

**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20370-5000**

**IN REPLY REFER TO  
BUPERSINST 1770.4A  
Pers-621  
2 APR 1996**

BUPERS INSTRUCTION 1770.4A

From: Chief of Naval Personnel  
To: All Ships and Stations (less Marine Corps filed addresses  
not having Navy personnel attached)

Subj: FLAG OFFICER CASUALTY ACTION BOARD (FOCAB)

1. Purpose. To issue revised functions, membership, and responsibilities of the FOCAB in order to provide real-time assessment of Navy casualty cases. This is a complete revision and should be read in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. BUPERSINST 1770.4.

3. Applicability and Scope. This instruction applies to the review of certain cases involving members of the Navy who die or become missing or seriously ill/injured on active duty, including members of the Naval Reserve who die or become seriously ill/injured while serving on active duty for training or inactive duty for training, or while traveling to or from such duty.

4. Functions. The FOCAB will:

a. Participate actively in reviewing all casualty cases where a potential problem may exist and ensuring all aspects of the case(s) are monitored and acted upon appropriately in order to address and solve problems and ensure high-quality, compassionate, responsive service to the member and survivors.

b. Review the case of any Navy member deemed warranted by any member of the FOCAB.

c. Identify problem areas concerning any aspect of the handling of a member's death, illness or injury, to include: circumstances leading up to the tragedy, the cause, the quality and standards of medical care, religious concerns, casualty and mortuary assistance, investigations conducted into the circumstances surrounding a member's illness/injury, missing status, medical care or death, and media coverage of related events.

d. Develop recommendations and plans for corrective actions, take all steps necessary in any areas where problems are identified, and take preventive actions to preclude similar problems.

e. Ensure every case brought before it is tracked until all aspects of the case have been resolved.

f. Oversee the operation of the Casualty Assistance Calls Program (CACP), which provides surviving next of kin all possible assistance, guidance, and support with compassion and empathy by the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO), command, and all supporting agencies.

g. Through Pers-6, maintain contact with the CACO and next of kin from the time of the event to ensure that all concerns expressed by the next of kin are adequately addressed. In addition, maintain contact as long as necessary to ensure that all aspects of the casualty have been completed (benefits, investigations, etc.).

h. Reassure members or surviving next of kin of Navy's interest in their well-being and the continued availability of support to lend comfort and assistance.

i. Advise the Chief of Naval Personnel regarding policy and delivery of quality CACO response, recommending policy changes in areas that warrant program improvements.

j. Through designated release authorities, facilitate the forwarding of all releasable information, reports, and records surrounding the circumstances of the member's death, missing status, illness, or injury in a timely and forthright manner. Release of the above will be monitored by regional casualty representatives, as well as by the FOCAB.

k. Ensure the accuracy of Navy-related details in cases that are covered by the new media, or have potential to come to media attention.

## 5. Membership and Responsibilities

a. The FOCAB Chair is the Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel (Pers-00B). The Chair shall:

(1) Coordinate the agenda items to be presented to the Board.

(2) Approve the participation of non-members in meetings.

(3) Convene and preside over FOCAB meetings.

(4) At the conclusion of the meeting:

(a) Summarize the major issues.

(b) Identify issues that must be resolved.

(c) Seek consensus among FOCAB members on matters presented for approval or decision.

(5) Update the Chief of Naval Personnel bi-weekly on all FOCAB cases.

b. FOCAB membership consists of the following:

(1) Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel

(2) Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Personal Readiness and Community Support (Pers-6)

(3) Chief of Legislative Affairs

(4) Judge Advocate General of the Navy

(5) Chief of Chaplains

(6) Chief of Information

(7) Deputy Inspector General of the Navy

(8) Deputy Director, Naval Criminal Investigative Service

(9) Deputy Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

(10) Director, Naval Council of Personnel Boards

(11) Deputy Director, Naval Reserve

Membership may be expanded or reduced when the Board considers issues within or outside an organization's specific area of interest or responsibility.

c. The FOCAB Executive Assistant is the Director, Casualty Assistance and Retired Activities Division (Pers-62). The Executive Assistant shall:

(1) Schedule all FOCAB meetings and ensure that all members are informed of the schedule and agenda.

(2) Review all items to be considered by the FOCAB with the Chair, as necessary.

d. The FOCAB Secretary is the Head, Casualty Assistance Branch (Pers-621). The board Secretary shall:

(1) Provide input to the Board on matters involving personnel casualty assistance issues.

(2) Prepare correspondence, memorandums, and notes pertaining to FOCAB business.

(3) Coordinate administrative matters and follow up on action items.

e. The members of the FOCAB will:

(1) Recommend for review the case of any Navy member involving death, missing status, or serious illness or injury, which results in, or has potential for:

(a) concerns by the next of kin about the quality or standard of medical care; the nature of the death; notification of next of kin and follow-on casualty and mortuary assistance; or investigation into the cause or circumstances surrounding the illness/injury, missing status, or death.

(b) high-level interest within the Department of the Navy, Department of Defense, or elsewhere within the Administration.

(c) significant media coverage.

(2) Recommend for review any group of cases which, when evaluated together, reveal a trend and suggest the possibility of a systemic problem.

(3) Review the circumstances surrounding each case to be considered by the Board.

(4) Address each aspect of the case within their respective areas of responsibility.

(5) Attend (or designate an appropriate senior representative to attend) each session of the FOCAB.

(6) Deliberate aspects of each case under review during the session.

(7) Identify and introduce problem areas which should be addressed by the Board.

(8) Propose recommended courses of action to resolve existing problems, preclude potential problems, or preempt situations that may lead to similar problems in future cases.

