides a strong foundation on which the command ombudsman grows and develops into an effective service provider. Training starts with the commanding officer's guidance and should include:

- Information about job duties.
- Assignment of a command POC.
- Reporting requirements and procedures.
- Guidelines for working within the command support team.
- Expectations and goals for the ombudsman program at the command.

The *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual,* which includes a copy of *The Navy Family Ombudsman Program Instruction, OPNAVINST 1750.1F,* should be provided by the command and reviewed by ombudsmen before taking on the role. The *Manual* is also available at <http: //www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

2.1.1 Online Orientation

The Ombudsman Program Manager maintains an online orientation for ombudsmen who are unable to attend Ombudsman Basic Training within the first six weeks of appointment. The purpose of this online orientation training is to provide new ombudsmen with an overview of the program. However, upon completion of the online training ombudsmen are not certified, trained ombudsmen. Ombudsmen are not considered trained until they complete Ombudsman Basic Training. Ombudsmen Basic Training schedules are available at <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

2.2 Ombudsman Basic Training (OBT)

Ombudsman Basic Training is required of all ombudsmen. It provides information to properly execute the duties of command ombudsmen. Ombudsman Basic Training is fifteen hours long and includes nine training modules.

1. Introduction to the Navy Family Ombudsman Program, History, Structure, Ombudsman Roles.
2. Professionalism, Code of Ethics and Confidentiality.
3. Command Support Team and the Family Readiness Group.
4. Information and Referral.
5. Communication Skills.
6. Handling Crisis Calls.
7. Disasters.
8. Mobilization and Deployment.
9. Managing Your Program.

Only CNIC certified trainers are authorized to instruct Ombudsman Basic Training. Trainers must:

- Be the spouse of an active duty or reserve Sailor (officer/enlisted) or a paid staff member of an FFSC.
- Have completed OBT and have two years experience.
- Be recommended by their spouse's CO. FFSC staff must be recommended by the FFSC director.
- If applicable, have command-authorized funding for travel and per diem.

FFSC ombudsmen coordinators are encouraged to support ombudsmen who want to become certified trainers. This is an excellent opportunity to recognize talented ombudsmen, to utilize their talents, and to allow ombudsmen who have a desire to give back to their ombudsman community the chance to do so. The Ombudsman Program Manager certifies Regional Train the Trainers whose purpose is to train and certify trainers to teach OBT.

In locations where training is not available, a command may issue invitational travel orders to enable the ombudsman the opportunity to complete training at another installation. To obtain a list of approved training sites go to <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>. The student must bring a command provided copy of the *Navy Family Ombudsman Program Manual* which includes the participants course book and OPNAVINST 1750.1F.

FFSCs support OBT by:

- Coordinating and offering the standardized ombudsman basic training course per assessment of local requirements.
- Advertising the training schedule.
- Providing or arranging classroom space.
- Ensuring there are enough local CNIC certified ombudsman trainers to meet the needs of local commands and their ombudsmen.
- Ensuring that only certified OBT instructors teach the course. Only those trainers certified by Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) to instruct OBT will do so. The use of guest speakers is inappropriate during OBT. However, guest speakers are permitted during advanced training.
- The student's sponsoring command is responsible for printing and issuing all materials prior to the first day of class.
- Reporting non-completion of OBT to the sponsoring command and explaining the details.

2.3 Advanced Training

Advanced, or ongoing training, is considered to be any training received by an ombudsman after the completion of OBT. Experienced ombudsmen and FFSC ombudsmen coordinators suggest that at a minimum, ombudsmen receive training on:

- American Red Cross.
- Casualty Assistance Calls Program.
- Crisis Response.
- Disaster Preparedness
- Deployment Readiness.
- Domestic Abuse.
- Legal.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.
- Media Relations.
- Newsletters.
- Operations Security.
- Personal Financial Management Program.
- Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.
- Sexual Assault Prevention.
- Suicide Prevention.
- TRICARE.

