

Ombudsman Program Advisory Group Meeting
12 Nov 13; 1000 EST
Commander, Navy Installations Command

Members in attendance were:

Mrs. Monika French, CNO Ombudsman-at-Large
Mrs. Theresa Stevens, CNO Ombudsman-at-Large
FORCM Nancy Hollingsworth, CNIC
CMDM Michael Jackson, Command Leadership School
Ms. Marilyn Haumer, Command Leadership School
Ms. Lindsay Baldwin, CNRNW, OPAG Ombudsman Representative
Ms. Michelle Harvey, NOSC Kitsap, OPAG Ombudsman Representative

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1001 by CNIC's Ombudsman Program Coordinator, Mrs. Lisa Johnson and members were introduced.

Approval of 24 April 2013 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 24 Apr 13 were approved.

Old Business

Ombudsman Video

CNO and Mrs. Greenert have filmed the opener for the new ombudsman video, and it was released to Ombudsman Coordinators in July 2013. The remaining portion of the video was taped 09 -12 Sep 13 in Norfolk, VA. Ombudsmen, Ombudsman Coordinators, Command Leadership and family members were interviewed for this project. Edits are underway with a draft expected mid-November, for review. The final project will include the opener and the remaining interviews in one video.

Command Leadership School (CLS) stated that they are not currently using the new video opener because it addresses ombudsmen rather than the Command Leadership. Discussion suggested that the CLS contact CNO Greenert's office to look into the possibility of filming another video that would address command leadership.

Until the new video is released, Certified Ombudsman Trainers (COTs) may use the new opener alone or partnered with the current video.

Ombudsman Program Survey Results

The ombudsman survey released May 2013 covered three topics – ombudsman reimbursement, communication and the Ombudsman Registry Monthly/Quarterly Worksheet. The first topic, ombudsman reimbursement continues to be an issue for ombudsmen and commands. The

Ombudsman Program Manager and CNIC Comptroller will meet to discuss the possibility of turning the recorded webinar into a tutorial for command leadership.

Mrs. French indicated that she always asks about reimbursement and continues to hear that ombudsmen are not being reimbursed. It was noted that there is a difference in not knowing how to reimburse and not having the funds to reimburse. Ombudsmen should discuss allowable expenses with their commanding officer prior to spending any money with the expectations of receiving reimbursement. If commands are not able to reimburse ombudsmen expenses, the ombudsman will have to choose whether or not they choose to continue in the position.

Ombudsmen and Ombudsman Coordinators indicated they were satisfied with the amount of information disseminated via e-Blast messages.

Ombudsman Monthly/Quarterly Worksheet

The Ombudsman Monthly/Quarterly worksheet has been revised based on feedback from an ombudsmen working group. The new worksheet is currently being tested and reviewed and will be released upon completion. The possibility of creating an app for worksheets is under review.

New Business

Ombudsman Program Advisory Group Ombudsman Representatives Term

The term length for the Ombudsman Program Advisory Group representatives is one year, with the option for a second year. Mrs. Michelle Harvey is eligible and will be completing a second year as the Reserve Ombudsman Representative. Mrs. Lindsay Baldwin is no longer serving as the Navy Region Northwest ombudsman and with therefore not carry out the second year option. The OPAG thanks Mrs. Baldwin for her service and wishes her well on her future endeavors. CNIC will begin the process of soliciting an OPAG Ombudsman Representative from an active duty command.

Annual Update of Ombudsman Coordinators and Certified Ombudsman Trainers

The annual update of the Ombudsman Coordinator and Certified Ombudsman Trainers (COTs) rosters has been completed; there are currently 171 COTs, Navy-wide.

The schedules for classroom OBT and COT training for CY 2014 have been received and have been posted on the FFSP website www.ffsp.navy.mil. The schedules are also linked to the Ombudsman Registry www.ombudsmanregistry.org.

Installations and regions are finding it difficult to offer training for Certified Ombudsman Trainers (COTs) due to funding restrictions. CNIC is researching the possibility of offering an electronic option to COT training, eCOT.

Program Updates

Ombudsmen-at-Large (OAL) Report

Mrs. French and Mrs. Stevens have been given the green light to travel this year and they have plans to visit NSA South Potomac (Dahlgren) and NAS Patuxent River the week of 18 Nov 13. Mrs. French recently visited Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (JBAB).

ADM Greenert, CNO, is impressed with the increased usage of the Ombudsman Registry and identification of command ombudsmen, and congratulates the Ombudsmen-at-Large for their part in keeping this topic at the forefront of their visits around the fleet. Usage has doubled in the past year. They should continue to let people know of their pending visits as this information triggers a lot of activity within the Ombudsman Registry.

FORCE Hollingsworth offered CNIC's assistance in supporting the work of the OALs.

