



BY:

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Director
Coast Guard Investigative Service

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FOIA 20-CGFO-01852
JAN 27 2021

American Oversight
1030 15th Street NW Suite B255
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Evers:

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) dated May 1, 2020, and received by this office on June 29, 2020, requesting any report of an incident of white supremacist, white nationalists, white separatist, far-right, alt-right, or pro-nazi or ideology among military personnel.

To provide you with the greatest degree of access authorized by law, we considered your request under both the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a and FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552. Information about an individual that is maintained in a Privacy Act System of records may be accessed by that individual unless the agency has exempted the system of records from the access provisions of the Privacy Act. Privacy Act Exemption (k)(2) protects investigatory material compiled for law enforcement purposes. The information you seek falls under the scope of Exemption (k)(2) and is therefore exempt from the Privacy Act's requirement to release information to first-party requesters. Instead, your access is limited to those portions of the record that must be released under the FOIA.

A comprehensive search for records that would be responsive to your request produced a spreadsheet totaling three (03) pages identifying cases. Of the three (03) pages of documents, I have determined that zero pages are releasable in its entirety, zero pages are being withheld and three (03) pages are released with redactions.

Enclosed are three (03) pages with certain information withheld pursuant to FOIA Exemptions (b)(6) and (b)(7)(C). This personal information is being withheld under 5 U.S.C. 552 (b)(6) and (b)(7)(C) because there are clearly identifiable privacy interests in this information. I have determined that release of this material would likely cause particular harm to those privacy interests. I have considered the general public interest in releasing this information, but in each case where I recommend withholding information under FOIA Exemption (b)(6) and (b)(7)(C), the balance clearly tilts in favor of protecting the privacy interest of individuals rather than any general public interest in release

If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, please contact our office at 202-372-3039 and refer to FOIA 2020-CGFO-01852, you may also contact our FOIA

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Public Liaison by sending an email to efoia@uscg.mil, or calling 202-475-3522. Additionally, you have a right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) which mediates disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. You may contact OGIS as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with the response to this request, you have the right to appeal. Should you wish to do so, you must send your appeal and a copy of this letter, within 90 days of the date of this letter to: Commandant (CG-611), ATTN: FOIA APPEALS, 2703 Martin Luther King Ave. STOP 7710, Washington DC, 20593-7710 and follow the procedures outlined in the DHS regulations at 6 CFR 5.9. your envelope and letter should be marked "FOIA Appeal." Copies of the FOIA and DHS regulations are available at www.dhs.gov/foia.

I am the person responsible for the partial denial of your request. Also participating in this decision is LCDR Jessica Burrell, Coast Guard Investigative Service Legal Counsel.

Provisions of the FOIA and the Privacy Act allow us to recover part of the cost of complying with your request. In this instance, because the cost is below the \$14 minimum, there is no charge.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL BERKOW
Director