2.4 Ombudsman Assemblies

Local ombudsman assemblies frequently serve as venues for ongoing training of ombudsmen. An ombudsman assembly is a monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly meeting of all command ombudsmen in a given region. It is established by the sponsoring command (base commander, CO, area coordinator) in support of tenant commands. Each sponsoring command has a local instruction that governs its assembly's operation. The assembly functions under the supervision and guidance of the sponsor. Functions of the assembly may include:

- Serving as a resource for professional development of local ombudsmen by arranging topical training.
- Serving as a liaison for policy discussion and clarification by appropriate local authorities regarding issues of interest to ombudsmen and command family members.
- Assisting commands to recognize/show appreciation to their ombudsmen.
- In the absence of a local FFSC, maintaining a current roster of area ombudsmen.
- Other functions as directed by the sponsoring command such as providing resource handbooks, publication of a newsletter, and maintaining a local calendar of events.

COs, XOs, CMCs, chaplains, and their spouses are also encouraged to attend ombudsmen assemblies.

Because of the structure and diversity of Navy communities and installations, there may be more than one assembly within a geographic area. Assemblies are not hierarchical and one does not have authority over another regardless of the rank of the sponsor. Local commanders may decide that one area assembly consisting of all ombudsmen within the geographic location is sufficient.

Assemblies are information-sharing groups and do not function as social clubs. Assemblies will not maintain treasuries or collect dues for the purpose of sponsoring assembly activities. Each sponsoring command should have a local ombudsman assembly instruction. An example is included in Appendix Two of this *Manual.*

Assembly leadership should be selected and appointed for a specified term, in writing, by the sponsoring command. A sample description of the duties of an assembly chairperson is also included in Appendix B of this *Manual.*

Unless otherwise directed by a local ombudsman assembly instruction, the FFSCs primary responsibility with local ombudsmen assemblies is to coordinate topical speakers for meetings.

2.5 Training Funds

Local commands may reimburse the ombudsman for costs of childcare and mileage incurred during training. To be eligible for reimbursement, the ombudsman must have a letter of appointment and have signed the volunteer agreement.

Budget permitting, commands may fund associated travel, berthing, meals, and incidental expenses for ombudsmen to attend non-local training. Expenses may be reimbursed or travel advances may be authorized per Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR).

Chapter 3: Marketing

Marketing is often described as selling a product or service to a defined target audience; but it can also be described as reaching out to populations served by the FFSC to inform them of programs and services they may find beneficial. In addition to being a population the FFSC wants to serve, local command ombudsmen also provide a vehicle through which the FFSC can reach out to military spouses. Military spouses can be among the most challenging populations to reach for many organizations, including the FFSC. This chapter covers:

- Marketing to Ombudsmen.
- Marketing Tools.

3.1 Introduction

The FFSC has an overall marketing plan. In addition, each program and service provided by the FFSC has a CNIC-provided program guide that includes a chapter or section on how to market that particular program or service. Please refer to these guides to learn more about general marketing concepts, marketing plans, target audiences, and marketing tools in general. The focus of the following information is to describe ways to market directly to ombudsmen and to the families they serve.

3.2 Marketing to Ombudsmen

Ombudsmen are a fun and easy group to access. They typically are information-gatherers by nature. They use base services, read base publications, and are tuned in to what's going on in the military and civilian community, the Navy, and in the world. Military identification card-carrying ombudsmen are entitled to personally use all FFSC programs and services. They are also in the position to tell command Sailors and their families, and command leadership and their families, about FFSC programs and services.

Some FFSCs target programs specifically to local ombudsmen such as ombudsmen support or discussion groups. Ombudsmen may be invited to participate in programs that are not typically open to military spouses, but may be helpful in the volunteer role of command ombudsmen.

Ombudsmen should always be invited to check out a program for themselves so they feel comfortable referring command family members to attend. Some of these types of programs include:

- Parenting classes.
- Family Employment Readiness workshops.
- Transition Assistance workshops.
- Relocation Assistance seminars.
- Stress or anger management sessions.
- Military Spouse Orientation.

