# Analysis of the Career Intentions Survey (CIS) CG-1B1 Executive Summary
## [Updated as of 31 March 2019 ]

## Background

The Career Intentions Survey (CIS) is a survey of active duty officer and enlisted members who are leaving active duty (categorized as "leavers" for the purpose of this report), enlisted members who have recently re-enlisted or extended and officers at five, eleven and seventeen years of service (categorized as "stayers" for the purpose of this report) (Encl 1-5). The CIS monitors opinions associated with retention.

The "Analysis of Career Intentions Survey" from October 2018 provided an examination of Coast Guard retention research from 2016 to October 2018. The Executive Summary of the October 2018 Analysis of the Career Intentions Survey is included (Encl 6).

Enclosures 2-5 report the principle variances between stayers and leavers combined from 2016 to 2019. Using a full year's recent data, below you will find a summary of the 2018 questions scored highest and lowest by stayers and leavers.

## Response Rates

CIS response rates (Encl 3) for the Coast Guard appear low, however, they remain on par with standard surveys of this type and are the highest of all military services ("leavers" and "stayers"). The CG response rate for 2018 was 28% for leavers up from 20% in 2017. Response rates for stayers was 41% in 2018 up from 36% in 2017. Command support for this survey is critical to ensure members' responses are fully captured.

| USCG Leavers (respondents / % total) | | | | USCG Stayers (respondents / % total) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 (to date) | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 (to date) |
| 159 / 27% | 298 / 20% | 456 / 28% | 67 / 26% | 749 / 54% | 682 / 36% | 1624 / 41% | 694 / 40% |

The four DOD services only send surveys to departing personnel. Return average rates for respective Services: Army 5%, USMC 6%, USAF 37% and USN 29%.

Questions scoring **highest** for **stayers** in 2018 (Encl 5):

1. The Coast Guard missions are important to me.
2. I am treated with dignity and respect at my unit.
3. A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists within the Coast Guard.
4. I had the opportunity to work on special projects/programs.
5. My job gave me a feeling of personal accomplishment.

Questions scoring **lowest** for **stayers** in 2018 (Encl 5):

1. Rewards and recognition were linked to performance.
2. Evaluations fairly reflected the performance.
3. I have witnessed harassment while in the Coast Guard.
4. At my current unit, the workload was distributed fairly.
5. I had the materials and equipment needed to do my work right.


Questions scoring **highest** for **leavers** in 2018 (Encl 5):

1. The Coast Guard missions are important to me.
2. I had the opportunity to work on special projects/programs.
3. I am treated with dignity and respect at my unit.
4. A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists within the Coast Guard.
5. People in my workgroup felt they were involved in the way work gets done.


Questions scoring **lowest** for **leavers** in 2018 (Encl 5):

1. Rewards and recognition were linked to performance.
2. Evaluations fairly reflected the performance.
3. I have witnessed harassment while in the Coast Guard.
4. I had the right amount of control over my own career and future.
5. Complaints and problems were resolved fairly.


Questions with the **largest scoring difference** between **stayers** and **leavers** (Encl 4):

1. I had the right amount of control over my own career and future.
2. My job effectively used my skills and abilities.
3. I am treated with dignity and respect at my unit.
4. I have witnessed harassment while in the Coast Guard.
5. I had the right amount of control over my job.
6. The morale within my work-group was good. [Tie w/#4 and #5.]


## Results and Conclusions

- Stayers and leavers see their original choice to join the Coast Guard as a good decision and they are committed to the missions.
- The CIS continues to demonstrate that self-determination and unit level issues are key drivers to stay or leave the Service.  These drivers are consistent with other organizations and align with lessons learned from research within the industrial and organizational psychology fields.
- Most of our leavers' lowest scores are for concerns at the local level.  These results continue to confirm that leadership to our people is of the utmost importance.

**Recommendations**

Leadership Assessment Survey (LAS):  The establishment of the LAS (previously ULDP) is supporting local leadership.  The LAS is a unit-driven assessment that provides the results immediately with a direct linkage to the Coast Guard Leadership competencies Leading Self, Leading Others and Leading Performance & Change.  Understanding problems at a local level will assist in the establishment of actions to improve the culture and climate at the unit level and in turn assist in the retention of our members.  As the CIS survey results continue to demonstrate, members depart the Service generally for issues at the unit level.  [The DEOCS survey is available to units with a minimum of 25 people (we have roughly 300 units with less than 25 people), however, the LAS is available to units, offices, shops, work teams, departments and divisions with at least 10 people.  These are unit level results with no demographic data collected to ensure confidentiality.]  The LAS goes hand in hand with the updating of unit and team level leadership resources provided by the Office of Leadership (CG-128) and the Leadership Development Center.  Link to LAS: https://cg.portal.uscg.mil/units/CG-128/SitePages/ULAS.aspx