Enclosure: Responsive Documents: 3 pages

CS1908001544	<p>On 08/08/2019, (PK) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), of the Commandant Advisory Group (CAG) received a suspicious letter addressed to the Coast Guard Commandant. The letter reads, "Hey Mr. Commandant, Coast Guard core values are sure evident in the news like white supremacy. What a core value! Don't let America's racist down. We count on you." The envelope has no name or return address on it and was stamped in Columbus, OH on 07/29/2019. CGIS Capital Region is investigating. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>On 08/12/2019, CGIS Capital Region contacted (LEO) (b)(6), (b)(7), a Postal Inspector with the U.S. Postal Service in Washington DC, to see if he or his unit could figure out who sent the letter. (LEO) (b)(6), said there is nothing the Postal Service/Postal Inspectors could do to determine who sent the letter because the letter was dropped off at a public collection box and surveillance cameras would not have been available to capture the person on. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>With no other leads to go on CGIS Capital Region is closing this investigation.</p>
CS1910002040	<p>On 10/16/219, CGIS received information from the (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (b) regarding (S) (b)(6), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) Jacksonville, FL. Since 2011 (S) (b)(6), has been accused by multiple CG employees of potentially threatening behavior and/or harassment. (S) (b)(6), has been investigated on multiple occasions by CGIS, the (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), and the Equal Opportunity Office (EEO). (b)(6), received a suspension in 2012 following an investigation into his behavior and was also placed on administrative leave for over one year while the investigation was conducted. User activity monitoring in October 2019 revealed additional historical to present day indicators that (b)(6), likely subscribes to white supremacist ideology and has shared his beliefs with other CG employees. (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) requested assistance from CGIS (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) and local agents to determine if (S) (b)(6), represented a threat of violence. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>From 10/2019 to 2/2020 CGIS attended conferences with (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), CGCIS, CG Legal Service Center, and CG Human Relations. (b) passed recommendations on handling future abusive outbursts from (S) (b)(6), along with potential indicators of work place violence. CGIS accompanied CGCIS to brief the FBI Jacksonville, FL (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) increased (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) per changes to their security plan. They requested CGIS observe if anything was found and to act as liaison with (b)(6), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) □</p> <p>□</p> <p>(b) advised (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) to set clear boundaries of unauthorized internet activity and immediately call 911 if (S) (b)(6), violent (S) (b)(6), was not found to be in possession of firearms. As of 2/5/2020-CGCIS investigation is complete. (S) (b)(6), discontinued searches of White Supremacy websites in November 2019, but continues to search (S) (b)(6), pro-Iranian and pro-Russian site. (PK) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), PIO, informed CGIS that he interviewed (S) (b)(6),. (S) (b)(6), admitted to misuse of a government computer and will discontinue visiting pro-Russian, Iranian, and white supremacy sites, and stop excessive streaming at work. He admitted that his reason for visiting the sites were to obtain a fair and balanced perspective on current events. CGIS referred information about instant messages between (b)(6), and (PK) (b)(6), (b)(7)(b) to CGIS (b)(6), (b). CGIS RAO Jacksonville, FL contacted (b) and (b) confirmed that the actions taken by (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) of counseling (S) (b)(6), were in accordance with their recommendations. All logical leads on this investigation have been completed. All original documents have been forwarded to CGIS Southeast Region for archiving. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>This Command Assistance investigation is Closed pending any additional information.</p>
CS2003000465	<p>This Command Assistance investigation was initiated on 03/13/2020 upon notification by (PK) (b)(6), (b)(6), Staff Judge Advocate, CG Training Center (TRACEN) Cape May, NJ, that (S) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), CG TRACEN Cape May, called a Hispanic recruit a "spic" on 03/11/2020. It was also reported that (S) (b)(b)(6), was observed on 03/06/2020 making what appeared to be a Nazi salute during morning co (b)(6), and (b)(6), he claimed his religious affiliation as "Black Sun Worship RAHU" on his intake form. Black Sun Worship was found to have Nazi ties during an initial Internet search. (PK) (b)(6), (b) advised CG TRACEN Cape May would complete a command directed Administrative Investigation into the matters reported. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>On 03/16/2020, CGIS RAO Cape May requested a data base query through the FBI for any records identifiable with (S) (b)(6), (b) have an affiliation with any domestic terrorist organizations, white supremacy groups, and Nazi related groups. □</p>