3.3 Marketing Tools

A variety of tools is available to reach out to ombudsmen. They include:

- **Regular mail or email.** Access to ombudsmen is available as a current roster of local ombudsmen is maintained by the FFSC. Their names, email addresses, and phone numbers are on the roster. An electronic weekly or bi-weekly newsletter or graphically enhanced email could be sent to advertise a particular program or service. Maintain a distribution list to send short emails about upcoming events or to solicit feedback from ombudsmen.
- **Web site.** Dedicate a section of the FFSC or installation web site to local command ombudsmen. Advertise upcoming training opportunities, link to local assembly leadership, provide an opportunity for ombudsmen to contact the FFSC via email, and list useful links.
- **Assemblies.** The FFSC ombudsman coordinator or other representative of the FFSC should attend every assembly meeting and ask to be included on the agenda to make brief announcements. In addition, a table should be set up with pamphlets and flyers about FFSC programs and other useful information.
- **Materials.** Whenever possible, supply local command ombudsmen with bulk copies of materials they can distribute to family members. Copies of flyers of upcoming events, token items such as magnets or pens with the FFSC logo and

telephone number can be shared with families at FRG meetings and at the command.

- **Ombudsman newsletters.** Ombudsmen are always on the lookout for items for their newsletter, but often have limited space. Many FFSCs shrink program flyers so four will fit onto one page and the ombudsman can simply insert the flyer into their newsletter - easily advertising four FFSC programs. FFSC staff can also write short articles that can be reprinted in the ombudsman newsletter.
- **Careline messages.** Ombudsmen who maintain carelines are encouraged to update them at least weekly. Some FFSCs write careline messages ombudsmen can simply record. Some centers print four to six of these careline messages to a page and distribute via the ombudsman assembly or send via email. A sample message follows:

  Kids, dogs, work, deployment got you feeling overwhelmed? The Fleet and Family Support Center offers a series of time and stress management sessions for Navy spouses. The first session of four sessions begins Thursday, 22 September and meets from five to six p.m. at the FFSC. Free childcare is available. Call XXX-XXXX for more info or to sign up.

- **Resource guide.** Most FFSCs create a list of local Navy and community organizations that provide services military families may find beneficial. FFSCs should share this list of resources with the local ombudsmen community. Provide multiple copies so that the ombudsmen can share with their command support team and command families.
- **Base newspaper.** FFSC staff could work with the editor of the base newspaper to ensure articles of interest to ombudsmen and military families are always included. New programs and services, a "meet the staff" or "meet the ombudsman" column, articles about the ombudsman program, resource updates, ombudsman recognition, and press releases about upcoming ombudsman training and assembly meetings can be distributed via the base newspaper.

FFSCs, ombudsmen and command leadership strive to get information into the hands of Sailors and their families — thus preventing problems, improving quality of life, and strengthening Sailors and families who support the Navy's mission.

Appendix A
Acronyms

ARC	American Red Cross
ANFA	Affected Navy Family Assistance
BEQ	Bachelor Enlisted Quarters
BOQ	Bachelor Officer Quarters
BUPERS	Bureau of Naval Personnel
CACO	Casualty Assistance Calls Officer
CACP	Casualty Assistance Calls Program
CBQ	Combined Bachelors Quarters
CDO	Command Duty Officer
CFS	Command Financial Specialist
CMC	Command Master Chief
CMCSLC	Command Master Chief Spouse Leadership Course
CNIC	Commander Navy Installations Command
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COB	Chief of the Boat
COT	Certified Ombudsman Trainer
CSLC	Command Spouse Leadership Course
DEERS	Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System
DFAS	Defense Finance Accounting Service
DOD	Department of Defense
FFSC	Fleet and Family Support Center
FFSP	Fleet and Family Support Program
FRG	Family Readiness Group
FRP	Fleet Response Plan

GMT	General Military Training
IA	Individual Augmentee
I&R	Information and Referral
ITO	Invitational Travel Orders
IRR	Individual Ready Reserve
LES	Leave and Earning Statement
NCIS	Naval Criminal Investigative Service
NMCRS	Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society
OAL	Ombudsman-at-Large
OBT	Ombudsman Basic Training
OOD	Officer of the Deck
OPAG	Ombudsman Program Advisory Group
OPSEC	Operation Security
PAO	Public Affairs Officer
PCO	Prospective Commanding Officer
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PFM	Personal Financial Management
PNOK	Primary Next of Kin
POC	Point of Contact
POD	Plan of the Day
POM	Plan of the Month
POW	Plan of the Week
PRD	Projected Rotation Date
PSA	Public Service Announcement
PSA	Personnel Support Activity
PSD	Personnel Support Detachment
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PXO	Perspective Executive Officer
ROAB	Regional Ombudsman Advisory Board
ROTT	Regional Ombudsman Trainer the Trainer
RTT	Regional Train the Trainer
SELRES	Selected Reserve

