



U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System
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**Report to The White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy
on
Executive Order 13860**

July 2020

On March 4, 2019, President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order (EO) 13860 titled: “Supporting the Transition of Active Duty Service Members and Military Veterans into the Merchant Marine”¹ (Appendix A). This EO brings attention to the vital importance of the U.S. Merchant Marine for national security, safety, and prosperity, and aims to facilitate more easily the transition of active duty Service members into the U.S. Merchant Marine. While recruiting Service Members and Veterans into the Merchant Marine will not provide the required number of merchant mariners needed for our national security requirements, this initiative contributes to the existing cadre of merchant mariners while supporting the transition of active-duty sea service personnel to Veteran status and creating opportunities for well-paying jobs in the U.S. Merchant Marine.

This report fulfills the requirement for a yearly status report under Section 3(b) of EO 13860, in which the U.S. Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS) is directed to:

pursue innovative ways to support merchant mariner credentialing, including through continuation of the Military to Mariner Initiative as appropriate, and shall provide a yearly status report on its efforts under the provisions of this order to the President through the White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy.

The CMTS is a Federal, Cabinet-level committee, chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, that serves as a Federal interagency maritime policy coordinating committee. Established by Presidential Directive in 2004 and authorized by statute in 2012, the CMTS is directed to:

- assess the adequacy of the marine transportation system;
- promote the integration of the marine transportation system with other modes of transportation and other uses of the marine environment; and
- coordinate, improve the coordination of, and make recommendations with regard to Federal policies that impact the marine transportation system.

¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-supporting-transition-active-duty-service-members-military-veterans-merchant-marine/>

All mariners employed aboard U.S. merchant vessels greater than 100 Gross Registered Tons (GRT), and certain vessels 100 GRT or less, are required to hold a valid U.S. Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC). The MMC is issued by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and serves as an internationally recognized identity document and a record of the mariner’s professional qualifications. An MMC is the professional credential that allows individual mariners to be employed on a vessel. An MMC may contain multiple national or international (International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW)) endorsements authorizing service in the deck, engine, or steward’s department as an officer or rating. An MMC is valid for a period of five years from the date of issuance and must be renewed to maintain validity. Qualifying for an MMC is a multi-step process that can include the evaluation of sea service, training, safety and suitability, medical suitability, chemical testing, completion of assessments of skill, and a written examination. The Military to Mariner Initiative has worked to identify military service and training that may be accepted to meet specific requirements for an MMC.

Since October 2014, Federal Departments and Agencies have been working diligently through the CMTS Military to Mariner (M2M) Task Force² to support Veterans transitioning from Active Duty service to civilian employment, and ensure that applicable in-service, mariner-related experience and training are appropriately credited towards an MMC. Subsequently, in response to EO 13860 and under Congressional directives, the Task Force sought to support the credentialing of sea service personnel while on Active Duty.

“Service members receiving merchant mariner credentials increase their level of professionalism, strengthen our mariner pool, and create new opportunities for Veterans once they leave military service.”

- RADM Mark H. Buzby
Administrator
Maritime Administration
CMTS Military to Mariner Task Force Co-Chair

The following briefly describes the role of participating Agencies in this initiative:

- ***U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)***
USACE is one of the largest Federal employers of civilian mariners, in support of the Agency’s navigation missions.
- ***U.S. Army Transportation School (ATS)***
ATS trains Active Duty service mariners to merchant mariner standards, guides them through the merchant mariner credentialing process, and supports their post-military career placements.
- ***U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)***
The USCG Office of Merchant Mariner Credential (CG-MMC) establishes the regulations and policies governing the issuance of U.S. merchant mariner credentials. The USCG National Maritime Center (NMC) is responsible for issuing MMCs to all applicants meeting national and international qualifications. The NMC also maintains a webpage dedicated to aiding military members through the MMC application process. The USCG Force Readiness Command (FORCECOM) develops and maintains

² See <https://www.cmts.gov/topics/m2m>

credentialing resources for Active Duty members to obtain their MMC in support of national security missions, and creates post-service opportunities.

