



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

CECW-CO-N

S: 21 May 2008

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**MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND
DISTRICT COMMANDS**

SUBJECT: Request for Volunteers: Public Life Jacket Mandatory Wear Requirement at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Projects

1. Last spring, MG Don Riley directed that a Project Delivery Team (PDT) conduct a comprehensive study to determine the feasibility of mandating a life jacket wear requirement at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects. MG Riley requested this study out of concern that Corps public fatality records, 1998 thru 2007, attest that 92 percent of Corps water-related fatality victims were not wearing a life jacket.

2. On 28 February 2008, MG Riley received a briefing from the PDT on their findings. Based on information gathered from Corps district and field offices, the U.S. Coast Guard, State agencies, and other non-Corps partners, the PDT recommended that Title 36 regulations not be changed to require life jackets be worn on Corps waters. The PDT did recommend the Corps continue to support U.S. Coast Guard's life jacket initiatives and aggressively pursue voluntary life jacket wear through targeted public education actions, life jacket loaner programs, and increased partnerships.

3. MG Riley deferred his decision on the PDT's recommendations until additional information is available. The PDT was asked to identify one or more districts willing to conduct an applied, and monitored for effectiveness, life jacket wear requirement field test. I ask each of the MSC commanders to give serious consideration to voluntary participation in this demonstration exercise.

4. This memo provides additional details of the demonstration process; however, the actual parameters of the test will be determined in discussions between the demonstration district(s), members of the Life Jacket Mandate Study PDT, and the technical support staff from ERDC.

5. The demonstration exercise will be limited to no more than three districts. The PDT is specifically interested in including districts that have management responsibilities on river systems as well as lakes, districts within States willing to cooperate on this policy, and districts in States opposed to it. Volunteering districts may determine whether all, or a representative sample, of their projects will participate in the test.

6. Considering that the 2008 recreation season is already upon us and the necessity to provide adequate public notice of the life jacket wear requirement, the demonstration exercise will not begin until the 2009 season. In order to collect adequate data, the test period will run 3-5 years.

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7. Nominations for participation in this exercise should be submitted to me NLT 21 May 2008. Questions related to this matter should be directed to Lynda Nutt, HQUSACE National Operations Center for Water Safety, via email at Lynda.g.nutt@usace.army.mil, or by phone at (559) 584-1058.

8. The survey questionnaire results and a PDT interim report will be posted, NLT 21 May 2008, on the Natural Resources Management Gateway, <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil>.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



MICHAEL G. ENSCH
Chief, Operations Division
Directorate of Civil Works

CF:
Chiefs; Operations
Chiefs; Safety and Occupational Health Office
Chiefs; Public Affairs