U.S. Department of Transportation
United States Coast Guard

Commandant
United States Coast Guard

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COMDTNOTE 12451

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COMMANDANT NOTICE 12451

CANCELLED: 14 MAR 2002

Subj: CH-3 TO COAST GUARD CIVILIAN AWARDS MANUAL, COMDTINST M12451.1B

1. PURPOSE. This Notice transmits changes to the Coast Guard Civilian Awards Manual.

2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief Counsel, and special staff offices at Headquarters shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Notice.

3. SUMMARY OF CHANGES. Changes are made principally in Coast Guard Civilian Awards Manual, COMDTINST M12451.1B, Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 6.

   a. In Chapter 1, the reference to the Federal Personnel Manual is corrected; Sections E.2., and G. are revised; the reference to military eligibility for an honorary award is eliminated.

   b. In Chapter 3, the Secretary's Partnering for Excellence Award and the Secretary's Team Award are added as Departmental Honorary Awards (section A.2.); the Dwight D. Eisenhower Award and the Program Emphasis Awards are eliminated as Departmental Honorary Awards; the Secretary's Achievement in Work Force Diversity is renamed the Secretary's Award for EEO/Affirmative Action; the Secretary's Award for Voluntary Service incorporates the Community Service Award, which is eliminated; the office symbol for the Office of Civilian Personnel is corrected; and the issuance of medals and lapel rosettes for Departmental Awards is eliminated, with recipients receiving crystal trophies and engraved plaques, respectively.

   c. In Chapter 4, the issuance of medals and lapel rosettes for Coast Guard Awards is eliminated, with recipients receiving crystal trophies and engraved plaques, respectively; and, nomination procedures are clarified. A new award, Coast Guard Civilian Employee of the Year Award is established, with criteria and procedures to be established.

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: B:c MLCLANT, MLCPAC (16 Extra); D:d Boston, South Portland, Southwest Harbor, Woods Hole, Moriches, Hampton Roads, Charleston, Humboldt Bay (1)

d. In Chapter 6, in section B, Special Act or Service Awards, SF-52s shall be completed for cash award recommendations of $5,000 or less. In section C, the On-The-Spot cash award amount is increased from $200 to $250 maximum per award, and from $400 to $500 maximum in a year. Written justifications for On-The-Spot cash awards are to be made in the Remarks section of the SF-52. Also, the procedures for nominating employees for cash awards of up to $10,000 and cash awards greater than $10,000 are established.

e. In Chapter 7, in section D, Documentation for Time-Off Awards, SF-52s shall be used to document time-off recommendations.

4. PROCEDURES.

a. Remove and Insert the following pages:

Remove	Insert
Table of Contents	new Table of Contents
Chapter 1	new Chapter 1
Chapter 3	new Chapter 3
Chapter 4	new Chapter 4
Chapter 6	new Chapter 6
Page 7-3 and 7-4	new Page 7-3
Enclosures (1) and (2)	new Enclosures (1) and (2)

b. Make pen and ink changes as follows:

(1) On the front page of the Coast Guard Civilian Awards Manual, COMDTINST M12451.1B, dated 23 July 1992, change reference (a), Federal Personnel Manuel (FPM) Chapter 451, Incentive Award (NOTEL) to 5 USC 45.

(2) On page 6-2 of the Coast Guard Civilian Awards Manual, COMDTINST M12451.1B, dated 23 July 1992, in section 4, Documentation Requirements, change enclosures (2) and (3) to (1) and (2); in section 5, Determining the Amount of Cash Award, section a, Tangible Benefits, change enclosure (2) to enclosure (1); On page 6-3,in section b, Intangible Benefits, change enclosure (3) to enclosure (2).

(3) Change (G-PC) to (G-WPC) wherever it appears in the Manual.

(4) Change civilian personnel office, servicing civilian personnel office, and civilian personnel staff to Command Staff Advisor wherever it appears in the Manual.

5. FORMS AVAILABILITY: Recommendation for Secretarial Award, DOT Form 3200.2 (Rev. 5-00), and SF-52, Request for Personnel Action, are available in JetFiller on Standard Workstation III (SWIII) and from your Command Staff Advisor (CSA). The Commander's Award for Civilian Service, Form CG 5514, and the On-the-Spot Cash Award certificates are available from your CSA.

Thomas F. Fisher
Acting Director of
Personnel Management

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CHAPTER 1. EXPENDITURE OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS

A. Introduction. One of the more pleasant supervisory tasks is to reward employees for exceptional performance. Supervisors have a normal and healthy self-interest in building and maintaining a highly motivated and productive work force. Public recognition for superior performance helps build morale and improve productivity as employees learn that new ideas are welcome and high quality performance is rewarded.

B. Purpose. The incentive awards program motivates employees to increase productivity and creativity by rewarding employee job performance and ideas which benefit the Government, and which are substantially above normal job requirements. This manual implements the Department of Transportation's (DOT's) Personnel Manual (DPM) Chapter 451, Incentive Awards, as well as **5 CFR 451** and Chapter 45 of Title 5, U.S.C., which is the legal basis for the Federal Incentive Awards Program.

C. Policy. It is the policy of the Commandant to:

1. Motivate all employees of the Coast Guard to increase their creativity and productivity through recognition exceptional job performance, commitment to satisfaction, continuous quality improvement and saving ideas which benefit the economy of the Coast Guard, Department, or Federal Government.

2. Recognize and reward individuals and groups appropriately on the basis of merit for special acts or services, inventions, or other personal contributions that significant and which substantially exceed normal job standards and expectations.

3. Assure that incentive awards under this Instruction are used only for their intended purpose to recognize and reward an employee, or group of employees, for contributions which benefit the Coast Guard and are above or beyond normal job requirements.