Appendix B
Sample Ombudsman Assembly Instruction

SAMPLE OMBUDSMAN ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTION

(COMMAND)INST 1750.XX
(Code)
(Date)

(COMMAND) INSTRUCTION 1750.XX

Subj: OMBUDSMAN ASSEMBLY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 1750.1F

Encl: (1) Ombudsman Assembly Chairperson Description of Duties

1. Purpose. To provide guidance and establish procedures governing the organization and operation of COMXXXGRU 5 Ombudsman Assembly.

2. Cancellation. (COMMAND)INST 1750.XX.)

3. Background. The Chief of Naval Operations established the Navy Family Ombudsman Program on 14 September 1970. Reference (a) contains program requirements and guidelines for execution of this program throughout Navy. The Command Family Ombudsman serves as a communication link between the command, command family members, and as an information and referral specialist.

4. Discussion. The Ombudsman Assembly exists to support the local, appointed command ombudsmen. As a non-policy making and non-supervisory entity, it serves primarily as a forum for discussion among the membership and to help provide continuing training opportunities. It is also an advocate for Navy's mission and Navy family members.

5. Assembly Membership. Membership in the Ombudsman Assembly, per reference (a) and this instruction, shall include the appointed ombudsmen of all commands resident at the station, including local tenant and afloat commands, and any other commands in the area which need support, such as the naval hospital. Membership begins when individuals submit their ombudsman letter of appointment from the sponsoring command and will continue until a notice of termination is received from the command. Commanding officers, executive officers, command master chiefs, chaplains, and their respective spouses, are encouraged to attend all Ombudsman Assembly meetings and activities. Other interested parties are invited to attend.

6. Action. (Issuing command) will:

a. Appoint an action officer as liaison with the assembly.

b. Appoint an Ombudsman Assembly Chairperson, in writing, for the designated term of office.

c. Ensure the assembly has a suitable place to conduct meetings.

d. Provide administrative support, including administrative supplies and printing services as deemed appropriate.

7. Ombudsman Assembly Chairperson. The Assembly Chairperson must be a current or former ombudsman. The Fleet and Family Support Center should not serve as the Assembly Chairperson, but can serve in an advisory capacity. Term of office will be for one year but may be renewed for another term at the discretion of the issuing command.

8. Fleet and Family Support Center Ombudsman Coordinator will serve as an advisor to the assembly, maintain an up-to-date ombudsman recall list, and provide this list to the assembly chair as it is modified. Additional support will be determined by [issuing command] and may include:

a. Assistance in planning continual training for ombudsmen.

b. Agenda recommendations for monthly assembly meetings.

c. Offering program guidance and policy clarification in consultation with the Ombudsman Program Manager, as applicable.

d. Additional, appropriate assistance as requested by commanding officers/ombudsmen.

9. Assembly Meetings and Activities. The assembly is not a policy making body and in no way will interfere with the individual command/ombudsman relationship or duties.

a. The Ombudsman Assembly shall meet monthly for the purpose of sharing information and as a resource for advanced ombudsman training and other functions as directed by sponsoring commands (e.g., provision of area resource handbooks and materials, publication of a newsletter, and maintenance of a calendar of events).

b. The assembly may make recommendations about community matters that affect the well being of area families. The group may not petition or actively and aggressively protest command-initiated action or policy.

10. Ombudsman Recognition. The assembly is authorized to assist commands to recognize and show appreciation of all command ombudsmen, per reference (a). The Fleet and Family Support Center Ombudsman coordinator may be invited to work closely with the assembly and the commands to provide appropriate recognition of the ombudsmen in conjunction with Ombudsman Appreciation Day, 14 September, and on other occasions as appropriate.

