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## **HARKCON ASSISTS COAST GUARD WITH SOLUTION TO CONTRACTING PERSONNEL SHORTAGE**

MCLEAN, Va. – The U.S. Coast Guard today approved the Career Contracting Opportunity Program (CCOP), which trains active duty personnel in the acquisitions process. Harkcon provided extensive support to the Coast Guard Acquisition Office of Strategic Planning and Communications as a strategic team member on the development of the program, along with active duty and civilian Coast Guard personnel.

CCOP offers outstanding professional development and career broadening opportunities to certain active duty personnel interested in challenging and rewarding roles in contracting during late stages of their military careers.

Coast Guard contracting specialists are charged with developing and implementing policies and procedures involving the procurement of anything service members need to do their jobs – from ships and helicopters to printers and fax machines. These contracting professionals must possess a keen familiarity with Coast Guard operations, contracting methods and regulations, and business and industry practices.

A 17 percent vacancy rate in the Coast Guard Office of Contracting Activity and the projected retirement of a significant portion of the workforce over the next decade led Coast Guard leadership to seek an innovative solution to address hiring needs. Bringing on retired personnel for civilian contracting jobs not only ensures a workforce competent in service operations, but also provides an opportunity for post-military upward career mobility for qualified veterans.

The Coast Guard chartered a CCOP Planning Team in December 2008 and hopes to fully implement the program by the fall of 2009.

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