DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

ACTION MEMO

FOR: ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)

FROM: VADM S. R. Van Buskirk, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education) (N1)

SUBJECT: United States Navy Religious Accommodation Process

- Mr. Secretary, request you grant authority for N1 to approve all religious accommodation requests. TAB B is a similar authorization granted to the Marine Corps on November 1, 2012.

- The Secretary of Defense directed the services to review and ensure sufficient clarity and specificity in religious accommodation processes; consistent with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and Service Chiefs' intent to ensure that appropriate levels exercise regulatory waiver authority, the U.S. Navy developed a process by which requests for religious accommodation (grooming or apparel, only) will be addressed in accordance with pertinent law, rules, regulations and instructions.

- The Navy religious accommodation process has a twofold purpose: first, to maintain the fighting capability of the Navy at the highest level; and second, to accommodate the religious practices of members where and when appropriate.

- Upon receipt of a request, DCNO (N1) will consider the totality of the request as well as precedence, approve or disapprove, in whole or in part, and send the decision, via the chain of command, to the requestor. The denial of a request is subject to review by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO). The requestor, upon receipt of the DCNO (N1) decision, may appeal that decision to the CNO, whose decision is final.

- The process alters pre-existing practice, but maintains the service-level oversight twice determined necessary by the CJCS and Service Chiefs. This process provides appropriate and consistent accommodation determinations within the requirements of the pertinent instructions, regulations, and law, as recommended by OSD.

- I am working with the Chief of Chaplains and DC (M&RA) on a re-write of SECNAVINST 1730.8C that codifies this change at which time, this action memo is no longer required.

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RECOMMENDATION: Approve request by initialing below as appropriate:

Approve _____ Disapprove _____

ATTACHMENTS:
As stated

COORDINATION: TAB C

Prepared By: (b) (6) [redacted]