(COMMAND)INST 1750.XX

J. A. BOSS
Captain, U.S. Navy

Distribution:

SAMPLE OMBUDSMAN ASSEMBLY CHAIRPERSON DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

1. Responsibilities:

a. Practice and enforce application of the Ombudsman Code of Ethics during all assembly meetings and activities.

b. Preside over all meetings of the ombudsman assembly.

c. Call special meetings as required.

d. Provide information and support to the area ombudsmen.

e. Team with the Fleet and Family Support Center ombudsman coordinator to plan and schedule monthly training to meet the needs of the assembly. Make sure that prospective speakers/trainers have the necessary education and experience to meet training requirements. This includes a clear understanding of OPNAVINST 1750.1F policy regarding the topic.

f. Prepare and distribute an agenda for all meetings.

g. Serve as a member of all standing committees and special committees deemed necessary by [issuing command].

h. Review all assembly correspondence prior to distribution and maintain copies on file.

i. Ensure the assembly is represented at meetings pertaining to quality of life issues that directly affect family members, per approval of the commander.

j. Coordinate with the Fleet and Family Support Center to perform orientation of all newly appointed ombudsmen.

2. Chairperson qualifications:

a. Current ombudsman possessing a working knowledge of the military chain of command and lifestyle.

b. Good judgment, sound leadership skills, and demonstrated ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

Appendix C
Resources

Disaster Prepardedness

- Casualty Assistance Calls Program <http://www.npc.navy.mil/COmmand Support/Casualty Assistance/>.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>.
- Homeland Security < http://www.ready.gov/ >
- National Center for PTSD <http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/>.
- The National Organization for Victim's Assistance <http://www.trynova.org/>.
- Affected Navy Family Assistance <http://www.cnic.navy.mil/cnic_hq_site/ANFA/index.htm>.
- The American Red Cross <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/>.

Financial Resources

- Consumer Information Center <www.pueblo.gsa.gov>.
- Defense Finance Accounting Service <http://www.dod.mil/dfas/>.
- Federal Trade Commission <www.ftc.gov>.
- Internal Revenue Service <www.irs.gov>.
- National Better Business Bureau <www.bbb.com>.
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society <http://www.nmcrs.org/services.html>.
- Women, Infants, Children Program (WIC) <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/>.

Ombudsman Program Management

- Directorate for Information Operation and Reports (Expense Forms) <http://contacts.gsa.gov/webforms.nsf/0/4366F7D7DC67B9AC85256A720047DB33/$file/SF1164.pdf>.
- Fleet and Family Support Program <www.ffsp.navy.mil>.
- Military Insignia <http://usmilitary.about.com/od/theservices/a/rankchart.htm>.
- Military Instructions <http://doni.daps.dla.mil/default.aspx>.
- Navy Mail Center <http://www.daps.dla.mil/>.
- Ombudsman Registry <http://www.ffsp.navy.mil>.

Resources

- American Red Cross <http://www.redcross.org>.
- Department of Defense Reserve Affairs <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/>.
- Lifelines <http://www.lifelines.navy.mil/>.
- Naval Services FamilyLine <www.lifelines.navy.mil/Familyline>.
- Naval Criminal Investigative Service <http://www.ncis.navy.mil>.
- Navy Legal Services <http://www.jag.navy.mil/html/NLSONCLegalassistance.htm>.
- Navy Reserve <http://navyreserve.navy.mil>
- MilitaryOneSource <http://militaryonesource.com>.
- TRICARE <www.tricare.osd.mil/>.
- SITES <www.dmdc.osd.mil/sites>.
- U.S. Department of Labor <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/userra_fs.htm>.

Stress Management

- America's Continuing Education Network <http://www.ace-network.com/index.html>.
- American Academy of Family Physicians <http://www.aafp.org/fpm/20000400/39over.html>.
- Coping.org <http://www.coping.org/>.
- Department of Defense Stress Awareness <http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/stressawareness>.
- Military OneSource <www.militaryonesource.com/>.
- Navy Knowledge Online <https://www.nko.navy.mil/>.