

OPAG Minutes
Ombudsman Program Advisory Group Meeting
Conference Call
25 Sep 12; 1000 EDT
Commander, Navy Installations Command

Members in attendance were:

Mrs. Monica French, CNO Ombudsman-at-Large
CDR John Pucciarelli, Command Leadership School
FLTCM Scott Benning, N913, Manpower, Training and Education
FORCM Christopher Engles, CNIC
Mr. James Warren, Reserve Forces Command Family Support Program Manager
Ms. Lanita Lee, Exceptional Family Member Program
Ms. Marilyn Haumer, Command Leadership School

Ms. Renee C. Harris, Supervisor, CNIC Family Readiness Supervisor
Mrs. Lisa Johnson, CNIC Ombudsman Program Coordinator
Mrs. Doreen Scott, CNIC Ombudsman Training Coordinator
Mr. Ed Roscoe, CNIC Management IT, Training Analyst

The meeting was called to order at 1015 by CNIC's Ombudsman Program Coordinator, Mrs. Lisa Johnson, and members were introduced and welcomed.

CMDCM Michael Jackson was recognized as a new member of the OPAG representing the Command Leadership School. Master Chief Jackson was TAD and unable to attend the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting on 08 Feb 12 were approved.

Unfinished Business:

Joint Basing

Questions and issues regarding joint basing are addressed on a case by case basis. Commands are encouraged to work within their region to answer questions and resolve problems. To date, no action items from ROAB meetings have been received concerning Joint Basing. There has been an increase in the number of spouses from sister services inquiring about Ombudsman Basic Training. CNIC supports these requests to attend OBT training.

New Business:

Ombudsman-at-Large

Mrs. Monika French, CNO OAL appreciates the support she's received as OAL and the opportunity to visit with ombudsmen and staff, Navy-wide, representing the Ombudsman Program. Since her appointment earlier this year, she has visited 3 OCONUS installations and 9 CONUS installations. Mrs. French passes on the message from CNO

Greenert that he cares about what ombudsmen say and do to support the Navy and Navy families.

National Reserve Ombudsman Advanced Training

The National Reserve Ombudsman Advanced Training was held 17 – 19 Aug 12, in St. Louis, MO. Mr. James Warren, COMNAVRESFORCOM Family Program Manager, reported that this event was approved and planned prior to limits on conferences being set and will probably be the last one to be held for some time. In light of limited funding, attendance was limited to 180 ombudsmen from NOSCs and other frontline ombudsmen, space available. Due to funding limitations, no banquet was held this year; participants used their per diem for meals.

Rear Admiral B. P. Cutchen gave opening remarks, followed by FORCM Chris Wheeler. Training topics included OPSEC/security, psychological health outreach, suicide prevention, humor management, newsletters, Code of Ethics, CIAC and Ombudsmen, and effective communication within the chain of command. CNIC spoke on OPNAVINST 1750.1G CH-1 and the Ombudsman Registry. Regional Breakouts, an ombudsman panel, and a resource panel also took place. Overall, the National Reserve Ombudsman Advanced Training received great feedback from the presenters and participants.

Certified Ombudsman Trainer (COT) Training

A standardized instructor guide for Region Train the Trainers (RTTs) to use when teaching COT classes was completed in June 2012. The training was showcased to RTTs and COTs in July and August, and training materials on CDs, were mailed to the regions in early August, for distribution within the region.

Ombudsman Appreciation

September is the month that Ombudsman Appreciation is celebrated and installations have been holding events throughout the month. CNIC advertised many of these events in the Family Connection Newsletter. There were also many leadership messages sent out in honor of the Programs 42 years in existence.

OPAG Ombudsman Representatives

The current OPAG Ombudsman Representatives, have completed their term serving on the OPAG and nominations are now being accepted for two new representatives – one from an active duty command and the other from a reserve command.

- FORCM Engles to distribute Position Description and request to Fleet, Force and Region Command Master Chiefs for distribution to all commands. Requesting that they submit questionnaire and letter of recommendation to Mrs. Lisa Johnson, Ombudsman Program Manager, no later than 02 Nov 12.
- CNIC Ombudsman Program team will review the nomination packages, and select up to ten candidates to be reviewed by OPAG members – five active component and five reserve component commands.

- OPAG members will review the nomination packages and select two nominees (primary and alternate) from each component – active duty and reserve commands – and submit to Mrs. Johnson no later than 16 Nov 12.
- CNIC will announce the OPAG Ombudsman Representatives by 30 Nov 12.
- Ombudsman Representatives will be invited to attend the next OPAG meeting.

The OPAG wishes to thank Mrs. Stephanie DuBose, COMNAVSURFOR and Mrs. Jeanne Dusek, COMNAVRESFORCOM, for their contribution and dedication to the Ombudsman Program through their representation on the OPAG.

Program Updates

Town Hall Meetings

In response to limited funding for conferences and symposiums, CNIC is hosting Town Hall Meetings, via webinar, for Ombudsman Coordinators and COTs. Two meetings have been held this year with 83 in attendance. The next Town Hall Meeting is scheduled for 01 Nov 12 at 1100 EDT.

Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards (ROABs)

OPNAVINST 1750.1G CH-1 requires regions to hold at least two ROAB meetings per year. Commander, Navy Region Japan (CNRJ) submitted three action items from their most recent ROAB which were addressed by CNIC Ombudsman Program Manager.

OPAG members were asked to market ROABs as the appropriate level to address and resolve issues within the region.