D. Types of Awards. There are a variety of awards, many of which are appropriate to specific situations, from a letter of appreciation to a cash or honorary award. The decision on which award to recommend depends on the kind of accomplishment, as well as its magnitude and duration. Supervisors and managers should consider the awards program a flexible system and one which can be adapted to meet management needs.

E. Coverage.

1. The provisions of this Instruction apply to Coast Guard civilian employees paid from appropriated funds. Awards and recognition for Non-appropriated Fund (NAF) Activities employees are covered in the Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) Personnel Manual, COMDTINST M12271.1A (series).

2. **Instructions on awards and recognition for members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) are contained in the Executive Performance Appraisal System and Executive Performance**

Review Board, COMDTINST M12305.1A (series). Commandant policy and guidance on awards for suggestions, inventions, and scientific achievements are contained in the Improved Idea Express Suggestion System, COMDTINST M5305.4 (series). Military members are not eligible for cash awards under the provisions of this Instruction.

F. Authority for Expenditure of Appropriate Funds.

1. Under provisions of Title 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) 4503 and 5 U.S.C. 5403, the Coast Guard may pay cash awards to, and incur necessary expenses for, the honorary recognition of employees who, by their suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, or other personal effort contribute to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations; or who perform special acts or services in the public interest in connection with or related to their official employment.

2. This authority covers payment of a cash award. It also covers expenses for honorary awards (plaques, certificates, medals, pins, etc.) and travel costs for recipients. Invitational travel orders (ITO's) may be authorized for one individual related by blood or affinity (equivalent of a family relationship) at the recipient's choosing to attend a major award ceremony (for example, Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony). Travel expenses for an individual to assist a **disabled** award recipient may also be paid.

G. Grievances. **The granting of or failure to grant a cash, honorary, or informal recognition award, or time-off without charge to leave or loss of pay is not grievable.**

H. Confidentiality. Nominating supervisors, reviewing officials and approving officials must not discuss award nominations with nominees until the award has been approved. Award nominations and supporting documentation should be considered privileged information, and should be made available only to those with a need-to-know. Failure to observe this rule may result in embarrassment to the nominee, to management, or to both.

I. Summer, Stay-In-School, and Co-op Employees. Employees employed in these positions are eligible for official letters of commendation, letters of appreciation, and honorary or cash Special Act or Service Awards.

CHAPTER 3. DEPARTMENTAL HONORARY AWARDS

A. Introduction. This Chapter describes the criteria and nomination procedures for honorary awards available to Coast Guard employees through the Department of Transportation (DOT). Coast Guard managers and supervisors are expected to weigh carefully all individual achievements considered deserving of performance recognition and to recommend the employee(s) for the highest level award deemed appropriate, consistent with the award's criteria. While an employee shall be recommended for only one DOT award for a single achievement, in instances when the recommended award is not approved, the employee should be considered for the next successively lower-level award. An employee may be nominated for an honorary award in addition to a cash award.

1. Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement (Gold Medal).

   a. Award Summary: **This is DOT's highest honorary award. It is granted in recognition of exceptional outstanding leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of marked national or international significance, which reflect great credit on the Department and the Federal Government. This award may be given to an individual or a group. The Secretary selects the recipient of this award and nominations are not solicited.**

   b. Criteria. Outstanding leadership and distinguished contributions of major significance.

   c. Awardee Receives. **A crystal trophy.**

2. **Secretary's Partnering for Excellence Award.**

   a. Award Summary. This is the second highest award within the Department. It recognizes intermodal teams/groups who have used the Partnering for Excellence model to further ONE DOT activities supporting one or more of the strategic goals as provided in the Department's Strategic Plan. Nominations may be made by the Commandant, or by the team/group themselves, which must also be endorsed by a sponsoring Departmental Officer or Operating Administration.

   b. Criteria. Intermodal teams/groups nominated for this Award must have the concurrence of all modes represented on the team/group, and each nomination must address the following:

   (1) Teamwork

   (2) Problem Solving

   (3) Customer Focus

   (4) Creative and Innovative Techniques

   (5) Results

   c. Awardees Receive. A crystal trophy.

3. Secretary's Award for Meritorious Achievement (Silver Medal).

a. Award Summary. This is the third highest level award within the Department for civilian employees and is given to those who have made meritorious contributions of high value to the Department in meeting one or more of the strategic goals outlined in the Department's Strategic Plan. **Approved** nominations **are forwarded** to the Department by the Commandant.

b. Criteria. **Meritorious** contributions of **high** value to the Department **by civilians** such as:

(1) A valuable scientific or technological contribution consistent with the strategic direction of the Department;

(2) Accomplishment of **assigned** duties in such an outstanding manner as to be clearly exceptional among all those who have performed similar duties;

(3) Development and improvement of methods procedures which have accomplished extraordinary results **in moving toward the attainment of the Department's strategic goals;**

(4) Eminent authorship in one or more areas directly related to the Department's strategic goals;

(5) Exceptional leadership **which resulted** in the successful **accomplishment** of **the Department's strategic mission**, the major redirection of objectives, or accomplishments to meet unique or emergency situations;

(6) Contributions to the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program of an outstanding and distinctive character;

(7) Leadership, accomplishment or actions that make a significant contribution to building a strategic ONE DOT;

(8) Demonstrated outstanding ability to manage diversity by creating an organizational environment that allows every employee to reach his/her full potential and fully contribute to the Department's strategic mission. Has excelled and embraced the spirit and intent of the DOT Managing Diversity Order (Order Number 3200.1, dated January 21, 1998); or

(9) Provided excellent customer service and improved customer satisfaction with transportation systems and Departmental services.

