

the Coast Guard as the Chief of Staff to the President.

(Added Pub. L. 109-163, div. A, title V, § 597(a), Jan. 6, 2006, 119 Stat. 3283.)

#### § 55. District Ombudsmen

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commandant shall appoint in each Coast Guard District a District Ombudsman to serve as a liaison between ports, terminal operators, shipowners, and labor representatives and the Coast Guard.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the District Ombudsman shall be the following:

(1) To support the operations of the Coast Guard in each port in the District for which the District Ombudsman is appointed.

(2) To improve communications between and among port stakeholders including, port and terminal operators, ship owners, labor representatives, and the Coast Guard.

(3) To seek to resolve disputes between the Coast Guard and all petitioners regarding requirements imposed or services provided by the Coast Guard.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—

(1) COMPLAINTS.—The District Ombudsman may examine complaints brought to the attention of the District Ombudsman by a petitioner operating in a port or by Coast Guard personnel.

(2) GUIDELINES FOR DISPUTES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The District Ombudsman shall develop guidelines regarding the types of disputes with respect to which the District Ombudsman will provide assistance.

(B) LIMITATION.—The District Ombudsman shall not provide assistance with respect to a dispute unless it involves the impact of Coast Guard requirements on port business and the flow of commerce.

(C) PRIORITY.—In providing such assistance, the District Ombudsman shall give priority to complaints brought by petitioners who believe they will suffer a significant hardship as the result of implementing a Coast Guard requirement or being denied a Coast Guard service.

(3) CONSULTATION.—The District Ombudsman may consult with any Coast Guard personnel who can aid in the investigation of a complaint.

(4) ACCESS TO INFORMATION.—The District Ombudsman shall have access to any Coast Guard document, including any record or report, that will aid the District Ombudsman in obtaining the information needed to conduct an investigation of a complaint.

(5) REPORTS.—At the conclusion of an investigation, the District Ombudsman shall submit a report on the findings and recommendations of the District Ombudsman, to the Commander of the District in which the petitioner who brought the complaint is located or operating.

(6) DEADLINE.—The District Ombudsman shall seek to resolve each complaint brought in accordance with the guidelines—

(A) in a timely fashion; and

(B) not later than 4 months after the complaint is officially accepted by the District Ombudsman.

(d) APPOINTMENT.—The Commandant shall appoint as the District Ombudsman an individual who has experience in port and transportation systems and knowledge of port operations or of maritime commerce (or both).

(e) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary shall report annually to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the matters brought before the District Ombudsmen, including—

(1) the number of matters brought before each District Ombudsman;

(2) a brief summary of each such matter; and

(3) the eventual resolution of each such matter.

(Added Pub. L. 111-281, title II, § 214(a), Oct. 15, 2010, 124 Stat. 2915.)

#### § 56. Chief Acquisition Officer

(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Coast Guard a Chief Acquisition Officer selected by the Commandant who shall be a Rear Admiral or civilian from the Senior Executive Service (career reserved) and who meets the qualifications set forth under subsection (b). The Chief Acquisition Officer shall serve at the Assistant Commandant level and have acquisition management as that individual's primary duty.

(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—

(1) The Chief Acquisition Officer and any flag officer serving in the Acquisition Directorate shall be an acquisition professional with a Level III acquisition management certification and must have at least 10 years experience in an acquisition position, of which at least 4 years were spent as—

(A) the program executive officer;

(B) the program manager of a Level 1 or Level 2 acquisition project or program;

(C) the deputy program manager of a Level 1 or Level 2 acquisition;

(D) the project manager of a Level 1 or Level 2 acquisition; or

(E) any other acquisition position of significant responsibility in which the primary duties are supervisory or management duties.

(2) The Commandant shall periodically publish a list of the positions designated under paragraph (1).

(3) In this subsection each of the terms "Level 1 acquisition" and "Level 2 acquisition" has the meaning that term has in chapter 15 of this title.

(c) FUNCTIONS OF THE CHIEF ACQUISITION OFFICER.—The functions of the Chief Acquisition Officer include—

(1) monitoring the performance of acquisition projects and programs on the basis of applicable performance measurements and advising the Commandant, through the chain of command, regarding the appropriate business strategy to achieve the missions of the Coast Guard;

(2) maximizing the use of full and open competition at the prime contract and sub-contract levels in the acquisition of property,