- ***Department of Defense (DOD), Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)***
DOD/OSD develops and maintains resources for advancement of merchant mariner training and credentialing for Active Duty service members in support of national security missions, and creates post-service opportunities.
- ***Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)***
FMCSA shares expertise to recruit, train, and hire Veterans with relevant expertise in the U.S. commercial trucking industry.
- ***U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS)***
DOL supports the education and training of Veterans for civilian careers.
- ***Maritime Administration (MARAD), Office of Maritime Labor & Training***
MARAD promotes a healthy U.S. maritime industry and ensures an equipped maritime workforce in times of national need.
- ***Military Sealift Command (MSC)***
MSC is one of the largest Federal employers of civilian mariners, in support of the Agency's national security missions.
- ***National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)***
NOAA OMAO employs Federal professional mariners and commissioned officers within their workforce to crew NOAA's scientific research fleet.
- ***U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST)***
USDOT monitors this initiative in support of a strong and healthy national transportation network.
- ***U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Benefits Administration***
VA supports the education and training of Veterans for civilian careers.
- ***U.S. Navy (USN)***
Navy develops and maintains resources for advancement of merchant mariner training and credentialing for Active Duty service members in support of national security missions, and creates post-service opportunities.
- ***U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM)***
USTRANSCOM needs a fully staffed and highly competent merchant marine to support movement of national defense materiel.
- ***U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Enrollment Services and Vetting Programs***
The Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC®) is a TSA program that allows for unescorted access to secure maritime facilities. Obtaining a valid TWIC® is the first step in acquiring an MMC.
- ***White House Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy (OTMP)***
OTMP supports the Military to Mariner Initiative at the Administration level.

Additionally, there are two Federal Advisory Committees; the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC)³ and the Merchant Mariner Medical Advisory Committee (MEDMAC) that advise the Secretary of Homeland Security through the Commandant of the Coast Guard on matters relating to personnel in the U.S. Merchant Marine including training, qualifications, certification, documentation, fitness standards, and other matters. The members of these committees are industry stakeholders that have been working with the Services on a standing military- to- mariner initiative since 2001.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER 13860

The following summarizes efforts by DOD and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under each of the five provisions of Section 3 of EO 13860. Section 3 reads as follows:

Sec. 3. Credentialing Support. (a) To support merchant mariner credentialing and the maintenance of such credentials, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security, with respect to the applicable services in their respective departments, and in coordination with one another and with the United States Committee on the Marine Transportation System, shall, consistent with applicable law:

- (i) Within 1 year from the date of this order, identify all military training and experience within the applicable service that may qualify for merchant mariner credentialing, and submit a list of all identified military training and experience to the United States Coast Guard National Maritime Center for a determination of whether such training and experience counts for credentialing purposes;*

³ <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Commercial-Regulations-standards-CG-5PS/Office-of-Merchant-Mariner-Credentialing/MERPAC/>

Sea service Agencies submit relevant training courses and programs to the USCG NMC for evaluation to meet training and service requirements for MMC endorsements. Once approved, courses are valid for five years (unless limited by regulation) and any changes in course instruction must be updated and approved by NMC. As of February 2020, 101 training courses from the Army, MSC, Navy, NOAA, and USCG have valid approvals by the NMC⁴.

DOD Status: Complete. The 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) required all Services to submit military courses applicable to the MMC to the NMC for review. The Services continue to maintain course approvals as the courses change, are updated, or expire.

To date, Navy has submitted 21 courses of instruction and Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS) to NMC for evaluation. Navy submits these to NMC as Programs of Instruction (POIs), or a suite of courses, rather than as individual courses in order to gain the most credit toward MMC endorsements, reduce the requirement for examinations, and better identify gap-training requirements toward specific endorsements.

The Army Transportation School currently has 30 POIs offered that have been reviewed. The school continues to conduct and maintain a comparative analysis of civilian credentials related to a Soldier's military training and skills, resulting in 35 courses or programs approved through the NMC.

DHS Status: In Progress. The USCG is implementing its analysis plan for remaining course approvals. USCG has 825 formal courses, of which 130 have a maritime nexus. Of the 130 maritime-related courses, 29 have been crosswalked and approved by the NMC. Additionally, 10 courses and 30 job-specific qualifications, including Personnel Qualification Standards (PQS), Watch Qualification Standards (WQS), Job Qualification Requirements (JQR), and Enlisted Performance Qualifications (EPQ), have been crosswalked for final processing and submission to the NMC for approval.

"With over 40% of MSC's workforce prior Service, we recognize the importance of the skills and leadership that Veterans, regardless of branch of service, bring to the table. Veterans are helping shape the future of the maritime industry, and this renewable source of talent is directly contributing to Navy's mission and service to customers."

