



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND
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PENSACOLA, FLORIDA 32508-5220

NETCINST 5370.1F
N00G
28 Aug 2025

NETC INSTRUCTION 5370.1F

From: Commander, Naval Education and Training Command

Subj: NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND HOTLINE PROGRAM

Ref: (a) DoD Instruction 7050.01 of 17 October 2017
(b) SECNAVINST 5370.5C
(c) SECNAVINST 5430.92C
(d) NAVINSGEN Investigations Manual of May 2024
(e) Department of the Navy Hotline Program Standard Operating Procedure of August 2023
(f) DoD Directive 7050.06 of 17 April 2015
(g) Guide to Investigating Military Whistleblower Reprisals and restricted Complaints of 18 April 2017
(h) Naval Inspector General Certification Manual
(i) DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 2, DoD Information Security Program: Marking of Information, of 24 February 2012
(j) SECNAV M-5210.1

1. Purpose. To establish the policies and procedures for the management, coordination, and operation of the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) Hotline Program.

2. Cancellation. NETCINST 5370.1E.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all Department of the Navy (DON) personnel to include personnel assigned to non-appropriated fund activities within the NETC domain.

4. Background

a. References (a) and (b) establishes guidance on the Department of Defense (DoD) and DON Hotline programs. Reference (c) provides information regarding the DON policy to eliminate acquisition fraud, waste, and related improprieties from the DON. This instruction amplifies references (a) through (c) and assigns responsibilities for implementing these programs within the NETC domain.

b. Commander, NETC (CNETC) is committed to an active, aggressive program directed toward the elimination of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement within NETC. All subordinate commands will actively support this program.

c. Command evaluation, audit, inspection, and investigative components within NETC will execute their assigned responsibilities to detect, deter, and eliminate fraud, waste, mismanagement, and related improprieties occurring within the DON.

5. Policy

a. General

(1) The policy of the DON is to effectively manage all resources entrusted to its care. All personnel will be vigilant to the possibility of illegal or improper acts and will report such illegal or improper acts to proper authorities. Reference (c) defines "proper authority" to include "the immediate superior of the person submitting the report or that individual's commander or commanding officer (CO), but if either are implicated, an appropriate inspector general (IG), a special agent of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), the DoD or Navy hotlines, or any other portion of the DOD or Naval IG."

(2) The Hotline Program is an important tool used to identify and correct fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and related improprieties. Prompt, responsive, and impartial action will be taken to examine substantive allegations; to pursue corrective measures per applicable laws, regulations, and directives; and to report the result of such inquiries via the chain of command.

(3) Hotline complaints referred to NETC will be investigated by NETC staff personnel or, at CNETC's discretion, referred to echelon 4 commands for investigation and reporting. In those instances where NETC staff personnel conduct the investigation, feedback will be provided to the appropriate command leadership.

(4) Reference (d) establishes guidelines for conducting investigations. All NETC activities will use this manual as a guide for hotline investigations. Reference (e) provides

standards, guidelines, and formats to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of DON hotline operations. Process flowcharts to be followed by NETC commands conducting hotline investigations are available from the NETC IG office.

(5) The Naval IG Hotline Tracking System (NIGHTS) is the primary data collection tool for the Office of the Naval IG (NAVINSGEN) contacts, and designed to track, manage, and analyze hotline data in support of commanders and COs at all levels. All NETC activities will use NIGHTS per reference (f) and current NAVINSGEN policy statements. The NIGHTS web site address is: <https://nights.ncdc.navy.mil>.

(6) References (f) and (g) establish the policy for military whistleblower protection. Commands receiving a military whistleblower complaint will immediately notify the NETC IG by phone and provide an advance copy of the complaint via encrypted e-mail. The original complaint will be entered into Defense Case Activity Tracking System enterprise (D-CATSe) by the command receiving the military whistleblower complaint. Echelon 4 commands that do not have a certified military whistleblower investigator will refer cases to NETC via D-CATSe within two working days. Commands that do not have access to D-CATSe will advise NETC during their initial phone and e-mail notifications. NETC will notify NAVINSGEN of all reprisal allegations within five working days of their receipt and will conduct military whistleblower reprisal (MWBR) investigations for commands that do not have a qualified MWBR investigator, unless NAVINSGEN directs otherwise.

(7) Reference (g) establishes procedures for conducting investigations of alleged military whistleblower reprisal and will be used as a guide when conducting such investigations.

b. Investigative Standards. Inquiries and investigations will be conducted in an independent and professional manner without command influence, pressure, or fear of reprisal. All credible allegations will be thoroughly and impartially investigated and reported.