CSE-2018-09-000088	<p>On 09/14/2018, at 1935 hrs, Sector Charleston Public Information Officer, (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) contacted CGIS Charleston and advised that during a recent televised news interview with (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), Sector Commander, Coast Guard Sector Charleston, regarding Hurricane Florence, (S) (b)(6), (b)(7) displayed what could be interpreted as a White Supremacy/White Power hand sign/gesture while in the background of the televised footage. (S) (b) was relieved of his responsibilities regarding Hurricane Florence response and the Coast Guard posted a rebuttal on Twitter stating that the actions of the individual did not reflect those of the Coast Guard. CGIS witness interviews indicated (S) (b) was warned prior to the incident by a public affairs representative that the hand signal he proposed to display on the air could be viewed as derogatory. CGIS agents attempted to interview (S) (b) who invoked his Article 31(b) rights and requested an attorney. (S) (b)(6), CGONE data was searched. No derogatory information was found. Numerous interviews were conducted of supervisors, subordinates, co-workers, and associates from previous duty stations. No derogatory information was obtained. Records checks were conducted in NCIC, the CG Civil Rights Directorate, and his Personnel Data Record (PDR) with negative results. (S) (b)(6), retained a civilian attorney. CGIS agents contacted his attorney who declined an interview of (S) (b)(6). (S) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) this matter is being referred to (S) (b)(6), command for action. (S) (b)(6), subsequently received a (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) for his actions.</p>
CSE-2018-10-000108	<p>CGIS Pacific Region received Coast Guard Counter Intelligence Service (CGCIS) Insider Threat Referral 180910-219 from Agent (b)(6), (b)(7), □</p> <p>□</p> <p>The referral identified apparent misuse of a Government Information System by (S) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). (S) (b)(6), was identified as having viewed several websites with possible pornographic content, websites possibly linked to white supremacy/nationalism, and drafting emails to (b)(6), a Norwegian citizen who espouses a worldview he self describes as "Odalism," a blending of paganism, traditional nationalism, racialism, and environmentalism. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>CGIS Pacific Region advised that the content of the referral would be most appropriately addressed by the Command. On 01/23/2019 (S) (b)(6), was charged with violating article 92 of the UCMJ and awarded the following (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) □</p> <p>□</p> <p>This Suspicious Activity Report is closed.</p>
CSE-2018-11-000057	<p>This Other Agency Support case was initiated upon request from FBI (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) Baltimore, MD, for CGIS assistance in obtaining information related to (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), for use in determining if (b)(6), (b)(7) was associated with (S) (b)(6), (b)(7), a known white supremacist and target of a FBI (b) investigation. According to information provided by FBI (b) (b)(6), (S) (b) stated in an online chat room that his roommate shared similar beliefs as him, and that the FBI suspected (b)(6), (b)(7) and (S) (b) may have been roommates in the recent past. It was also reported that (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) name was mentioned in a recent online posting of several white supremacy group leaders in an attempt to disseminate white supremacist personal identifiable information to the public. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>On 11/08/2018, CGIS provided to FBI JTTF Baltimore photographs of (b)(6), (b)(7) and other identifying information. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>On 11/14/2018, FBI (b) Baltimore reported having found no derogatory information identifiable with (b) (b)(6), (b). □</p> <p>□</p> <p>On 01/09/2019, CGIS received information indicating (b)(6), (b)(7) was (b)(6), (b) from the Coast Guard on (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) for (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). FBI (b)(6), (b)(7) was notified of (S) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) discharge from the Coast Guard. □</p> <p>□</p> <p>This Other Agency Support Investigation is Closed.</p>

CSE-2018-11-000062

On 11/08/2018, CGIS Alameda Field Office (AFO) was notified by (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), that (V) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C); (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), was physically assaulted, while on leave, attending a concert in Virginia. The subjects were unknown at the time of incident. (b)(6), notified CGIS AFO only for visibility and to assist Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD), if requested.

CGIS AFO requested and received a copy of the Incident report from Virginia Beach Police Department (VBPD). (S) (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) was listed in the police report as one of the subjects. According to (S) (b)(6), statement to VBPD Officers, (V) (b)(6), (b) was wearing red shoes laces inside the Shakas club, which other members perceived as an association with white supremacy. (S) (b)(6), also stated that (V) (b) (b)(6), used racial slurs to members of other races while inside the establishment.

(b)(7)

(V) (b)(6), (b) received visible injuries to his ear, face, and lip, along with injuries to his right forearm. His injuries were initially treated at a local Virginia hospital with follow-up appointments coordinated through Base Alameda Clinic, Alameda, CA.