- Steven C. Cade

Executive Director

Military Sealift Command

CMTS Military to Mariner Task Force Co-Chair

⁴ All approved courses (across Services and commercial education providers) are available online at: <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/NMC/pdfs/courses/courses.pdf>

(ii) With respect to National Maritime Center license evaluation, issuance, and examination, take all necessary and appropriate actions to provide for the waiver of fees for active duty service members, if a waiver is authorized and appropriate, and, if a waiver is not granted, take all necessary and appropriate actions to provide for the payment of fees for active duty service members by the applicable service to the fullest extent permitted by law;

DOD Status: Complete. Eligible Service members with sea service experience can have fees related to the MMC paid for by their respective Services through the Voluntary Credentialing Programs. Eligibility can be accessed through the Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) sites to verify applicability.

For example, to date the Army Transportation School has funded credentials resulting in over 558 maritime-related credentials or endorsements issued by the NMC and TSA, based on Service members military training and experience, under the Voluntary Credentialing Program.

DHS Status: In Progress. USCG established the Voluntary Credentialing Program and Military to Mariner Program to validate applicability of, and provide reimbursement to, eligible current USCG Enlisted Service members (Active Duty and Select Reserve) for the evaluation, issuance, and examination fees through the USCG COOL site and MyCG Education, a centralized portal for credentialing requests.

In June 2019, the Commandant of the USCG signed a decision memorandum that recommended initiating a regulatory change to allow for waiving credentialing fees for Active Duty military members⁵ and members of the Uniformed Services⁶. The USCG is currently developing an interim policy to waive MMC fees for Active Duty military and members of the Uniformed Services. The policy to waive fees for these members is expected to be published by late spring 2020. A rulemaking process has been initiated for the long-term implementation of this provision.

(iii) Direct the applicable services to take all necessary and appropriate actions to pay for Transportation Worker Identification Credential cards for active duty service members pursuing or possessing a mariner credential;

The Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC[®]) is a TSA program. A TWIC[®] is required for workers who need unescorted access to secure areas of the Nation's regulated maritime facilities and vessels. All applicants for an MMC must apply and be approved for issuance of a TWIC[®]. Mariners serving on certain vessels may not be required to be issued or carry a TWIC[®].

⁵ As defined in 10 USC §101(a)(4), the "armed forces" services include Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and USCG.

⁶ As defined in 10 USC §101(a)(5)(B), the "uniformed services" include the "armed forces," the Commissioned Corps of NOAA, and the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service.

DOD Status: Complete. Eligible Service members, those with sea service or HAZMAT transportation experience, can have a TWIC[®] paid for by their respective Services through the Voluntary Credentialing Programs. This eligibility can be accessed through the COOL sites to verify applicability. The Navy provides reimbursement of TWIC[®] fees for eligible Active Duty and Reserve Enlisted and Officers. The Army Transportation School pays for TWIC[®] cards for all eligible Army mariners, dependent on job duties.

To simplify the payment for TWIC[®] for all eligible service members, the DOD Services' COOL offices contacted TSA to improve the monitoring and payment process for service members enrolling for a TWIC[®]. In collaboration with TSA's enrollment services provider, DOD plans to obtain payment authorization codes from TSA. These authorization codes can be provided to service members before enrollment, allowing them to use the code as payment and eliminating the need to reimburse members for credentials. Using these codes, the Services can improve management and oversight of the TWIC[®] enrollment process, thus removing "out of pocket" costs for service members.

DHS Status: Complete. The USCG is reimbursing TWIC[®] fees paid by eligible current USCG Enlisted service members (Active Duty and Select Reserve), and has policy on submitting an application to the USCG's Voluntary Credentialing Office in order to obtain preapproval of reimbursement for the TWIC[®] fees.

(iv) *Ensure that members of the applicable services who are to be discharged or released from active duty and who request certification or verification of sea service be provided such certification or verification no later than 1 month after discharge or release; and*

This action is substantially completed across the Services, with ongoing refinement to the process.

DOD Status: Complete. Sea service letters are completed at the local level by the Sailor's Commanding Officer. This decentralized process helps meet the timeliness requirement.

DHS Status: Complete. This was also a requirement for the USCG under the Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014⁷, Section 305.