(1) Independence. Perceptions generated by the handling of hotline investigations greatly influence the success of the program. All allegations must be examined by officials outside and independent of the operation in which the complaint

allegedly occurred. Echelon 4 commanders referring complaints to subordinates for investigation of their own commands must ensure objectivity and impartiality are maintained throughout the investigative process. Individuals and organizations assigned to perform an investigation must be free, in fact and appearance, from any impairment of objectivity and impartiality. The investigator must meet basic selection criteria, (e.g., sufficient seniority, maturity, professional experience, and independence in the matter under inquiry, as if appointed for a Manual of the Judge Advocate General investigation). The assistance of others with special professional or technical skills may be used when warranted. If there is a conflict of interest and the receiving command IG must recuse themselves because the investigation cannot be conducted objectively or impartially, the receiving command will contact NETC IG to discuss before transferring the case.

(2) Accountability. Commanders, COs, and supervisors have the duty to hold subordinates accountable for their actions and to correct systemic faults. The investigation must provide the information necessary to exercise that responsibility effectively. If the investigation proves (or gives the perception of) wrongdoing, the investigative report should contain a recommendation for the deciding official to take appropriate action.

(3) Completeness. Hotline investigative reports must be thorough and address all relevant aspects of the investigation. The report must be logically organized, accurate, clear, and concise. It must not raise unanswered questions or leave matters open to question or interpretation. If additional allegations or discoveries, whether related to the original complaint or not, surface during the investigation, they will be addressed in the hotline investigative report or in a separate investigation. Systemic weaknesses or management problems disclosed during the investigation must be reported. The NETC IG will provide the format to be used for hotline investigative reports.

(4) Timeliness. Investigations will be completed expeditiously. NETC will assign a due date for receipt of the investigative report; normally, the response time to NETC IG is 120 calendar days for both Navy and DoD hotline completion reports. Investigating officers will enter weekly case notes

into NIGHTS providing an update of the case. An estimated completion date of the next step of the investigative process (e.g., interviews, team meetings, report completion) will be included. When an investigator is assigned, the hotline is to be their primary duty until the investigation is complete and properly reported. When some form of action is recommended in the investigative report, the assigned investigator will submit a report of completed action to NETC not later than 30 calendar days after the investigative report is forwarded to NETC. The activity or individual tasked with the investigation will ensure established due dates are met. Should valid circumstances preclude meeting the assigned due date, an extension may be requested. Requests for extension must be submitted in writing by letter or e-mail and contain the following:

- (a) Status of investigation (provide a summary of the results of investigation to date).
- (b) Reason for delay in completing investigation or submitting investigative report.
- (c) Expected date report will be provided to NETC.
- (d) Other comments as appropriate.
- (e) Signature of the activity head or copy to the same.

(5) Confidentiality. The Hotline Program assures complainants of confidentiality to the fullest extent permitted by law and regulation to encourage complete disclosure without fear of reprisal. Complainants are encourage to identify themselves in order to obtain additional information, if needed, and provide feedback on the investigation's results. To maximize protection for complainants granted confidentiality, NETC IG will act as the point of contact if an investigator requires their identity. If disclosure is unavoidable, the investigator must protect the source's identity to the fullest extent possible. The IG will obtain a signed confidentiality waiver before releasing a complainant's identity outside IG channels, including referrals to the command for appropriate action.

c. Certification Requirements

(1) All command NETC Enterprise Inspectors General, and Command Evaluators that perform hotline duties, will be certified per reference (h).

(2) Assignment of a noncertified individual as a hotline investigator, for a single case, must be approved by NETC IG, and a certified investigator will provide oversight for the investigation. The NETC IG will grant interim certification when it is deemed that the intended investigator, by demeanor, experience, and position, is capable of conducting a professional investigation and producing a report that satisfies the standards of independence, accountability, completeness, and timeliness.

(3) Command evaluators within the NETC domain will receive NETC IG interim designation to conduct hotline investigations. Those personnel are required to obtain and maintain their certification by complying with the training requirements set forth in references (b) and (h).

(4) Personnel desiring to attend NAVINSGEN investigation training courses must complete team member certification per reference (h) and enroll via the Waypoints Learning Management System: <https://don.csod.com/LMS/catalog/Welcome.aspx>.

d. Additional Provisions

(1) Commands and activities possessing an IG function will obtain access to the NIGHTS database from NETC IG in order to manage investigative files. Users will submit a completed DD Form 2875 System Authorization Access Request to the NETC lead investigator or deputy IG to obtain access to NIGHTS.