2019 Coast Guard Organizational Assessment Survey (OAS):  The 2019 OAS will be fielded late April 2019.  Units with a minimum of eight responses will receive unit level results, thus supporting both large and small units.  In most cases, units will be able to compare results to the community of similar units (e.g. my boat station vs all boat stations).  The OAS is also a key tool in measuring views by community such as enlisted ratings and unit types as well as by race, ethnic and gender.  The long history of the OAS from 2002 to 2019 (nine surveys) provides a rich source of data for program and community managers to effectively manage their programs and communities.  Units with eight responses or more on the 2017 OAS have had their data loaded into CGBI and access has been given to unit COs/OICs and XOs/XPOs.  Unit level results from the 2019 OAS will also be placed in CGBI allowing for comparison to the 2017 results.  Unit leadership support for the 2019 OAS is paramount to having the data to measure, trend and compare the unit, community and Coast Guard culture in how we, at all levels, are meeting the needs of Coast Guard people.

CIS Report Cycle:  The next CIS report will run again through the end of the calendar year.  Due to significant timeframe differences in the recruiting and departure of personnel, an annual cycle will best reflect trends.  Producing the CIS report annually upon the close of the calendar year will provide for year to year comparison and take into account the usual summer end of service obligation for the majority of Coast Guard personnel.

All Hands on Deck to Retain the Women and Men of the World's Best Coast Guard:  All leaders from Flags/SESs, senior civilians, unit commanders, shop leaders and down to the deckplate level are responsible for fostering an inclusive environment that supports the retention of the workforce.  Creating a culture of respect and inclusion in line with the Coast Guard Core Values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty is at the heart of a command climate that supports our people and ensures mission success.  The CIS assists the Service in measuring the impact of our actions.  It provides insight into the reasons why members may consider staying or leaving the organization.  Ensuring CIS results reach a broad audience will assist in educating leaders and followers as they work to cultivate healthy climates at our units, amongst teams and within the communities we serve.  The goal of this annual report is to continue assisting leaders who are on the "front lines" of battle to retain talented people who make up the world's best Coast Guard.

Your feedback regarding this survey, report and any observations are greatly appreciated and can be directed to the CIS POC, Mr. Paul Redmond.

**Administration and How To Use CIS Results**

It is highly encouraged that all departing members take the CIS. Because it is not solely an exit survey, officers are provided the assessment at the five, 11 and 17 year marks. Enlisted members are provided the CIS when they re-enlist or extend. The CIS is sent to officers and enlisted members electronically by the CG-1B staff 60-90 days prior to the specified dates of departure from active duty. I ask that all commands support and make time for these members to take this critical assessment (~15 min).

The CIS is a Servicewide review of why military members leave the organization or why they stay. As leaders, we can use these results to have a discussion with our members to better understand departures and what we may be able to do to make a unit more inclusive and supportive to retaining members. The core purpose of inclusion and support is to truly see, hear and value our people as individuals and what they bring to our units and the Coast Guard as a whole. DHS conducts the exit survey process for our exiting Coast Guard civilians.

The CIS results, along with the DEOCS, OAS, CGILE (ALCOAST 414/18) & FEVS (for those with civilian employees), coupled with the LAS, provide lines of position to manage and lead our units. As every good navigator knows, the more accurate a line of position, the better the fix on where our people stand. Through informed engagement we can make appropriate course corrections to positively impact the environment we work day in and day out.

People continue to ask why we don't have open-ended questions on many surveys. This is because the scaled questions provide us the general direction of how people view the Coast Guard and their local situation. Backing that up, there is a rich body of leadership, industrial/organizational psychology and social/positive psychology that helps us understand the details of why people leave an organization and that research continues to point to local issues as the key to how others are treated. Treatment of our personnel refers back to being seen, heard and valued. One LAS item for scoring is "People at my unit are comfortable bringing up controversial issues." This is critical because, at the local level, if our personnel need a survey to provide input to their chain of command then research shows there is a deeper issue of trust that would not be addressed well by comments in a survey. I recommend that leaders use the many tools at their disposal to assess the climate of their unit, engage positively and strive to deliver substantive change at the unit level based on insights provided from this myriad of sources.

People are our #1 priority and resource. Understanding retention is critical and helps sustain high-quality performance to then significantly enhance mission accomplishment. Thank you for taking the care our personnel deserve in order to achieve safe and effective operations.

Encl:   (1) List of CIS Questions
        (2) Bar Graph of CIS Question with Mean Results
        (3) CIS Questions with Mean Results of Leavers and Stayers
        (4) CIS Questions Mean Results Sorted by 2018 Difference Between Leavers and Stayers
        (5) CIS Questions Responses by Year (sorted low to high)
        (6) Executive Summary of the October 2018 Analysis of the CIS