


**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS**

Application for the Correction of
the Coast Guard Record of:

BCMR Docket No. 2025-030


LCDR (retired)

FINAL DECISION

This proceeding was conducted according to the provisions of 10 U.S.C. § 1552 and 14 U.S.C. § 2507. The Chair docketed the case after receiving the applicant's completed application on December 17, 2024, and this decision of the Board was prepared pursuant to 33 C.F.R. § 52.61(c).

This final decision, dated October 16, 2025, is approved and signed by the three duly appointed members who were designated to serve as the Board in this case.

APPLICANT'S REQUEST AND ALLEGATIONS

The applicant, a Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) who retired from active duty on February 29, 2020, asked the Board to correct his record to show that he received two Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation Ribbons (CG MTCs) and the DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame. He also asked for copies of the awards citations and ribbons/stars for the two CG MTCs. The applicant argued that he earned the two CG MTCs effective August 31, 2022 and May 31, 2023 and that they were entered into his personnel record but are not reflected on his DD 214¹. Regarding the DHS Outstanding Unit Award, the applicant argued that he received a DD 215² reflecting the award but stated that the award is not listed on his Member Information page in his official military record.

¹ The DD Form 214 provides the member and the service with a concise record of a period of service with the Armed Forces at the time of the member's separation, discharge or change in military status (reserve/active duty). In addition, the form is an authoritative source of information for both governmental agencies and the Armed Forces for purposes of employment, benefit and reenlistment eligibility, respectively. The DD Form 214 is issued to members who change their military status among active duty, reserve, or retired components or are separated/discharged from the Coast Guard to a civilian status. COMDTINST M1900.4D.

² A DD 215 is used to correct or add information to a DD 214.

The applicant stated that in November 2024 he accessed the Coast Guard's Personnel Database (Integrated Personnel Electronic Records Management and Pay System (iPERMS))³ and noticed that there were two CG MTC ribbons listed on his Member Information Sheet that are not on his DD 214. He stated that he does not know who entered the two awards in his record nor was he provided with the citations.

In support of his request, the applicant submitted a copy of his DD 214, a copy of a DD 215 dated February 29, 2020⁴ reflecting the DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame and an CG MTC Ribbon with a Gold Star in lieu of a third.⁵ He also submitted a copy of his Coast Guard Member Information pages dated August 6, 2024 which lists all of the awards/medals/ribbons he received during his Coast Guard career.

The applicant stated that he discovered the alleged errors in his record in November 2024 and argued that the Board should make the correction because he "raised within proper timeline and not properly reflected in my record."

SUMMARY OF THE RECORD

The applicant retired from the Coast Guard on February 29, 2020 after serving more than twenty-three years on active duty. The Honors and Awards Summary section of his Coast Guard Member Information pages list the twenty-seven awards/medals/ribbons he had earned, including five CG MTCs issued on the following dates:

May 31, 2023
August 31, 2022
July 25, 2019
March 19, 2015
January 31, 2003

The DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame is not listed under the Honors and Awards Summary of the applicant's Member Information pages that he provided to the Board, nor is it listed on his DD 214. However, the applicant submitted a copy of a DD 215 listing the DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame. The applicant's DD 214 does not list the two CG MTCs from 2022 and 2023.

VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD

On June 10, 2025, a judge advocate (JA) of the Coast Guard submitted an advisory opinion in which he recommended that the Board deny relief in this case. In doing so, he adopted the findings and analysis provided in a memorandum prepared by the Personnel Service Center (PSC).

³ iPERMS is an online database and/or information system used for storing and managing military personnel records.

⁴ There were 29 days in February 2020 because it was a leap year.

⁵ For subsequent awards of a given medal, a gold or silver star is issued in lieu of an additional medal and must be so specified in the citation. Chapter E.4.a of the Coast Guard Medal and Awards Manual, COMDTINST M1650.25D.

The JAG office recommended that the Board deny relief because although the CG MTC may be awarded to civilian employees in accordance with Coast Guard policy, the applicant has not demonstrated that he earned the two CG MTCs which were dated after his retirement. The JAG also noted that the applicant stated that he is currently a civilian employee of the U.S. Navy.

PSC recommended that the Board deny relief because the two CG MTCs that were added to the applicant's record after his retirement were done in error and the applicant provided no evidence that he was on the award eligibility roster for either award. PSC also noted that its database reveals that one of the CG MTCs was issued by the office of the Commandant for an award period from December 1, 2020 to January 1, 2022, which is after the applicant's retirement date.

PSC noted that the applicant's record also shows that Coast Guard Base National Capitol Region issued him another CG MTC for an award period from March 21, 2023 to May 12, 2023. PSC stated that this period was after his retirement date as well.

Regarding the DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame, PSC stated that the award was added to the applicant's profile in Direct Access on April 8, 2025.

APPLICABLE LAW AND REGULATIONS

Chapter 1.E. of COMDTINST 1900.4D, the Commandant's instructions for preparing the DD 214, states that block 13 of a DD 214 should show "all decorations, medals, badges, commendations, citations, and campaign ribbons awarded or authorized for all periods of service."

Chapter 1.D.2.a of the DD 214 instructions states that all entries, unless specified otherwise (i.e., blocks 7a, 7b), are for the current period of active duty only from date of entry as shown in block 12a through the date of separation as shown in block 12b.

Chapter 3.B.7. of the Coast Guard Military Medals and Awards Manual states that the CG MTC may be awarded to groups or teams not identifiable by OPFAC [Coast Guard Operating Facilities Manual] as a Coast Guard unit. To justify this award, the individual members of the group must have performed service that made a significant contribution to the group's overall outstanding accomplishment of a study, process, mission, etc. The service performed as a group or team must be comparable to that which would merit the award of the LOC [Letter of Commendation] or higher to an individual. The award of the CG MTC does not preclude individuals from being recognized with a personal award for the same action/period recognized.

APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO THE VIEWS OF THE COAST GUARD

On July 24, 2024, the BCMR sent the applicant a copy of the Coast Guard's recommendation and invited him to submit a response. He responded on August 28, 2025 and disagreed with the Coast Guard's recommendation. The applicant argued that BCMR case precedent presumes that entries into a member record are true and correct, and that the advisory

opinion enclosures used the term “likely” in paragraph 4.f of the CG-LGL memorandum, which is not definitive and beyond the preponderance of evidence.⁶

The applicant also argued that the advisory opinion did not state that member record entries were performed in an arbitrary and capricious manner and were thus performed properly by the CG staff. Finally, he argued that the advisory opinion enclosures relied on 3rd hand information in the direct access personnel management system and NOT the actual documentation (Form CG-1650 and citation) which was used for system entry by the CG staff.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Board makes the following findings and conclusions on the basis of the applicant's military record and submissions, the Coast Guard's submission and applicable law.

1. The Board has jurisdiction over this matter under 10 U.S.C. § 1552(a) because the applicant is requesting correction of an alleged error or injustice in his Coast Guard military record. The Board finds that he has exhausted his administrative remedies, as required by 33 C.F.R. § 52.13(b), because there is no other currently available forum or procedure provided by the Coast Guard for correcting the alleged error or injustice that the applicant has not already pursued.

2. An application to the Board must be filed within three years after the applicant discovers the alleged error or injustice.⁷ The applicant retired in 2020 and alleged that he discovered the error in his record in 2024. Therefore, the Board finds that the application is timely.

3. The applicant asked that his record be corrected to reflect two CG MTCs that were added to his record after his retirement on February 29, 2020, and the DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame. When considering allegations of error and injustice, the Board begins its analysis by presuming that the disputed information in the applicant's military record is correct as it appears in his record, and the applicant bears the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the disputed information is erroneous or unjust.⁸ Absent evidence to the contrary, the Board presumes that Coast Guard officials and other Government employees have carried out their duties “correctly, lawfully, and in good faith.”⁹

4. The applicant's record shows that he retired from active duty on February 29, 2020 and his Member Information pages show that he received five CG MTCs. However, two of the CG MTCs were awarded for periods of service after his retirement – he retired in February 2020 and two of the CG MTCs were awarded for service from December 1, 2020 to January 1, 2022 and March 21, 2023 to May 12, 2023. The Coast Guard argued that the two CG MTCs which were entered into the applicant's record for service after his retirement were entered in error. However, the Coast Guard did not explain how or why this happened. The Board notes that there is nothing

⁶ Paragraph 4.f. of PSC's memorandum states that “it is likely the awards were added to the applicant's profile in error.”

⁷ 10 U.S.C. § 1552(b) and 33 C.F.R. § 52.22.

⁸ 33 C.F.R. § 52.24(b).

⁹ *Arens v. United States*, 969 F.2d 1034, 1037 (Fed. Cir. 1992); *Sanders v. United States*, 594 F.2d 804, 813 (Ct. Cl. 1979).

in the record to show that the applicant was awarded the two extra CG MTCs prior to his retirement or that he received them post-retirement as a reservist or as a civilian employee of the Coast Guard.

5. Although the Coast Guard recommended that the two CG MTCs be removed from the applicant's record, the Board is loath to removed them because the Board may not correct errors that are in an applicant's favor.¹⁰ Moreover, the Coast Guard did not offer an explanation as to how or why the two CG MTCs were added to his record for periods of service after his retirement from the Coast Guard. Finally, because the Board presumes that Coast Guard officials and their employees carried out their duties "correctly, lawfully, and in good faith," so the Board finds that the two CG MTCs were presumably entered into the applicant's record in good faith.

6. The Board finds that the applicant's request to place his DHS Outstanding Unit Award with Gold Frame on the Honors and Awards Summary be dismissed as moot, because the Coast Guard stated that the award was added to the applicant's record on April 8, 2025, approximately four months after he submitted his application to the Board. The applicant already has a DD 215 documenting the addition of the award to his DD 214.

7. The applicant asked the Board to correct his record by adding to his DD 214 the CG MTCs that were added to his personnel record after his retirement. The Board should deny this request because the two CG MTCs were awarded for periods of service after his retirement. Pursuant to Chapter 1.D.2.a of the DD 214 instructions, all entries on a DD 214 are for the current period of active duty only from date of entry as shown in block 12a through the date of separation as shown in block 12b. The applicant's DD 214 shows in Block 12a that he began active service on August 13, 1999 and Block 12b shows that his active service ended on February 29, 2020. Therefore, any awards placed into his record for a period of service after February 29, 2020 would not be included on this DD 214.

8. Accordingly, the applicant's request to have the two CG MTCs added to his DD 214 should be denied, and his request to have the DHS Outstanding Unit listed in his record should be denied as moot because it has already been added to his record.

(ORDER AND SIGNATURES ON NEXT PAGE)

¹⁰ 10 U.S.C. § 1552(b) (requiring the applicant or his or her representative to request the correction); *see Friedman v. United States*, 141 Ct. Cl. 239, 252-53 (1958) (holding that "[t]he Correction Boards were established for the purpose only of reviewing, on application of a member of the military personnel, a military record to correct errors or injustices *against* such personnel and not to review and reverse decisions of other established boards *favorable* to such personnel).

ORDER

The application of LCDR [REDACTED], USCG (Retired), for correction of his military record is denied.

October 16, 2025