c. Awardee Receives. **A crystal trophy.**

4. Secretary's Award for Excellence.

a. Award Summary. This is an award for outstanding achievements of all major duties especially those linked to DOT Strategic Goals including customer satisfaction.

b. Criteria. Eligibility is limited to **civilian employees** in clerical, administrative, technical, **or** general support positions at grades GS-1 through GS-9, wage grades WG-1 through WG-8, or equivalent. Nominations must be based on outstanding achievement of all major duties. All aspects of performance must **not only** far exceed normal requirements, but deserve special commendation. **Employees can also be recognized in whole or in part for actions or accomplishments that contribute to a stronger ONE DOT.**

c. Note. **An employee need not have received the highest performance rating the last rating** cycle to be nominated for this award, provided the employee is performing at the level to earn such a rating at the time of the nomination.

d. Awardee Receives. **A crystal trophy.**

5. **Secretary's Award for EEO/Affirmative Action.**

a. Award Summary. **This award is the** highest level of honor and recognition to those employees who have excelled in promoting equal opportunity/affirmative action while serving in positions that are not primarily EEO-related. The award demonstrates the value which top level management places upon employees, supervisors, and managers who actively **and effectively enhance the Department's EEO and Affirmative Action activities.**

b. Criteria. All civilian employees and military members are eligible except those whose primary job responsibility is EEO. Employees with primary job responsibility in EEO **may** be considered for **the meritorious or superior achievement awards.**

c. Awardee Receives. An **engraved** plaque.

6. Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service.

a. Award Summary. This award represents the Department's high level of interest in recognizing volunteer service. Employees at all grades and organizational levels are eligible for consideration. The Volunteer Service Award will be presented to the employee who has made significant contributions through any of the volunteer programs for which the Department provides support or sponsorship, **or service to organizations within his or her community.**

c. Criteria. The criteria for selecting the award nominees, including military members, should include length of volunteer service, number of hours per week, month or year, innovation or initiative in improving conditions of the organization being served, type of service rendered, and benefits to the community.

d. Awardee Receives. An engraved plaque.

7. **Secretary's Team Award.**

   a. **Award Summary. This award is given to groups and teams in recognition of meritorious contributions of high value to the Department in meeting one or more of the Strategic Goals, and whose exceptional performance results in the improvement, reinvention, or reengineering of practices, operations, and customer services. This includes groups and teams including cross-functional teams, natural work groups, design project groups, and process/quality action teams who work together as a unit to achieve shared objectives or missions.**

   b. **Criteria. Nominations must address each of the following elements:**

      (1) Teamwork

      (2) Problem Solving

      (3) Customer Focus

      (4) Creative and Innovative Techniques

      (5) Results

   c. **Awardee Receives. A crystal trophy.**

8. Secretary's Award for Valor.

   a. Award Summary. **This award is the** highest Departmental award for acts of heroism or courage involving great personal risk **by civilian employees** under unusual circumstances.

   b. Criteria. Civilians are eligible for actions on or off duty which demonstrate outstanding courage and voluntary risk of personal safety in the face of danger in an emergency.

   c. Awardee Receives. An engraved plaque.

B. Nomination Procedures.

1. **Commandant (G-W)** solicits nominations for the Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony (usually in June/July) via **ALCOAST**.

2. Nominations must be made using the **DOT Form 3200.2 (Rev. 5-00), Recommendation for Secretarial Award, which is available for use with Jetform Filler on Standard Workstation III. Hard copies of DOT 3200.2 (Rev. 5-00) are available by contacting your Command Staff Advisor.**

3. **Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, chiefs of special staff offices in Headquarters,**

assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, Director of Information and Technology Directorate, Director of Finance and Procurement Directorate, and Director of Resource Management Directorate, submit nominations directly to Commandant (G-WPC).

C. Review and Approval.

1. All nominations are reviewed by **an ad hoc Coast Guard Awards Review Board**, which makes recommendations to the Commandant **based on limited allocations for each award. There are no allocation limitations for the Secretary's Award for EEO/Affirmative Action or Award for Valor.**
2. The Commandant forwards the nominations to a Departmental Awards Review Board, which makes final recommendations to the Secretary.
3. Those nominations not approved may be considered for local recognition if appropriate. **Because the Coast Guard receives a limited allocation for nominations for the Secretary's Meritorious Achievement Award (Silver Medal), nominations for this Award which are not forwarded to the Department for further consideration may be recommended by the Coast Guard Awards Review Board for the Commandant's Superior Achievement Award (Bronze Medal).**

D. Multiple Awards. An employee may **not receive** both a Commandant's Superior Achievement Award and a Departmental honorary award for the same achievement. An employee may receive more than one honorary award while serving in the same position, if performance in that position is considered sufficiently meritorious on more than one occasion.

E. Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony. The Secretary's Annual Awards Ceremony is held in the fall of each year (generally **November)** in Washington, DC. It is a showcase of the Departmental activities that have merited high-level recognition during the past year. Employees who attend the ceremony are considered to be in a duty status and all recipients are encouraged to attend the ceremony if possible. Recipients **only** from field units shall be authorized appropriate travel and per diem expenses funded by **Commandant (G-WPC).**

CHAPTER 4. COAST GUARD HONORARY AWARDS

A. Introduction. The Commandant is authorized to approve **two high-level** honorary awards in accordance with **Departmental Personnel Manual (DPM) Letter No. 451**. Both are equal in stature but appropriate at different points in an employee's career. **The Commandant may also approve other awards, such as the Preparation Equals Performance Award Program, COMDTINST 5305.8.** In addition, commanding officers may also grant honorary awards to employees who have demonstrated leadership, initiative, outstanding performance, courage, and patterns of excellence based on acts of performance over shorter periods of time or sustained superior performance during longer periods of service including retirement.

