

U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY
(USMMA)
2017 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

Prepared by the USMMA Advisory Board

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Executive Summary

This report provides the U.S. Secretary of Transportation (Secretary) Elaine Chao with advice and counsel in accordance with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA, or Academy) Advisory Board (Board) Charter, Order DOT 1120.45, issued on March 27, 2013. Pursuant to 46 U.S. Code of Regulations 51313, then-Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, appointed members to the Board in May 2013.

This 2017 report is the fourth Annual Report written by the Board. Its primary purpose is to advise the Secretary, Maritime Administration (MARAD) Administrator, and Academy Superintendent on matters that need immediate and continued attention to advance the Academy toward meeting its strategic goals and objectives.

The findings in this and previous Annual Reports are based on direct inspections and observations made during three or more visits by the Board to the Academy each year; oral reports and written documents provided to the Board by faculty and staff; survey data; and small group and individual discussions with Midshipmen, faculty, staff, administration, alumni, members of the maritime industry, and higher education accreditors. Recommendations are based on the Board members' collective knowledge of best practices and emerging trends and issues in higher education and the maritime industry, and on Board members' expertise.

Consistent with the Advisory Board's 2016 report, this report focuses on three areas requiring immediate and continuing attention: 1) Safety of Midshipmen; 2) Maintaining Regional Accreditation; and 3) Strategic Plan and Performance Measures for the Academy.

The appendices describe how the Academy is complying with the previous secretarial directives and meeting the Board's recommendations contained in previous Annual Reports. Where applicable, the Board has updated its recommendations.

Areas for Immediate and Continuing Focus

1. Safety of Midshipmen – Preventing Sexual Harassment and Assault

For over a decade, alleged occurrences of sexual harassment, assault, hazing, bullying, coercion, and retaliation toward Midshipmen were identified by victims, witnesses, and by the U.S. Department of Defense's Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) Service Academy Gender Relations (SAGR) Surveys as problems of varying degrees of frequency and severity. Rear Admiral James Helis, USMMA's superintendent, instituted policies and programs at the Academy from 2012 to 2016 considered to be best practices in higher education to prevent and address sexual harassment and assault. In 2016, the Advisory Board recognized the efforts of the Academy but reported that these efforts were insufficient; alleged and reported incidents of harassment and assault by Midshipmen and alumni continued.

USMMA's accrediting body, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), conducted a decennial accreditation review in 2016. MSCHE warned the Academy that it was not in compliance with accreditation standards, in part because of a persistent pattern of sexual harassment and assault. MSCHE required the Academy to submit a Monitoring Report in March 2017. The purpose of the report was to provide evidence of the Academy's progress toward addressing and preventing sexual harassment and assault, as well as to remedy other related issues (see Section 3 for additional discussion). MSCHE conducted an onsite review at the Academy in April 2017 to verify the facts in the Monitoring Report. MSCHE's decision on the Academy's accreditation status is expected in late June 2017.

In June 2016, then-Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx directed MARAD and USMMA to take steps to improve the safety of Midshipmen and prevent and end sexual assault and sexual harassment of Midshipmen. Then-Secretary Foxx also suspended Sea Year, an experiential learning program on U.S. Naval Military Sealift Command vessels and commercial U.S. flagships that is a core component of the USMMA curriculum. The intent of the Sea Year suspension was to allow time for USMMA, MARAD, and the maritime industry to strengthen policies and practices to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault, hazing, bullying, coercion, and retaliation occurrences toward Midshipmen on campus and during the Sea Year program.

In the past 12 months, the U.S. Congress, U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT), MARAD, USMMA, and the maritime industry have moved boldly toward preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault. Then-Secretary Foxx directed an independent culture audit conducted by the Logistics Management Institute (LMI) to:

1. Identify the current institutional climate at USMMA and any contributing subcultures;
2. Analyze the nature and scope of the problem of sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus and at sea derived from recent reports, research, survey data, policies, and interviews; and
3. Provide recommendations for improvement.

The LMI audit was conducted over 60 days and involved 162 structured interviews from a broad array of USMMA constituent groups, literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative analyses, and best-practice analyses. The audit found that USMMA Midshipmen experience sexual harassment and assault at a higher level than cadets at other Federal Service Academies. It also identified cultural aspects that contribute to these behaviors and provided recommendations to address them. The *Department of Transportation U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Culture Audit Deliverable 4: Final Report* (LMI Final Report) is available at:

<https://www.usmma.edu/sites/usmma.edu/files/docs/USMMAReport%20508.pdf>.

Following publication of the LMI Final Report and as a result of the constructive response and action by maritime industry leaders, MARAD, and the Academy, then-Secretary Foxx approved a staged resumption of Sea Year. This involved Midshipmen returning to sea on State Maritime Academy (SMA) training vessels, U.S. military vessels, civilian-crewed vessels, and commercial maritime vessels that are compliant with newly established eligibility requirements to host USMMA Midshipmen during Sea Year. Use of SMA vessels then ceased once the use of credentialed commercial maritime vessels resumed.