(v) *Ensure the applicable services have developed, or continue to operate, as appropriate, the online resource known as Credentialing Opportunities On-Line to support separating service members seeking information and assistance on merchant mariner credentialing.*

⁷ "Not later than 30 days after receiving a request for a sea service letter from a member or former member of the Coast Guard under subsection (a), the Secretary shall provide such letter to such member or former member" <https://www.congress.gov/113/plaws/publ281/PLAW-113publ281.pdf>

DOD Status: Complete. All the military Services have an established COOL site⁸, a step-by-step resource mapping skills, training, and credentials needed to meet certain civilian employment qualifications, and even where GI Bill benefits can be used to meet those requirements. Navy and Army COOL sites provide specific maritime crosswalks with sea service training experience gained in their respective branches. Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy COOL provide assistance with TWIC[®] applications.

In addition to Navy COOL, Navy has developed an online resource called MilGears⁹ that customizes each Sailor's career pathway with special emphasis on M2M careers. MilGears will help Sailors identify eligible credentials based on their specific training, qualifications, and experience, all derived from their official service documents (Electronic Training Jacket (ETJ), Joint Services Transcript (JST), and Verification of Military Education and Training (VMET)). There is also a robust tool within MilGears specifically to assist with the M2M application process.

DHS Status: Complete. USCG COOL¹⁰ is now publicly available; USCG COOL connects populations of interested members to the MMC endorsements that best align to their USCG training and experience. USCG COOL is a credentialing informational tool, which provides guidance on credential requirements and funding resources, including active credential funding through the Voluntary Credentialing Program.

⁸ <https://www.cool.osd.mil/>

⁹ <https://milgears.osd.mil/>

¹⁰ <https://www.cool.uscg.mil/>

RECENT SUCCESSES

In recent years, the sea Services have internalized the importance of the Military to Mariner initiative and are actively dedicating resources to the associated programs. The Services view educating and training their Service members to commercial mariner standards as value added for the member during and after their time within the Services. For example, training and expertise gained through obtaining an MMC are incorporated into Navy training to increase the efficacy of Navy operations.

Following the USS Fitzgerald and USS McCain incidents, the Navy's Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) training continuum has undergone a complete transformation. Much of the training for Junior SWOs is now grounded in STCW fundamentals. In addition, they receive significantly increased "reps and sets," or hands-on learning opportunities, via simulators and will have their mariner skills formally assessed up to ten times during their career from Division Officer through Major Command. Finally, every SWO documents their watch standing in personal log books, and receives a quarterly review by their Commanding Officer.

The Howard Coble Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2014 extended the sea service recency requirement for Veterans of the Uniformed Services from three to seven years¹¹. Although this was implemented through policy in 2015, the USCG published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on September 17, 2019, proposing to update the regulations to include this provision. The rule is expected to be finalized by year's end. This allows a greater number of Veterans to apply their sea service experience to their MMC.

Executive Order 13860 was codified through the 2020 NDAA, signed into law by the President on December 20, 2019, affirming commitment to this critical initiative. The legislation expanded upon EO 13860; Table 1 provides a comparison of the applicability of the different provisions and identifies new provisions introduced in the 2020 NDAA.

¹¹ "(a) ENDORSEMENTS FOR VETERANS.—Section 7101 of title 46, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following: "(j) The Secretary may issue a license under this section in a class under subsection (c) to an applicant that—“(1) has at least 3 months of qualifying service on vessels of the uniformed services (as that term is defined in section 101(a) of title 10) of appropriate tonnage or horsepower within the 7-year period immediately preceding the date of application; and “(2) satisfies all other requirements for such a license.””
<https://www.congress.gov/113/plaws/publ281/PLAW-113publ281.pdf>



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sarah B. Stone has come up through the ranks as a deck side mariner, utilizing all the tools available to her to get her Master's Degree from one of the Army's Military to Mariner partner schools while deployed.

CW2 Stone entered the Army Transportation Corps in 2004 as a Watercraft Operator. Her first assignment was aboard the US Army Small Tug in the 73rd Transportation Company, Fort Eustis, VA. Currently CW2 Stone is the First Mate deployed on the Logistics Support Vessel 6 in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, Kuwait.

Table 1: Comparison of Military to Mariner programs in EO 13860 and 2020 NDAA.