B. Commandant's Superior Achievement Award (Bronze Medal).

1. Award Summary. This award is the highest honorary award granted by the Commandant to Coast Guard civilians: Individual employees or a group of employees may receive this award for special efforts significantly above and beyond the requirements of their position. The achievements upon which a nomination for this award are based should have current impact in improving Coast Guard operations or serving the public interest.

2. Criteria. Nominations shall exemplify one or more of the following:

   a. Performance of duties in such an exemplary manner as to set a record of achievement that inspires others to greater efforts;

   b. Demonstration of unusual skills or initiative and continuous quality improvements in the development of new work methods or procedures, or the conception of inventions which will result in substantial savings in staff, time, space, materials, etc., or the improved safety and health of the work force;

   c. Exceptional achievements which substantially contribute to accomplishment of the Coast Guard mission;

   d. Innovations in service to the public or improvements that are of a major significance to the accomplishment of the Coast Guard's mission; and

   e. Notable authorship.

3. Awardee Receives. **An engraved plaque.**

4. Nomination Procedures. **Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, chiefs of special staff offices in Headquarters, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, Director of Information and Technology Directorate, Director of Finance and Procurement Directorate, and Director of Resource Management Directorate, submit nominations directly to Commandant (G-WPC). Nominations must include the following:**

   a. Nominee's name, title, series, and grade of current position;

   b. Brief statement of current duties;

   c. Brief biographical sketch (primarily **employment** history);

d. A listing of significant honors and awards received;

e. A proposed citation (not longer than 25 words) for use in the awards presentation and engraved inscription on the award plaque; and

f. A detailed description of achievement or service (no more than two pages) showing clearly how the criteria for the award have been met.

5. Note. **The special efforts being recognized by this award shall have occurred within the last 2-year period.**

6. Review. Nominations received by **Commandant (G-WPC)** are reviewed for procedural compliance and adequacy of documentation and forwarded to the **Coast Guard Awards Review Board, which makes recommendations to the Commandant (G-C)** for final approval. Since approval takes approximately 30 days following receipt by Commandant **(G-WPC),** sufficient lead time should be provided. **A copy of the approved award nomination will be provided to the awardee's command point of contact (POC), and the award plaque will be mailed to the POC by Commandant (G-WPC).**

C. Commandant's Distinguished Career Service Award.

1. Award Summary. Highest level award granted to a very select group of employees at retirement equivalent to the Superior Achievement Award (Bronze Medal).

2. Criteria. This award is for civilian employees whose careers reflect long and exceptional devotion to duty and extremely significant contributions to the economy, efficiency, or other improvement in the operations of the Coast Guard. The career achievements on which the nomination is based should be either uniquely important projects or significant, recognized expertise in some phase of the Coast Guard's technical, professional, or administrative work. The award is appropriate for employees at any grade level or occupation (professional, administrative, technical, and clerical) who have completed a minimum of 20 years of creditable Federal service, at least five of which were in the career civil service with the Coast Guard. **Military Service creditable toward an employee's service computation date is creditable time for this award.**

3. Awardee Receives. An engraved plaque.

4. Nomination Procedures. **Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, chiefs of special staff offices in Headquarters, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, Director of Information and Technology Directorate, Director of Finance and Procurement Directorate, and Director of Resource Management Directorate, submit nominations directly to Commandant (G-WPC). Nominations must include the following:**

a. Nominee's name, title, series, and grade of current position;

b. Brief statement of current duties;

c. Brief biographical sketch (personal, if available and appropriate, but primarily **employment** history);

d. Listing of previous honors and awards; and,

e. Narrative (no more than two pages) of the nominee's career achievements which is sufficiently specific for a disinterested reviewer to conclude that **the nominee's accomplishments merit this recognition.**

5. Review. Nominations received by Commandant **(G-WPC)** are reviewed for procedural compliance and adequacy of documentation and forwarded to **the Awards Review Board, which makes recommendations to the Commandant (G-C)** for final approval. Since approval takes approximately 30 days following receipt by Commandant **(G-WPC)**, sufficient lead-time should be provided. **A copy of the approved award nomination will be provided to the awardee's command point of contact (POC), and the award plaque will be mailed to the POC by Commandant (G-WPC).**

D. Commander's Award for Civilian Service.

1. Award Summary. This Coast Guard honorary award gives commanding officers the opportunity to recognize individuals or groups for their achievements and contributions to the Coast Guard.

2. Criteria. Civilian employees at all grade levels are eligible to be recognized. Nominations should be based on one or more of the following:

a. Supervisory or non-supervisory duties performed in an outstanding manner, setting an example of achievement for others to follow;

b. Demonstrated initiative and skill in devising new or improved equipment, work methods, and procedures, or for inventions that result in considerable savings in manpower, time, space, materials, or other items of expense, or improved safety or health of the work force;

c. Demonstrated leadership in performing duties that resulted in improved productivity of the command, including customer focus and commitment to achieving excellence;

d. Achievements or contributions in support of the Coast Guard's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program;

e. Demonstrated courage or competence in an emergency while performing assigned duties resulting in benefit to the Federal Government;

3. Note. **An individual may receive more than one Commander's Award for Civilian Service if the award is for** different achievements or service. Employees who have established a pattern of excellence as recognized through the previous receipt of one or more honorary or monetary performance awards should be considered for this award. Retirement, separation, or long period of service shall not constitute a sufficient basis for conferring this award.

4. Awardee Receives. A Commander's Award for Civilian Service Certificate, Form CG-5514, shall be presented to the employee.

