



An Open Letter from the Director of Auxiliary, Fifth District Northern Region

On the Proposal for Division Realignment

One of the chief responsibilities of the Director of Auxiliary and the Executive Committee leadership is to assure the continued health and vitality of all Auxiliary units within the Region. It is essential, therefore, that leadership maintains an awareness and appreciation of what is happening throughout the Region's units; what trends are shaping its future, what impact demographics and the economy plays in regional evolution, how much leadership bench-depth exists and how effective (or not) is the cultivation of future leaders are but a few examples.

In order to get a current barometric read on the Region's climate, EXCOM chartered a review by your past Commodores to assess the current health of Flotillas throughout the Region and to identify areas of concern where a unit's future well-being may be in jeopardy. Their analysis was full-spectrum—everything from personal experience, anecdotal insights, and raw-data analysis. The past Commodores presented their findings and recommendations to the EXCOM. The conclusions EXCOM drew and the plan for going forward are:

- Although the Region is bounded by Sector Delaware Bay's geographic area of responsibility, the environment within that boundary is dynamic in terms of both demographics and economics; change and evolution are inevitable. We must be responsive and be able to adapt.
- There are a variety of stressors impacting the continued health of D5NR units, but not universally across all units. For some it is population shift, either or both of the membership or community served. For some it is a shallow gene pool for future leadership or lack of enthusiasm for new leaders to emerge. Still others are able to successfully shoulder the impact and charge on.
- The EXCOM and Past Commodores have been able to determine a recommended realignment plan in order to salvage and strengthen all units within the Region. The EXCOM evaluation, however, is at a very high level. It is offered as a recommended starting point for working towards a final proposal. That final proposal must come from the bottom up—Flotillas must evaluate the raw EXCOM proposal and either concur, offer alternatives, or at least provide amplifying information not able to be considered at the high level of analysis performed by the EXCOM.
- Equity in representation across the Areas, logistical concerns, future health of the units, was all considered in making the recommendation. Ultimately, there will be some units that are unsustainable which will either be disestablished or merged with others. Some Division boundaries will shift, incorporating Flotillas that had previously belonged to another Division. There are even considerations being made to merge Divisions in some cases.
- While EXCOM is fully cognizant of the sentimental attachment and pride associated with unit histories for members, it recognizes that the best course of action for assuring that legacy lives on



in some cases is to join a weak, faltering unit into another, strengthening both and carrying the flag forward. In those instances where units are merged, the charter date will remain whichever was older.

- One of the key challenges will be how to handle the merging of Staff Officers and Elected Officers. There are some suggestions being floated. This discussion, too, should be held as units and Divisions develop their Collaborative Merge Plan. (Once a final proposal is accepted, part of the process will be for units and Divisions to establish a transition planning team comprised of representatives from the affected components to work out how to make a smooth transition. The Plan needs to include finances, logistics, and programs continuity, elected and staff leadership, etc. The Division Commander should approve the Plan, or in the case of merging Divisions, the Area Captain.)
- The EXCOM baseline proposal by now should have been presented to you by your Division Commander via the Area Captain. The goal is to have the units review, make recommendations for improvement, and revise the plan into a final action proposal around the time of our Fall D-Train, to remain on target for fully implementing the re-Divisioning on January 1st, 2015.

Please be certain, it is absolutely essential that the final reorganization is a consensus-derived solution. The flotillas are the organizational elements most impacted, and the ones that it is the goal to support. The new Division boundaries cannot be drawn until the Flotillas' reorganization is finalized. To establish Divisions before the Flotillas are settled would be arbitrary and defeat the purpose of this effort. This is to be a bottom-up solution to strengthening the base of the organization, one that it is the responsibility of leadership to initiate and support.

This is your opportunity to take control of your destiny. Please make the effort and invest in how the future map of D5NR is colored.

Very respectfully,

P. D. J. Arnett
Commander

U.S. Coast Guard

Director Auxiliary, Fifth District Northern Region