VBPD did not require any CGIS assistance. All logical leads completed. Case closed.

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Commandant
United States Coast Guard

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FOIA 2020-CGFO-01852

Austin R. Evers
American Oversight
foia@americanoversight.org

Dear Austin R. Evers:

This letter is the final response to your May 1, 2020, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request addressed to the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). Your request was received in this office on June 25, 2020. You requested the following:

1. Any report of an incident of white supremacist, white nationalist, white separatist, far-right, alt-right, or pro-Nazi activity or ideology among military personnel.
2. Any study concerning incidents of white supremacist, white nationalist, white separatist, far-right, alt-right, or pro-Nazi activity or ideology among military personnel in the possession of or created, utilized, maintained, received, or distributed by the U.S. Coast Guard.
3. Records sufficient to identify the number of incidents or reports of white supremacist, white nationalist, white separatist, far-right, alt-right, or pro-Nazi activity or ideology among military personnel, and any ensuing action recommended or executed by your agency, since January 1, 2017, or the earliest date thereafter for which this information is available.

To the extent that this information is aggregated and maintained in a database or spreadsheet, we would accept as responsive a printout from the database containing fields reflecting the date and key facts of each incident or report as well as any ensuing action recommended or executed by the U.S. Coast Guard. American Oversight does not object to the redaction of names, addresses, or other personally identifying information from records responsive to this request.

Please provide all responsive records from January 1, 2017, through the date the search is conducted.

Further clarification was requested on July 16, 2020. On July 21, 2020, you responded with the following:

1. **Date range:** As noted on page 2 of the request, for item 2 (and for all parts of the request), please provide responsive records from January 1, 2017, through the date the search is conducted.

2. **Items 1 and 3:** Items 1 and 3 are related, but not precisely the same. Item 1 seeks “[a]ny report of an incident of white supremacist, white nationalist, white separatist, far-right, alt-right, or pro-Nazi activity or ideology among military personnel,” while item 3 seeks records sufficient to identify the *number* of such reports. If Coast Guard can provide every responsive report requested in item 1, we would likely consider this response adequate to satisfy item 3. However, if any reports are withheld or produced in such a manner that the total number of reports cannot be determined, then records sufficient to identify the number of reports—such as a database or spreadsheet, if such information is maintained this way—would likely be responsive to the request. If Coast Guard does not maintain this information in spreadsheets or databases, I would be happy to discuss further with you how these records are stored and what types of records might satisfy Item 3 of the request.

Your response was received by this office on August 27, 2020.

A search of the Civil Rights Directorate for documents responsive to requests (1)-(3) produced a total of 1 page. I have determined that it is being partially released pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §§ 552(b)(6) (Exemption 6) because there are clearly identifiable privacy interests in this information. I have determined that release of this material would likely cause particular harm to those privacy interests. I have considered the general public interest in releasing this information, but in each case where I recommend withholding information under Exemption 6, the balance clearly tilts in favor of protecting the privacy interest of individuals rather than any general public interest in release.

A comprehensive search was conducted by Elizabeth Mercado-Prioleau, Formal Complaints Manager, on June 26, 2020. The search was conducted through the databases and files maintained by the Civil Rights Directorate

If you need any further assistance or would like to discuss any aspect of your request, please contact the (Unit/Directorate) that processed your request. You may send an e-mail to efoia@uscg.mil or you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Mrs. Amanda Ackerson, at 202-475-3522 in the same manner. Additionally, you have a right to seek dispute resolution services from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) which mediates disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. Contacting the FOIA Public Liaison or OGIS does not stop the 90-day appeal clock and is not a substitute for filing an administrative appeal. If you are requesting access to your own records (which is considered a Privacy Act request), you should know that OGIS does not have the authority to handle requests made under the Privacy Act of 1974. You may contact OGIS as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with the response to this request, you have the right to appeal. Should you wish to do so, you must send your appeal and a copy of this letter, within 90 days of the date of this letter, to: Commandant (CG-611), ATTN: FOIA APPEALS, 2703 Martin Luther King Ave STOP 7710, Washington DC, 20593-7710. following the procedures outlined in the DHS regulations at 6 C.F.R. § 5.9. Your envelope and letter should be marked "FOIA Appeal." Copies of the FOIA and DHS regulations are available at www.dhs.gov/foia.