5. Nomination Procedures.

a. Nominations should be processed by the employee's supervisor through the chain of command to the approving official. A proposed citation, highlighting significant achievements, should accompany the nomination.

b. Nominations shall be reviewed by the **Command Staff Advisor** for procedural compliance and adequacy of documentation. When the award certificate is completed and signed, the signatory official or designated official shall present the certificate in a way consistent with military award ceremonies in the command. **Hard copies of Form CG-5514 are available by contacting the Command Staff Advisor's (CSA's) office.**

6. Review. The **Command Staff Advisor** shall forward the nomination to the approval official. Nominations are approved by the **area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, Chief of Staff and chiefs of special staff offices in Headquarters, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, Director of Information and Technology Directorate, Director of Finance and Procurement Directorate, and Director of Resource Management Directorate.** These officials are authorized to redelegate this authority to subordinate managers and supervisors to the extent they deem appropriate.

E. Commander's Award for Sustained Excellence in the Federal Service.

1. Award Summary. Highest level award granted by the **area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, chiefs of special staff offices in Headquarters, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, Director of Information and Technology, Director of Finance and Procurement Directorate, and Director of Resource Management Directorate,** to a select group of employees at retirement. This award is equivalent to the Commander's Award for Civilian Service.

2. Criteria. This award is appropriately granted to employees whose careers reflect long and exceptional devotion to duty and significant contributions to the efficiency, economy or other improvements in operations of the Coast Guard. A pattern of sustained high performance, career achievements, and indications of innovative leadership of highly successful programs or projects which have impacted the nominee's command are examples that would warrant this award.

3. Awardee Receives. A Commander's Award for Sustained Excellence in the Federal Service Certificate. **Hard copies of Form CG-4904 (8-91) are available by contacting the Command Staff Advisor's (CSA's) office.**

4. Nomination Procedures. Nominations should be processed by the employee's supervisor through the chain of command, via the **Command Staff Advisor** for approval. The Command Staff Advisor shall review the nomination for procedural compliance and adequacy of documentation. When the nomination is approved, the certificate shall be presented to the award recipient in a way consistent with military award ceremonies in the command.

F. **Awards in Support of EEO/Affirmative Action**. Superior achievements **in EEO/Affirmative Action** may be recognized by nominations for the following awards: Secretary's Award for Meritorious Achievement, **Secretary's Award for EEO/Affirmative Action**, Commandant's Superior Achievement Award (Bronze Medal), and the Commander's Award for Civilian Service. Examples of recipient criteria are as follows:

1. Supervisors. These are employees at all levels of supervision and **management whose primary job responsibility is not in the EEO area**, and who clearly excel in promoting EEO within their organization. To be effective, recognition for superior accomplishments must be based on objective evidence which indicates that the supervisor has excelled in several of the following important job factors:

   a. Motivating employees through encouragement and assistance to develop employee's full potential and utilize their skills to the maximum;

   b. Achieving effective employee utilization;

   c. Demonstrating sensitive treatment of all employees; and

   d. Evidence of demonstrated commitment to all concerns of EEO and results-oriented affirmative action plan responsibilities.

2. Employees Whose Primary Job Responsibility Is Not in the EEO Area. These are employees whose work is not specifically in the EEO area, but who advance equal employment opportunity in the Coast Guard through superior accomplishments in training, recruitment, or other activity.

3. EEO Program Leaders. These are employees who have specific responsibilities for equal employment opportunity (EEO) within the Coast Guard such as Civil Rights Officers, EEO Counselors, Federal Women's Program Managers, or Hispanic Program Managers. Examples include providing career counseling to employee, providing effective resolution of employee discrimination complaints, development of EEO action plans, and achieving success in working in support of economic opportunity or other community action programs directed to advance equal opportunity in government. **The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program Leaders are ineligible to receive Awards in Support of EEO/Affirmative. Their efforts may be recognized by the Secretary's Meritorious Achievement Award (Silver Medal), Commandant's Superior Achievement Award (Bronze Medal), or Commander's Award for Civilian Service.**

G. **Civilian Employee of the Year. This award recognizes deserving civilian employees for superior job performance and community involvement. Criteria and nomination procedures will be issued shortly via Commandant Instruction.**

H. Official Letters of Commendation are normally written and presented by an immediate supervisor for high quality performance of official duties such as extra effort, consistent devotion to duty, or above average accomplishment on a project, service to the customer, or public relations assignment. These letters may also be awarded by other supervisors when an employee has temporarily worked on another project or when a supervisor wishes to recognize special contributions by an employee of another organizational element. The original letter, presented to the employee, should state that a copy of the commendation will be filed as a permanent document in the employee's official personnel folder (OPF).

I. Letters of Appreciation are informal letters normally from a supervisor to an individual employee or group of employees. These letters may also be presented by official Coast Guard committees or working groups. Letters of appreciation serve as morale builders, providing the supervisor and others with means **to express appreciation** for an employee's efforts on a particular project or performance under adverse conditions. They are not official awards and are not filed in the employee's OPF, although they may be placed in the employee's Employee Performance Folder (EPF).

CHAPTER 6. SPECIAL ACT OR SERVICE AWARDS

A. Introduction. This Chapter sets forth requirements for granting Special Act or Service Awards in recognition of individual or group effort which goes significantly beyond expected job performance as reflected on employee individual performance appraisals. The Special Act or Service Award is used to improve efficiency, economy, and effectiveness by motivating employees to increase productivity and creativity, and by rewarding their efforts.

B. Special Act or Service Awards.

1. Definition. Special Act or Service Awards are monetary or non- monetary awards that shall be granted for a contribution resulting in tangible or intangible benefits or services to the government. Contributions include accomplishments achieved through inventions, suggestions, or special acts or services which contribute to the efficiency, economy, or other improvements of government operations, increased customer satisfaction, or a significant reduction in paperwork.

