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FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//G-C//
TO ALCOAST

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COMDTNOTE 6230

A. ARTICLE 8-2-1A.(21) CG REGULATIONS, COMDTINST M5000.3B

SUBJ: COAST GUARD ANTHRAX VACCINATION IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
(CG-AVIP)

1. I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THE ANTHRAX VACCINATION PROGRAM AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE COAST GUARD. THIS CRITICAL FORCE PROTECTION PROGRAM HAS BEEN STARTED BECAUSE OF THE VERY REAL THREAT OF ATTACK UPON OUR SERVICE MEMBERS WITH BIOLOGICAL AGENTS. WE KNOW THESE WEAPONS ARE BEING PRODUCED, AND WE KNOW THEY HAVE BEEN USED IN THE PAST. EXPERTS BELIEVE A TERRORIST GROUP WOULD EMPLOY ANTHRAX AS A WEAPON IF THEY THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP THEM TO REACH THEIR GOALS.
2. ANTHRAX IS A BIOLOGICAL WEAPON OF CHOICE BECAUSE OF ITS DEADLINESS AND THE EASE BY WHICH IT CAN BE MADE AND SPREAD. THE THREAT IS REAL. FORTUNATELY, SO IS OUR ABILITY TO PROTECT OUR FORCE BY IMMUNIZATION WITH THE ANTHRAX VACCINE. IT IS OUR OBLIGATION TO INSURE READINESS AND PROTECT COAST GUARD FORCES. THEREFORE, I HAVE DETERMINED THAT THE COAST GUARD WILL UNDERTAKE AND MAINTAIN AN ANTHRAX IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM. THE PROGRAM WILL COVER ALL ACTIVE DUTY AND RESERVE PERSONNEL, AND WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN THREE PHASES AS DESCRIBED MORE FULLY BELOW. COMMANDING OFFICERS SHALL IMPLEMENT THE SCHEDULE DETAILED BELOW IN PARAGRAPHS 4 AND 5.
3. A WEALTH OF SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION DEMONSTRATES THE LONG AND SUCCESSFUL USE OF THIS FDA-APPROVED VACCINE BY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE INCLUDING VETERINARIANS, LIVESTOCK WORKERS, AND LABORATORY EMPLOYEES. IN THE NEARLY 30 YEARS OF VACCINE USE, THERE HAS BEEN NO EVIDENCE OF LINKS TO CANCER, INFERTILITY, OR BIRTH DEFECTS; NOR HAVE THERE BEEN ANY MORE SIDE EFFECTS WITH THIS VACCINE THAN WITH OTHER ROUTINE IMMUNIZATIONS.
4. THE FULL IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM CONSISTS OF A SERIES OF VACCINATIONS. THE CURRENT FDA IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE REQUIRES THAT THE VACCINE BE GIVEN ON DAYS 0, 14, 28, THEN AT MONTHS 6, 12, AND 18. UPON COMPLETION OF THE 18 MONTH DOSE, BOOSTER VACCINATIONS AT 1-YEAR INTERVALS ARE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN IMMUNITY.
5. THE COAST GUARD ANTHRAX VACCINATION PROGRAM WILL BE ADMINISTERED THROUGH A 3-PHASED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:
 - A. PHASE 1 HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED. PHASE 1 REQUIRES THAT THE FIRST THREE DOSES OF ANTHRAX VACCINE BE ADMINISTERED TO ALL PERSONNEL PRIOR TO DEPLOYING OR DURING DEPLOYMENT TO DOD-DESIGNATED HIGH THREAT AREAS; I.E., KOREA AND THE PERSIAN GULF. THE REMAINING 3 DOSES WILL BE COMPLETED DURING OR UPON RETURN FROM DEPLOYMENT UNLESS SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTED BY THE OPERATIONS PLAN OR BY COMPETENT MEDICAL AUTHORITY (E.G., BY REASON OF PREGNANCY).
 - B. PHASE 2 BEGINS DURING FY00. PHASE 2 REQUIRES IMMUNIZATION OF ALL PERSONNEL POTENTIALLY DEPLOYABLE TO HIGH RISK AREAS (E.G., WHEC, WMEC, WPB, PSU, LEDET, AIRCREW, HARBOR DEFENSE COMMAND UNITS).
 - C. PHASE 3 BEGINS DURING FY03. PHASE 3 REQUIRES IMMUNIZATION OF ALL ACTIVE DUTY AND RESERVE PERSONNEL NOT ALREADY IN THE ANTHRAX IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM.
6. COAST GUARD PERSONNEL WHO REFUSE THE VACCINATION WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE. THEY MAY BE SUBJECT TO ADVERSE DISCIPLINARY OR ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEEDINGS, OR BOTH, AT THE COMMANDER'S DISCRETION.

BECAUSE OF THE PHASED NATURE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, I AM NOT ISSUING A GENERAL ORDER THAT APPLIES TO ALL PERSONS AT THIS TIME. HOWEVER, REFUSAL TO RECEIVE THE VACCINATION AFTER BEING DIRECTED TO DO SO BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY IS PUNISHABLE AS A VIOLATION OF A LAWFUL ORDER AND REFERENCE A, AND IS PUNISHABLE UNDER THE UCMJ.

ADDITIONALLY, REFUSAL OF THE VACCINE WILL NOT RESULT IN THE MEMBER BECOMING NON-DEPLOYABLE. HOWEVER, I DO NOT WANT TO LOSE ONE COAST GUARD MEMBER BECAUSE HE OR SHE WAS UNPROTECTED AGAINST ANTHRAX, NOR BECAUSE HE OR SHE REFUSED THE VACCINATION.

7. I KNOW THAT RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING, ESPECIALLY VIA THE INTERNET, ABOUT THE DANGERS OF THE ANTHRAX VACCINE. YOUR FOCUS SHOULD BE ON THE DANGERS OF EXPOSURE TO ANTHRAX INSTEAD OF RUMORS. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE VACCINE. EDUCATING YOURSELF ON MEDICAL FACTS BEFORE RECEIVING THE VACCINATION WILL EXPLAIN THE REASON FOR THIS PROGRAM AND THE THREAT PRESENTED BY ANTHRAX. THREE SOURCES OF ACCURATE INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET ARE: (1) THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AT [HTTP://WWW.CDC.GOV/NCIDOD/DBMD/ANTHRAX.HTM](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/anthrax.htm), (2) THE NAVY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CENTER (NEHC) AT [HTTP://WWW-NEHC.MED.NAVY.MIL/PREVMED/IMMUN/ANTHRAX.HTM](http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/prevmcd/immun/anthrax.htm), AND (3) THE DOD AT [HTTP://WWW.DEFENSELINK.MIL/SPECIALS/ANTHRAX](http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/anthrax).

8. THIS POLICY WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO A FUTURE COMDTINST, ANTHRAX VACCINE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM, CURRENTLY BEING DRAFTED BY G-WK, DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND SAFETY. G-WKH WILL BE THE PROGRAM MANAGER OF THE ANTHRAX VACCINE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM, AND DOD WILL DETERMINE AND PUBLISH DESIGNATED HIGH THREAT AREAS.

9. THE SAFETY OF OUR PEOPLE AND THE SUCCESS OF OUR MISSION ARE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT I, AS COMMANDANT, TAKE PERSONALLY. I AM DETERMINED TO HAVE 100% OF COAST GUARD MILITARY PERSONNEL UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE NEED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROGRAM.

10. MY POC IS CDR MARK TEDESCO, G-WKH-1, AT 202-267-0528.

11. INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.

12. ADM J. M. LOY, COMMANDANT, SENDS

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