Provisions of the FOIA allow us to recover part of the cost of complying with your request. In this instance, because the cost is below the \$14 minimum, there is no charge.

If you need to contact our office concerning this request, please call (202) 372-4500 and refer to **2020-CGFO-01852**.

Sincerely,


Terri Dickerson
Director
Civil Rights Directorate

Enclosure:

Requests 1-3:

(1) Confederate Flag Incidents, (1) page



Incidents of the Confederate Flag at CG Locations

AHHI Case Number	Date Reported	Location	Aggrieved Person	Alleged Person Responsible	Incident	Media Attention	Findings	Actions Taken	Notes
1	(b) (6)	Academy-Cadets	Unknown	Unknown	White cadets took a picture wearing MAGA caps with a picture of a Confederate flag in the background with MAGA	Yes	NA	None	Command determine incident not a potential hate incident
2	10/27/2017	Academy-Cadets	(b) (6)	(b) (6)	An African American cadet was harassed by a fellow cadet who came into the African American cadet room playing a song on his phone that glorified the Confederacy Later, the AM cadet's laptop was changed to show a picture of an Confederate flag	Yes	Substantiated	NJP/Captains Mast, Training, Expectations Communicated	N/A
3	Ongoing	Cape May	Unknown	Unknown	CRD has received numerous inquiries from recruits who wish to display Confederate flag memorabilia, and others who have complained about it Stating that it's offensive	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	No further information Not reported in AHHI database
4	6/26/2019	CG Arista Borinquen	(b) (6)	Unknown	A Command Mster Chief (CMC) overheard a conversation that LT A mention that LT B had a Confederate Flag on his truck The CMC went to the parking lot to look at LT B's truck after overhearing the conversation and did not recognize any hate symbols or Confederate Flags The CMC researched the different types of Confederate Flags and recognized the flag on the truck's front license plate as the first official Confederate Flag He then discussed the issue with the command and addressed the issue with LT B, the owner of the truck LT B stated that it had historical significance to him as the original Confederate flag and does not represent any type of racism	No	Unsubstantiated	The flag was voluntarily removed immediately following notification that it could be offensive to others	Command did not consider this a potential hate incident
5	7/16/2019	New Orleans, LA	Unknown	Unknown	Website post of a picture of three males joining the Coast Guard standing in front of three flags, which one flag was the Mississippi flag that depicted the image of the Confederate flag The website post was sent to an employee in the public affairs department	Yes	N/A	None	Incident was not reported in AHHI database
6	8/26/2019	CG Sector Columbia River	Unknown	Unknown	A CG pilot's spouse noticed an obsolete Air Station Savannah unit patch, which included a depiction of a Confederate Flag, as part of a display of patches on the wall of the Sector Columbia River Wardroom alongside 3 dozen various patches This depiction of the flag on the patch was removed from Coast Guard service in the 1980's	No	N/A	The pilot removed the patch from the display without any command notification or authorization	Report was made by a spouse of CG Military member offended by the confederate flag symbol on patch Incident not reported in AHHI database
7	5/22/2020	CGC SENECA	(b) (6)	(b) (6)	SENECA Facebook page had an inadvertent posting to commemorate the 84th anniversary of the first flight of a rotary airwing aircraft The historical photograph of the aircraft German markings of that time period (circa 1936)	No	Pending	The posting was immediately removed from the SENECA Facebook page and Operational Commander	N/A