2. Criteria. Recognition by a Special Act or Service Award is appropriate when an employee or group of employees contribute substantially beyond expectations on a specific assignment or job function. The award is in addition to Performance Awards which recognize employee performance during the entire performance appraisal year and is based on the annual rating of record. Special Act or Service Awards are used to recognize exemplary efforts such as:

   a. A nonrecurring contribution either within or outside of job responsibilities:

   b. A scientific or technical achievement;

   c. An act of heroism;

   d. Disclosure of fraud, waste, or abuse; or

   e. Increased services to the customer.

3. Determining Extent of Job Responsibility. Special acts or services are often related to the employee's work. Being related to the employee's job, however, does not automatically mean that the contribution is part of the employee's job responsibilities. A contribution can be considered to be within "job responsibility" if it falls within expected job performance requirements. Because of the close relationship that can exist between an employee contribution and normal job requirements, decisions frequently must be made to determine whether a contribution recommended for recognition goes beyond what normally is expected of the contributor.

4. Documentation Requirements. The supervisor shall prepare a brief but explicitly-written justification describing the superior accomplishments performed by the employee or group of employees. **If a cash award of $5,000 or less is recommended, the written justification is**

6.B.4. (cont'd) prepared in the Remarks section of the SF-52. If a cash award greater than $5,000 is recommended, a supplemental statement is also prepared. All written justifications must include a description of the tangible and/or intangible benefits derived from the contribution. Tangible or intangible benefits are calculated by application of the charts contained in enclosure **(1)** and enclosure **(2).**

5. Determining the Amount of Cash Award. If a Special Act or Service Award is to include cash, the amount of the award must be based on the value of the benefits received which may be either tangible, intangible, or a combination of both. Neither type of benefit is inherently of greater value than the other. Tangible and intangible benefits are calculated as follows:

   a. Tangible Benefits. Every contribution must be reviewed to determine whether it will result in savings of time, personnel, materials, or equipment. If so, the estimated savings for the first full year of operation are calculated less the cost involved in implementing the contribution. The amount of the award is normally based on a reasonable estimate of these net tangible benefits for the first full year of operation. The estimated net tangible benefits total is applied to the Tangible Benefits Scale listed in enclosure **(1).**

   b. Intangible Benefits. These are contributions the benefit of which cannot be measured directly in dollar savings but which provide better quality service to the public or assist the Coast Guard in accomplishing its mission in a more effective manner. The amount of the award is determined by the scope of the program affected by the contribution and its impact on that program. To estimate the acceptable cash award for a contribution with intangible benefits, supervisors should consider the length of time the employee spent on the project, degree of complexity, etc. The Cash Award Scale for Intangible Benefits is in enclosure **(2).**

6. Relationship to Other Forms of Recognition. Special Act or Service Awards may be granted along with or addition to performance awards or Quality Step Increases. However, **an employee may not be granted a special act or service award and a performance award for the same contributions that were within job responsibilities.** The act or service must have been nonrecurring and have significantly exceeded normal job expectations.

7. Group Awards. When a contribution has been made by a group of employees, all contributing employees, including supervisors, may share in the award **except when an employee has received a performance award for the same contribution.** The cash award granted may be made in equal shares to each employee in the group or in proportion to their personal contribution to the achievement.

8. Time Limits. For fairness, maximum employee motivation and confidence, it is important that the award process function be done quickly and efficiently. Nominations should be submitted whenever appropriate, but no later than 90 days after the act or achievement which merits the award.

9. Nomination Procedures.

   a. The award justification shall be forwarded to the **Command Staff Advisor** for regulatory review prior to submission to the approving official. Nominations which are disapproved, or for which a lower or higher cash value is approved, will be returned with an explanation to the originator.

   b. A proposed citation highlighting significant achievements should accompany the nomination.

   c. The Commander's Award for Civilian Service may be given with the Special Acts.

10. Approval Authorities.

   a. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, and chiefs of special staff offices at headquarters may approve a cash award up to $5,000. This may be redelegated to subordinate managers and supervisors but no lower than two supervisory levels above the recommending official..

   b. Nominations for cash awards in excess of $5,000 **and up to $10,000** must be forwarded to Commandant **(G-WPC) for review via the local Command Staff Advisor. The nomination shall contain the signature of the local resource funds manager certifying that sufficient funds are available. Commandant (G-WPC) will forward nominations to the Coast Guard Awards Review Board, which will make recommendations to the Commandant (G-C). Commandant (G-WPC) will forward the nomination to Commandant (G-C) for final approval via Commandant (G-WP) and Commandant (G-W).**

   c. Nominations for cash awards in excess of $10,000 and up to $25,000 are approved by the U. S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). All nominations must be forwarded to the Commandant (G-WPC) via the local Command Staff Advisor. The nominations shall contain the signature of the local resource funds manager. Commandant (G-WPC) will forward nominations to the Coast Guard Awards Review Board, which will make recommendations to the Commandant (G-C). Approved nominations are forwarded to the Departmental Director, Office of Human Resource Management for review and for endorsement by the Secretary of Transportation, who forwards nominations to OPM.

   d. Nominations for cash awards in excess of $25,000 are approved by the President. All nominations must be forwarded to the Commandant (G-WPC) via the local Command Staff Advisor. The nominations shall contain the signature of the local resource funds manager. Commandant (G-WPC) will forward nominations to the Coast Guard Awards Review Board, which will make recommendations to the Commandant (G-C). Approved nominations are forwarded to the Departmental Director, Office of Human

6.B.10 d. (cont'd) Resource Management for review and for endorsement by the Secretary of Transportation, who forwards nominations to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The Office of Personnel Management reviews and submits approved nominations to the President for final approval.

