

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA)

CULTURE CHANGE

ACTION PLAN

January 6, 2017

The USMMA, with the full support of the entire U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), must immediately embark on a robust and comprehensive effort to transform the Academy's culture such that every Midshipman is respected, valued and can develop to her or his fullest potential to serve the Nation as a leader of exemplary character. The entire USMMA community must have zero tolerance for sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH), retaliation, bullying, hazing, coercion, victim blaming and alcohol misuse/abuse. Leadership, staff, faculty, and Midshipmen must all unite to support victims and hold those who violate Academy core values and standards accountable for their actions.

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

Build and Align the Academy Leadership and Management Team

- Establish a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO)
- Fill key positions, including Dean, Commandant, SAPRO positions, Civil Rights Director
- Revise performance plans to include support for cultural change, SASH prevention and response programs, and personal accountability
- Establish engagement protocol for developing a unified message for leadership and management from all stakeholder groups
- Add Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) to leadership team (complete)
- Include SASH Updates at all leadership meetings (complete)

Develop Integrated Multi-Year Sexual Assault and Harassment Prevention and Response Campaign

- Training & familiarization plan for SAPRO staff (USMMA)
- Revise SASH policies and reporting, investigation and response protocols, including obligation to intervene (USMMA/MARAD)
- Review and update all SASH training models, and include training evaluation and credentialing (USMMA/MARAD)
- Issue Strategic Campaign planning guidance (MARAD)
- Organize Strategic Campaign planning team and develop milestones (USMMA)
- Intensive and ongoing communications w/stakeholders (OST/MARAD/USMMA)
- SAPRO staff and SARC attend SASH conferences (USMMA ongoing)
- Follow-on assessment & feedback on Sea Year credentialing (OST)

Change Culture from Victim-Blaming to Advocating For and Protecting the Victim

- Establish policies and procedures against retaliation and reprisal including training, reporting, response, investigation and supporting victims (USMMA)
- Establish rapid response team to address threats (USMMA)
- Monitor allegations of retaliation and reprisal (USMMA)
- Provide results of investigations to victims in writing (USMMA)
- Strengthen and publicize victim advocacy programs (USMMA)
- Reduce barriers to seeking health care (USMMA)

Instill Sense of Personal Responsibility for Preventing and Addressing SASH and Retaliation at All Levels within USMMA

- Build on existing cultural strengths of service, self-sacrifice, discipline and teamwork (USMMA)
- Emphasize personal responsibility and accountability in annual SASH Training, and throughout USMMA programs for Midshipmen, staff and faculty (USMMA, ongoing throughout the year)
- Intense communications and informal training with targeted key groups (sports teams, clubs, etc.) and small groups of Midshipmen, staff and faculty (USMMA leadership)

Build Shared Ownership Among Academy, MARAD, and Industry

- Regularly engage with industry in formal gatherings such as the 2016 Call to Action (MARAD lead)
- Shipboard Climate Compliance Team (SCCT) develop a Sea Year Credentialing Process in conjunction with the industry and maritime unions (Completed)
- Engage with industry and maritime unions to develop Best Practices Guide through Ship Operators Cooperative Program (SOCP) and MARAD Working Group. (USMMA/MARAD ongoing)
- Convene and Chair the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention (SAPR) Working Group authorized by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Due by January 13). Provide the Working Group's report to Congress by September 25, 2017 (MARAD)

Establish Process for Credentialing Shipping Companies for Participation in Sea Year

- Companies must meet comprehensive credentialing requirements before Midshipmen may train onboard their vessels (MARAD, USMMA)
- Continue engagement with industry through Ship Operations Cooperative Program (SOCP) (MARAD/Industry/USMMA)

Fully Prepare and Support Midshipmen in Sea Year Program

- Revise Sea Year guidance and policies for Midshipmen
- Encourage industry participation in training and preparation for Sea Year
- Establish improved procedures for communications and reporting between Midshipmen at sea and the Academy (USMMA, MARAD)

- Investigate alternative options for Sea Year communications in consultation with shipping companies (MARAD/USMMA/Industry)
- Implement updated scenario-based training as part of pre-embarkation training
- Roll out “EverFi”¹ including enhanced Alcohol Awareness Training and sexual assault prevention training for Midshipmen and staff and faculty (USMMA)
- Strengthen reintegration for Midshipmen, including small group sessions to share experiences and offering support services (USMMA)

Establish Robust, Continual Feedback Process from Sea Year

- Integrate Academy and industry feedback process. (MARAD ongoing)

Medium-Term Actions

(During FY 2017)

Actions to Build and Align Academy Leadership and Management Team

- Continue to fill key leadership vacancies as they arise to support SASH Strategic Campaign (USMMA/MARAD)

Actions to Develop Integrated Strategic SASH Campaign

- Focus Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April 2017) programs on themes of accountability and support for victims (USMMA)
- Request resources in conjunction with FY18 Budget process (MARAD)

Instill Sense of Personal Responsibility for Preventing and Addressing SASH and Retaliation at All Levels within USMMA

- Add SASH and personal responsibility to Performance Plans for 2017-2018 Evaluation Period (USMMA)

Build Shared Ownership Among Academy, MARAD and Industry

- SOCP delivers Best Practice Guidelines for industry (MARAD/SOCP)
- Continue work on Computer Based Training in cooperation with SOCP (MARAD ongoing)
- SOCP delivers Best Practice Computer-based Training product for distribution to the industry (MARAD/SOCP - May 2017)

Establish Process for Credentialing Shipping Companies for Participation in Sea Year

- Assessment of Credentialing Program (MARAD/USMMA)

Fully Prepare and Support Midshipmen in Sea Year Program

¹ EverFi, Inc. develops training in several areas including, health and wellness, diversity and inclusion, alcohol and substance abuse, and sexual assault prevention. The company offers evidence-based online programs, data and advisory services.

- Evaluate and revise pre-embarkation training (USMMA)
- Evaluate and revise Sea Year policies, regulations, reporting and response procedures (USMMA)
- Examine all aspects of the Sea Year program including scope, structure, timing and post-graduation career plans (USMMA)

Establish Robust, Continual Feedback Process from Sea Year

- Continue enhancing Academy's reintegration process (USMMA)
- Continually compare industry feedback with Academy findings for consistency and common understanding of Sea Year climate (USMMA)
- Take actions if necessary with shipping companies if problems or discrepancies arise (MARAD SCCT)