Both Ombudsmen-at-Large and the CNIC Ombudsman Team expressed appreciation for the group effort and support of each other in representing the Ombudsman Program.

Mrs. French has concerns that Ombudsman Basic Training is geared towards sea-going command ombudsmen and does not adequately address needs of shore command ombudsmen. She asked CNIC to develop additional training to ensure that shore commands are thoroughly covered.

The Command Leadership School includes information on supporting shore command families via the Ombudsman Program. OBT and the Ombudsman Program Manual, module 8, have a breakdown of various command communities, to include shore commands. CNIC will consider offering webinar training for ombudsmen and command leadership to discuss specifics about supporting the many different communities, including shore commands. It's important for ombudsmen to know the families they serve and provide the appropriate support.

If the Commanding Officer provides guidance, ombudsmen may support civilian members of an installation or command. Some services are available to civilian members, while others are not – ombudsmen should discuss who they will be representing.

Town Hall Meetings

To offset funding restrictions regarding conferences and travel, regular Town Hall Meetings are offered to Ombudsman Coordinators, RCC Warrior and Family Support Specialists and Certified Ombudsman Trainers. These meetings provide program updates and current information regarding the Ombudsman Program.

Region Ombudsman Advisory Boards (ROABs)

Regions are required to hold ROAB meetings two times a year, submitting minutes to CNIC Ombudsman Program Manager for information. Items that are not resolved within the region may be submitted to CNIC as an Action Item for further review.

CNRNDW is planning their first ROAB meeting this week. CNRSW submitted two action items from their last ROAB meeting which have been addressed. One item asked that Ombudsman Coordinators and RCC WFSS be informed of eOBT graduates from their installation or region. This is now being done after every eOBT session. The other item asked for an application to be created for the Ombudsman Monthly/Quarterly Worksheet, which is being researched.

CNRMA shared an Information Paper created within their region concerning joint basing initiatives. OPNAVINST 1750.1G states that all Navy families will have ombudsman representation. Questions are arising over how to handle the situation where leadership from a sister service is not required to adhere to Navy policy. How will those Navy families receive the support they are entitled to and expect? Will it be provided by the sister service's support facilities? FORCE Hollingsworth noted that this needs to be addressed and that no Navy family should be left behind.

Ombudsmen on joint bases should still complete OBT/eOBT but may also take training offered by sister services; sister service support volunteers may take OBT/eOBT.

Ombudsman Registry

The Ombudsman Registry is undergoing revisions which will be released upon completion. Testing is currently being done in a beta site.

With the increased registration rate in the Ombudsman Registry, only 454 commands still need to register an ombudsman, compared to over 2,000 a year ago. The Ombudsman Registry Administrators receive a large numbers of questions from command leadership after attending the Command Leadership School (CLS), an indication that attendees are adhering to registry training delivered by CLS staff.

With the recent changes to the registry site, administrators and coordinators can now see activity generated by users – over 1,000 changes have been made in just 60 days. Contact Your Ombudsman forms sent to the administrators have dropped as these forms are now going to the registered ombudsman at the commands.

Forty-six change request tickets created from input by the OPAG and members of the worksheet working group were submitted with most being completed. A review of the remaining change requests is underway. Implementation of these items will reduce administrative paperwork for ombudsmen. Command leadership will find it much easier to register themselves and their ombudsman.

When the Ombudsmen-at-Large is traveling to a site, regions are contacting the Ombudsman Registry Administrator for assistance, to ensure that they are in compliance with the instruction.

Training Updates

eOBT

There continues to be high enrollment numbers for eOBT, due in part to budget restrictions, and the overall convenience to ombudsmen. It's important to note that the electronic training option fulfills the training requirement. In FY 13, eOBT had an estimated cost savings to the Navy of \$356,800.00, a 49% increase over FY 12.

CNIC is now connecting eOBT graduates with their FFSC Ombudsman Coordinator or RCC WFSF via email. This ensures that the ombudsmen, and their commands, will have on-going support within their region.

Ombudsman Program Hot Topic and recorded webinars

All Ombudsman Hot Topic webinars and staff training webinars are now recorded and accessible via the Learning Management System (LMS) website. Links are also posted on the Ombudsman Registry Forum for those who do not have access to the LMS. There were 337 viewings of recorded webinars in FY 2013.

Current Fact Sheet

The Ombudsman Program Fact Sheet is updated twice a year; the most recent update was completed in April 2013.

Roundtable Discussion

Command Leadership School requested that information related to training of shore command ombudsmen should be forwarded for inclusion in the training plan. The bottom line message is that every command needs the same assistance, regardless of its status.

It was also noted by the Ombudsman Representative that ombudsmen should attend events such as Ombudsman Assembly Meetings and Advanced Trainings to build a good working relationship with their Ombudsman Coordinator or RCC Warrior and Family Support Specialist.

Next Meeting TBD

Meeting adjourned at 1118 EST