11. Repeat Awards. Repeat awards are discouraged and care must be taken to ensure that they are not automatically granted. Reviewing and approving officials, and other managers should be alert to and take action to correct patterns of repetitive nominations. They should ensure that the same level of performance is not unjustifiably rewarded, and that awards are not inappropriately being used as compensation for lack of promotion opportunities, rewards for long and faithful service, etc.

12. Presentation. Awards shall be presented to recipients at appropriate ceremonies as soon as practicable after approval. In addition, publicity should also be given consistent with local command procedures.

C. On-The-Spot Cash Awards.

1. Definition. Supervisors and employees are faced with ever-increasing work load demands due to changing priorities, technological breakthroughs, and a need to get more done with less. Employees often help by taking on extra projects or proposing new ideas that have an immediate benefit to their office's ability to get the job done. To recognize an extra work effort, supervisors are authorized to grant On-The-Spot cash awards as a form of special recognition.

2. Criteria. Employees may receive **no more than two** On-The-Spot cash **awards at the maximum amount of $250 each**, not to exceed $500 in a 12-month period. The contribution must have not been previously recognized by a performance award.

3. Amount of Award. The maximum amount receivable for any one award shall be **$250. Employees receiving awards of less than $250 may receive as many on-the-spot cash awards during the year as it may take to reach a cumulative total of $500 during the year.**

4. Justification. The supervisor shall prepare a brief but explicit written justification **which shall be made in the Remarks section of the SF-52. The SF-52** will be forwarded to **Command Staff Advisor** for regulatory review and processing. **The resource funds manager must certify the availability of sufficient funding.**

5. Approval Authority. First level supervisors may approve On-The-Spot cash awards.

G. 4. Attention should be given to assuring that time off granted will not negatively impact employees credited with large amounts of annual leave carry-over.

H. Approval Authority for Time Off Awards.

1. **Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief of Staff, Chief Counsel, and chiefs of special staff offices at headquarters** are delegated authority to approve time off awards. These officials are authorized to re-delegate authority for managers and supervisors to approve up to 19 hours of time off.

2. If re-delegated, first level supervisors may approve a maximum of one day off without further review. For periods of more than one work day, the decision to grant a time off award and the amount of such award must be reviewed and approved by an official who is at a higher level than the official who made the initial decision, unless there is no official at a higher level in the command.

3. Nominations for time off awards shall be reviewed by the **Command Staff Advisor** for procedural compliance and adequacy of documentation. Upon completion, the **Command Staff Advisor** shall forward the nomination to the approval official.

I. Documentation For Time Off Awards.

1. All time off awards must be recommended and justified in writing. For time off awards of up to **19** hours time off, a brief but explicit written justification shall be **made in the Remarks section of the SF-52** describing the employee's contribution(s).

2. For awards exceeding **19** hours, a **supplemental written justification shall be attached to the SF-52 which must:**

   a. State the name and position of the employee;

   b. Describe how the employee met the required criteria (e.g., give examples of the employee's achievement and performance);

   c. Justify and states the number of hours of time off granted by describing the benefits realized by the Coast Guard from the employee's contribution;

   d. Explain why time off award is justified above any increases in basic pay and/or performance award;

   e. Indicate whether the employee previously received a time off award during the same leave year and, if so, the date of the award and how many hours were granted.

J. Personal Action. The amount of time granted shall be documented on a Standard Form 50 to be retained in the employee's Official Personnel Folder.

K. Merit Promotion. Due weight shall be given to time off awards as an incentive award when rating and ranking an employee for promotion.

Appendix

Determining Award Amounts

Suggestions, Inventions, and Special Acts or Services

Estimated First-Year Benefits to Government	*Amount of Award*
Up to $10,000	10 percent of benefits
$10,001 through $100,00	$1,000 for the first $10,000, plus 3 percent of benefits over $10,000
$100,001 or more	$3,700 for the first $100,000 plus .5 percent of benefits over $100,000