	EXECUTIVE ORDER 13860 Executive Order on Supporting the Transition of Active Duty Service Members and Military Veterans into the Merchant Marine	SEC. 3511. MILITARY TO MARINER (2020 NDAA) National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2020
Status	Signed March 4, 2019	Signed into law December 20, 2019 (Public Law No: 116-92)
(a) Credentialing Support <i>Identification of all training and experience that may qualify for merchant mariner credentialing, and submission to NMC for approval</i>	EO 13860 Section 3(i) Applies to any members of the “armed forces,” as defined in 10 USC §101(a)(4)(A), which are Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and USCG	Applies to all applicable Services under the “Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating when it is not operating as a service in the Department of the Navy, the Secretary of Commerce, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.” This follows the definition of “uniformed services”, which includes the armed forces and members of the NOAA and Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.
(b) Review of Applicable Services NEW to 2020 NDAA	<i>*this section is a new provision of the 2020 NDAA and therefore is not reflected in EO 13860</i>	Requires the “United States Coast Guard Commandant” to make a determination of training and experience submitted to the NMC within 6 months of submission
(c) Fees and Services <i>Waiver of Fees for credentialing and TWIC®, sea service letters, development of COOL sites, medical certifications (only medical certifications are NEW to 2020 NDAA)</i>	EO 13860 Sections 3(ii), (iii), (iv), (v) Applies to any members of the “armed forces,” as defined in 10 USC §101(a)(4)(A)	Applies to the applicable Services under the “Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating when it is not operating as a Service in the Department of the Navy, and the Secretary of Commerce” *The medical certification section is new to the legislation and not included in EO 13860. “(5) take all necessary and appropriate actions to review and implement service-related medical certifications to merchant mariner credential requirements.”
(d) Advancing Military to Mariner Within the Employer Agencies NEW to 2020 NDAA <i>Direct Hire Authority</i>	<i>*this section is a new provision of the 2020 NDAA and therefore is not reflected in EO 13860</i>	Creates direct hire authority for “The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Department in which the Coast Guard is operating when it is not operating as a service in the Department of the Navy, and the Secretary of Commerce” to employ separated members of the uniformed services with valid merchant mariner licenses or sea service experience

The direct hire authority is significant because it expedites the ability of Federal Agencies to hire credentialed Veterans, improving a process that has historically taken upwards of six months. MEDMAC is developing recommendations on the applicability of service-related medical evaluations to the requirements for merchant mariner medical certificates.

In addition to the provision of EO 13860, the following accomplishments have been achieved through the Military to Mariner initiative:

- assignment of permanent staff to the Navy and USCG COOL programs;
- USCG Academy graduates may receive an MMC with a 100 GRT or 50 GRT Master Near Coastal endorsement (after successful completion of service and examination) upon graduation;
- review of the application of GI Bill benefits to maritime training;
- identification of ways to recruit, train, and retain Merchant Mariners to support both national defense and Federal mission accomplishment.



Military Sealift Command's civil service mariner Paul Snyder joined MSC in 1997 after serving in the Navy as a Fireman and Boiler Technician. Using the experience and training he received in the military, the U.S. Coast Guard issued him merchant mariner credentials for a Qualified Member of the Engine Department. In 2012, he attained an Unlimited Chief Engineer's license, the highest level of certification for an engineer in the merchant marine. By 2014, he was sailing on that license as Chief Engineer aboard the USNS Safeguard, a Towing and Salvage ship.

Today, Chief Engineer Snyder is continuing his career as a mariner, helping MSC support our nation by delivering supplies and conducting specialized mission across the world's oceans.

CONCLUSION

The Departments of Defense and Homeland Security and their relevant Agencies have completed, or are well on their way to meeting, the requirement in the provisions of EO 13860 and statutory language (Table 2). These Agencies will continue to support this initiative through the CMTS.

Table 2: Summary of Departmental implementation status of EO provisions.

Provision	DOD	DHS
<i>i. Identification of Training and Experience</i>	Complete	In Progress
<i>ii. Waiver of MMC fees</i>	Complete	In Progress
<i>iii. Payment for TWIC[®] cards</i>	Complete	Complete
<i>iv. Sea Service Letters</i>	Complete	Complete
<i>v. Development of COOL resources</i>	Complete	Complete

The U.S. Merchant Marine and the maritime industry in general will benefit greatly from the skills and experience of sea-going Service members and other Veterans. Executive Order 13860, and its codification through the 2020 NDAA, affirms the U.S. Government's commitment to supporting the transition of Service members into the U.S. Merchant Marine.