(2) At the echelon 4 and below level, the head of the activity or principal assistant will sign all cover letters forwarding hotline investigative reports. Include in the cover letter, a statement of concurrence or non-concurrence with the conclusions and recommendations of the investigating official. Conclusions relate to the discussion portion of the report of investigation in which the investigating official explains why the allegations were substantiated or not; recommendations will not be made for disciplinary or corrective action for the

subject, but recommendations to fix conflicting policy or systemic issues is encouraged, if applicable. Subsequent correspondence related to corrective action may be signed "By direction" by the command's IG.

(3) All correspondence related to hotline complaints will be considered "CONTROLLED UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION," marked per the requirements in reference (i), and appropriate safeguards employed. All e-mail containing reports, documents, or correspondence related to an investigation will be treated as personally identifiable information and encrypted.

(4) All working papers and files resulting from the inquiry into the hotline complaint will be retained by the originating activity and uploaded into NIGHTS. Per section III of reference (j), all investigations conducted by other DON activities at NAVINSGEN direction will forward a record copy to NAVINSGEN during the course of the investigation. Record copy includes the final interim reports, endorsements, and other correspondence. Duplicates of material sent to NAVINSGEN and other working papers maintained by the tasked activities, including interview transcripts, sworn statements, results of interviews, background information, case summaries, recommendations, copies of related e-mail, and action memoranda, are to be maintained at local activities for two years after closing, then destroyed. Cases in litigation will be maintained locally until litigation is completed. If a case is referred to the local command and closed as a referral in NIGHTS, the resulting emails, preliminary inquiry, command-directed investigation reports, and final disposition can be maintained by the command IG but will not be uploaded into the NIGHTS document library. Case notes can be added after the case is closed to identify the outcome of the referral as needed.

(5) Commands will provide the widest dissemination of the Hotline Program within their areas of responsibility. To assist in this effort, the following hotline numbers and addresses are provided:

(a) NETC IG Hotline

24-Hour Hotline Phone
(850) 452-3477 Commercial
459-3477 DSN

E-mail: PNSC_NETCIGHotlines@navy.mil
Web Site: www.netc.navy.mil/Who-We-Are/NETC-Headquarters/Inspector-General/

Commander, Naval Education and Training Command
Inspector General (N00G)
250 Dallas Street
Pensacola, FL 32508-5220

(b) Naval IG Hotline

1-800-522-3451 Toll Free
288-6842 DSN

E-mail: NAVIGHotlines@navy.mil

Web Site: <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/ig>

Office of the Naval Inspector General
1254 Ninth Street, S.E.
Building 172
Washington, DC 20374-5006

(c) DOD IG Hotline

1-800-424-9098 Toll Free
664-8799 DSN
(703) 604-8799 Commercial

Web Site: www.dodig.mil/hotline

U.S. Department of Defense -
Office of Inspector General
4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

6. Action

a. NETC IG will:

(1) Maintain overall cognizance of the NETC Hotline Program.

(2) Investigate or inquire into reported matters of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and related improprieties within NETC.

(3) Monitor status of significant cases of fraud, waste, abuse, and related improprieties reported within NETC and coordinate with external agencies as appropriate.

(4) Coordinate with NAVINSGEN on initial certification training and facilitate professional development through continued education per reference (j).

b. Commanders, COs, and Officers-in-Charge will:

(1) Comply with the requirements of this instruction.

(2) Initiate prompt and aggressive inquiries into all reports of illegal or improper acts. The NAVINSGEN hotline complaint intake form is to be used by NETC commands conducting hotline investigations.

(3) Stress the positive aspects of stewardship, faith, and trust of the American citizens in military and civilian government employees.

(4) Set a personal example in regard to responsibility, accountability, and conduct, and insist on similar behavior from those placed in positions of authority.

(5) Make optimum use of internal communication tools and face-to-face discussions (e.g., All Hands Calls, Plan of the Week, and Plan of the Day) to reinforce personal commitment to eliminating fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and related improprieties.

(6) Establish and use Command Evaluation and Integrated Risk Management Programs in areas most susceptible to fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and related improprieties.

(7) Use NCIS to conduct investigations into potential criminal offenses.

(8) Ensure swift and appropriate corrective action, administrative and disciplinary, is taken in cases where wrongdoing has been substantiated.

(9) Display DoD and Navy hotline posters in command spaces.

7. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager.

8. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, NETC will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 (Review of Instruction). This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.

9. Forms. The following form is available for download via the DoD Forms Management web site (<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Directives/forms/>): DD Form 2875 System Authorization Access Request (SAAR)

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10. Reports. Per reference (i), reports referred to in this instruction are exempt from reports control.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G. C. Huffman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

G. C. HUFFMAN

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically on the NETC public web site (www.netc.navy.mil) or by e-mail at netc-directives@us.navy.mil.