Quick Guide for Calculating Awards Based on Tangible Benefits

Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award	Benefits	Award
Up to $10,000	10%	$50,000	$2,200	$90,000	$3,400	$170,000	$4,050	$1,800,000	$12,200
$11,000	$1,030	$51,000	$2,230	$91,000	$3,430	$175,000	$4,075	$1,900,000	$12,700
$12,000	$1,060	$52,000	$2,260	$92,000	$3,460	$180,000	$4,100	$2,000,000	$13,200
$13,000	$1,090	$53,000	$2,290	$93,000	$3,490	$185,000	$4,125	$2,100,000	$13,700
$14,000	$1,120	$54,000	$2,320	$94,000	$3,520	$190,000	$4,150	$2,200,000	$14,200
$15,000	$1,150	$55,000	$2,350	$95,000	$3,550	$195,000	$4,175	$2,300,000	$14,700
$16,000	$1,180	$56,000	$2,380	$96,000	$3,580	$200,000	$4,200	$2,400,000	$15,200
$17,000	$1,210	$57,000	$2,410	$97,000	$3,610	$225,000	$4,325	$2,500,000	$15,700
$18,000	$1,240	$58,000	$2,440	$98,000	$3,640	$250,000	$4,450	$2,600,000	$16,200
$19,000	$1,270	$59,000	$2,470	$99,000	$3,670	$275,000	$4,575	$2,700,000	$16,700
$20,000	$1,300	$60,000	$2,500	$100,000	$3,700	$300,000	$4,700	$2,800,000	$17,200
$21,000	$1,330	$61,000	$2,530	$101,000	$3,705	$325,000	$4,825	$2,900,000	$17,700
$22,000	$1,360	$62,000	$2,560	$102,000	$3,710	$350,000	$4,950	$3,000,000	$18,200
$23,000	$1,390	$63,000	$2,590	$103,000	$3,715	$375,000	$5,075	$3,100,000	$18,700
$24,000	$1,420	$64,000	$2,620	$104,000	$3,720	$400,000	$5,200	$3,200,000	$19,200
$25,000	$1,450	$65,000	$2,650	$105,000	$3,725	$425,000	$5,325	$3,300,000	$19,700
$26,000	$1,480	$66,000	$2,680	$106,000	$3,730	$450,000	$5,450	$3,400,000	$20,200
$27,000	$1,510	$67,000	$2,710	$107,000	$3,735	$475,000	$5,575	$3,500,000	$20,700
$28,000	$1,540	$68,000	$2,740	$108,000	$3,740	$500,000	$5,700	$3,600,000	$21,200
$29,000	$1,570	$69,000	$2,770	$109,000	$3,745	$550,000	$5,950	$3,700,000	$21,700
$30,000	$1,600	$70,000	$2,800	$110,000	$3,750	$600,000	$6,200	$3,800,000	$22,200
$31,000	$1,630	$71,000	$2,830	$111,000	$3,755	$650,000	$6,450	$3,900,000	$22,700
$32,000	$1,660	$72,000	$2,860	$112,000	$3,760	$700,000	$6,700	$4,000,000	$23,200
$33,000	$1,690	$73,000	$2,890	$113,000	$3,765	$750,000	$6,950	$4,100,000	$23,700
$34,000	$1,720	$74,000	$2,920	$114,000	$3,770	$800,000	$7,200	$4,200,000	$24,200
$35,000	$1,750	$75,000	$2,950	$115,000	$3,775	$850,000	$7,450	$4,300,000	$24,700
$36,000	$1,780	$76,000	$2,980	$116,000	$3,780	$900,000	$7,700	$4,360,000	$25000**
$37,000	$1,810	$77,000	$3,010	$117,000	$3,785	$950,000			
$38,000	$1,840	$78,000	$3,040	$118,000	$3,790	$1,000,000	*Awards over $10,000 require the		
$39,000	$1,870	$79,000	$3,070	$119,000	$3,795	$1,050,000	approval of the Office of Personnel		
$40,000	$1,900	$80,000	$3,100	$120,000	$3,800	$1,100,000	Management		
$41,000	$1,930	$81,000	$3,130	$125,000	$3,825	$1,150,000			
$42,000	$1,960	$82,000	$3,160	$130,000	$3,850	$1,200,000	**Maximum award authorized by the		
$43,000	$1,990	$83,000	$3,190	$135,000	$3,875	$1,250,000	Office of Personnel Management. A		
$44,000	$2,020	$84,000	$3,220	$140,000	$3,900	$1,300,000	Presidential Award of up to $10,000		
$45,000	$2,050	$85,000	$3,250	$145,000	$3,925	$1,350,000	may be paid in addition to the $25,000.		
$46,000	$2,080	$86,000	$3,280	$150,000	$3,950	$1,400,000			
$47,000	$2,110	$87,000	$3,310	$155,000	$3,975	$1,500,000			
$48,000	$2,140	$88,000	$3,340	$160,000	$4,000	$1,600,000			
$49,000	$2,170	$89,000	$3,370	$165,000	$4,025	$1,700,000			

Scale of Awards Based on Intangible Benefits

Extent of Application

Value of Benefit	Limited	Extended	Broad	General
	Affects functions, mission or personnel of one office, facility, installation or an organizational element of a headquarters. Affects a small area of sciences and technology.	Affects functions, mission, or personnel of several offices, facilities, or installations. Affects an important area of science or technology.	Affects functions, mission or personnel of an entire regional area of command. May be applicable to al of an independent agency or a large bureau. Affects a broad area of science and technology.	Affects functions, mission, or personnel of several regional areas or commands, or an entire department or large independent agency or is in the public interest throughout the Nation or beyond.
MODERATE VALUE – Change or modification or an operating principle or procedure which has moderate value sufficient to meet the minimum standard for a cash award: an improvement to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public	$25 - $100 (Compare with $250-$1,000 tangible benefits	$100 - $250 (Compare with $1,000-$2,500 tangible benefits)	$250 - $500	$500 - $1,000
SUBSTANTIAL VALUE – Substantial change or modification of an operating principle or procedure: an important improvement to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	$100 - $250 (Compare with $1,000-$2,500 tangible benefits)	$250 - $500 (Compare with $2,500-$5,000 tangible benefits)	$500 - $1,000 (Compare with $5,000-$10,000 tangible benefits)	$1,000 - $2,500
HIGH VALUE – Complete revision of a basic principle or procedure; a highly significant improvement to the value of a product, major activity, or program, or service to the public.	$250 - $500	$500 - $1,000 (Compare with $5,000-$10,000 tangible benefits)	$1,000 - $2,500 (Compare with $10,000-$60,000 tangible benefits)	$2,500 - $5,000 (Compare with $60,000-$360,000 tangible benefits)
EXCEPTIONAL VALUE – Initiation of a new principle or major procedure; a superior improvement to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	$500 - $1,000	$1,000 - $2,500	$2,500 - $5,000 (Compare with $60,000-$360,000 tangible benefits)	$5,000 - $10,000 (Compare with $360,000-$1,360,000 tangible benefits)

1) The minimum award for tangible benefits may be granted only when the benefits reach or exceed $250.
2) Contributions recognized by cash awards based on intangible benefits must be comparable in value to the Government, with those based on tangible benefits. Comparisons are shown in parenthesis below the award amount in the above chart.
3) When a contribution has both tangible benefits and intangible benefits, the amount of the award must be based on the total value of the contribution to the Government, i.e., a combination of the award amount based on tangible and the award amount based on intangible benefits.