Training Updates

Hot Topic webinars are offered monthly to ombudsmen, FFSC staff, command leadership and senior leadership spouses. Recent topics included FFSP Program Overview, Social Media/OPSEC and EFMP. Future topics include Military Families in Transition (MFIT) and Command Newsletters. Schedules are posted on the FFSP web site, www.ffsp.navy.mil, and the Ombudsman Registry, www.ombudsmanregistry.org. All Ombudsman Program webinars are delivered through the Learning Management System (LMS) at <http://learning.zeiders.com>.

CNIC Ombudsman Program team will be facilitating a webinar brief for EFMP liaisons and coordinators 24 and 30 Oct 12.

eOBT was first offered in Nov 2011. In FY'12, 160 ombudsmen and FFSC staff completed eOBT. eOBT fulfills the training requirement in OPNAVINST 1750.1G CH-1.

In July 2012, members of the Command Leadership School Spouse Steering Committee attended eOBT Module 6, Information and Referral. The feedback was very positive and a request was made to attend again during next year's annual meeting.

Schedules for eOBT continue to rotate quarterly between early morning, afternoon and evening sessions, Eastern Time. Regions should adjust the schedule accordingly for their specific time zone.

OPAG members are welcome to attend any of the Ombudsman Program webinars.

Ombudsman Registry

As of 2 August 2012 there were 4,720 commands listed in the Ombudsman Registry. There were 2,300 commands without ombudsmen registered. A new UIC listing is currently under review and commands have been entered into the registry bringing totals as of this OPAG meeting to 5,000 commands, with approximately 3,500 awaiting review.

MCPON message – On 9 July 2012 MCPON West sent a message to all Fleet, Force, and Command Master Chiefs asking each of them to take a "round turn" and get their Ombudsman registered! Per OPNAVINST 1750.1G CH-1, Navy policy requires that Commanders and Commanding Officers ensure that command family members have access to the services of an ombudsman. Today, approximately 4,912 active and reserve commands (ashore and afloat) are contained in the Ombudsman Registry database but only 1,940 Ombudsman are assigned. That leaves 2,972 commands that have not appointed or registered their ombudsman.

UIC Update Overview

Reserve Commands – update complete
Active Commands – updating – 3,500 left to review
2,300 commands without an ombudsman
46% assignment rate – Goal is to get to over 50%

Ombudsmen are not able to register themselves; Ed Roscoe contacts eOBT students and helps, as needed, to ensure they are registered.

Revised Fact Sheet

The Fact Sheet is a resource that can be handed out when talking about the Ombudsman Program. It is updated routinely, and is posted on the FFSP web site at www.ffsp.navy.mil.

Member Comments and Questions

FORCM Engles mentioned that the MCPON leadership mess is made up of 118 CMCs working for Flag Officers and that he will promote the Ombudsman Registry with this group. He also stated that he will speak to MCPON Stevens about doing a video that can be shown OCONUS, supporting the Ombudsman Program.

When on official OAL travel, Mrs. French is typically escorted by an ombudsman from the installation. She also debriefs the CO, and meets with small groups of ombudsmen and other N9 staff. She looks forward to meeting all of the OPAG members in person.

CDR Pucciarelli, CLS, appreciates receiving information via e-blasts; the CLS members were encouraged to contact Ed Roscoe if they need to send out any information to COs, ombudsmen or Ombudsman Coordinators via e-blast.

FLTCM Benning made the point that MCPON West used the registry to send messages via e-blast and his account will need to be turned over to MCPON Stevens. He requested that a copy of the Ombudsman Program Fact Sheet be sent to him for distribution to MCPON's mess.

Jim Warren asked whether the Ombudsman Program Quick Series book has been updated. CNIC has reviewed it and will verify that it has been updated. COMNAVRESFORCOM has ordered a new supply and will let us know if they have been updated.

Mrs. Haumer, CLS, asked if an ombudsman has to be re-registered in the Ombudsman Registry when re-appointed by a new CO. In this situation, the ombudsman does not have to be re-registered; however, the CO is responsible for removing anyone no longer serving, and adding in the new personnel – ombudsmen, CO, CMC, etc.

Mrs. Haumer also asked about the status of the project to update the Ombudsman video. This is currently in the CNO's office awaiting completion of the CNO's portion. The remaining portion will then need to be taken for action. The length of the video will be reduced from the original 12 ½ minutes. CNIC will announce when the video is complete.

In response to several questions from Mrs. Haumer regarding the Ombudsman Registry, Ed Roscoe responded that OICs and Dets stand alone from parent commands and may appoint or share an ombudsman. Ombudsmen representing more than one command need appointment letters from all commands being served. Also, as part of registry UIC review, commands with less than 10 members are being deleted unless they have an ombudsman and wish to remain in the registry.

Ms. Lanita Lee stated that the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) continues to change and she stays very busy. New DoDI (for EFMP) is awaiting federal registry notice for release. This will provide excellent guidance to services and is more joint service friendly than previous versions. EFMP held 2 Hot Topic webinars for ombudsmen; CNIC Ombudsman Program team will facilitate 2 webinars in October for EFMP liaisons and coordinators.

Mrs. Haumer mentioned that the Learning Management System (LMS) has not been compatible with AOL accounts and inquired if this was going to be changed in the future.

In response to her follow-on question about webinar enrollment limits, the LMS allows 40 – 60 people to enroll in a webinar, depending on the type of webinar. More enrollees are typically allowed to enroll, knowing that a portion of those registered will not attend.

If necessary, CNIC can request an additional unit per webinar to allow for larger enrollment.

FORCM Engles is retiring in October. The OPAG wishes him Fare Winds and Following Seas as he enters the next chapter of his life. All that he has done to support the OPAG and the Ombudsman Program is greatly appreciated.

Next Meeting

TBD

Meeting adjourned at 1104 EDT