Actions taken by the Academy and MARAD in partnership with industry are outlined below:

- MARAD engaged with maritime industry leaders to highlight the issue of sexual harassment and assault and discuss ways to provide more consistent support for victims and discipline for perpetrators, with a focus on protecting Midshipmen.
- MARAD engaged to strengthen a public-private partnership with industry and labor to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault. The following actions were implemented through this partnership:
 - “Sea Year Eligibility” requirements that include, but are not limited to, zero tolerance for sexual harassment and assault, vetted mentors to work with Midshipmen during Sea Year, and a no-fraternization policy between crew and Midshipmen.

- Training for all vessel crew members about sexual harassment and assault. Shipping lines are required to verify that crew members understand the issue, their responsibilities, the penalties for not reporting an incident, and the company's disciplinary procedures.
 - Requirement for each shipping line company to provide USMMA with a written summary of Midshipmen's experience on the company's vessel and note areas of concern and opportunities for improving the Sea Year experience.
 - Creation of a Shipboard Climate Compliance Team (SCCT) comprised of 10 licensed mariners (four of whom are female), sexual harassment and assault experts, and civil rights experts. The initial SCCT was led by two MARAD officials who are USMMA graduates. The SCCT reviews documents submitted by companies that seek to participate in the Sea Year program to ensure compliance with the criteria.
- Academy leadership strengthened policies and procedures and introduced new programs focused on preventing and ending sexual harassment, assault, bullying, hazing, coercion, and retaliation. Selected actions include:
 - Enhancement of Sea Year preparation for Midshipmen.
 - New post-Sea Year debriefing and reintegration process and workshop.
 - Progress toward making substantive revisions to the Sea Year Guidebook. Once completed, the Guidebook will inform Midshipmen about goals, objectives, policies, and protocols to be followed while Midshipmen are at sea.
 - Approval of a comprehensive and integrated Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Framework. SAPR is part of the Academy's multi-year strategic goals and approach to sexual assault prevention and response. SAPR strategic goals are included in Table 1.

Table 1. USMMA SAPR Strategic Goals

USMMA SAPR Strategic Goals	
Climate	Create a culture intolerant of sexual assault and sexual harassment and behaviors that enable such conduct.
Prevention	Deliver consistent and effective prevention methods and programs.
Response	Improve the availability of response support for sexual assault and sexual harassment victims. Increase victim confidence and lessen the stigma associated with reporting.
Accountability	Achieve high competence in holding offenders appropriately accountable. Improve capability and capacity for reporting, investigation, and prosecution of sexual assault. Elevate leadership engagement in response to sexual assault.
Assessment	Assess and report on program effectiveness, and use assessment information to make improvements in the program.

- USMMA established a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO), with a dedicated manager responsible for strategic planning, oversight, and integration of sexual harassment and assault prevention education program development, education, and response among all Academy stakeholders.
- USMMA faculty, staff, Regiment, and Midshipmen are collaborating in new ways to improve the culture and end harassment and assault:
 - Twelve USMMA faculty and staff attended the Military Service Academy Summit on Sexual Assault Prevention. They returned with ideas on how to frame the prevention of sexual harassment and assault message in terms of human dignity, which has been positively received on campus. Additional Midshipmen have joined this group and are actively engaged in enhancing the Academy's culture.
 - An interdepartmental committee comprised of faculty members, Midshipmen, and the Regiment created a Culture Campaign to highlight and integrate core values and achieve a shared vision to evolve the USMMA culture.
- The U.S. Congress added a requirement to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 mandating creation of a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Working Group. This group must report to Congress in September 2017 on efforts to further address sexual harassment and assault prevention and reporting at USMMA. To meet the NDAA mandate, MARAD formed three working subgroups:

- *USMMA Climate Awareness.* This subgroup is chaired by labor and industry representatives, with Academy representatives as members. The subgroup will evaluate options and provide recommendations to promote a climate of honor and respect and a culture that is intolerant of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or other inappropriate conduct.
- *Reporting and Response.* This subgroup is also chaired by labor and industry representatives, with Academy representatives as members. This subgroup is assessing options to remove barriers to reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other inappropriate conduct while protecting confidentiality. It will look at how vessel operators could protect victims against retribution. It will provide recommendations for removing barriers to reporting and measures that protect victim confidentiality.
- *Sea Year Training.* This subgroup is co-chaired by USMMA and a State academy representative. This subgroup is assessing the feasibility of changes to the Academy’s Sea Year training program and corresponding changes to curricula to improve the prevention of, and response to, incidents of sexual assault during Sea Year. It will provide recommendations for improving existing Academy programs or policies, the potential for creating new programs or policies, and identify any issues with changing Sea Year and corresponding curricula.

Recommendations

The decisive and swift actions by the U.S. DOT, MARAD, and USMMA to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault have further polarized the USMMA community with significant support and opposition. There have been met with much debate about the nature, extent, and ways of addressing the problem. Sea Year is an integral part of a complex network that contributes to the security and economy of the United States and the world. The impact of these actions has had far-reaching effects and consequences.

It is vital that all stakeholders invest time and effort to understand and accept various perspectives on these issues and actions. Stakeholders must also collaborate to heal fractured relationships and support the Academy in making forward progress.

Substantive progress has been made over the past 12 months to increase the safety of Midshipmen on campus and at sea. The Board advises continued work toward meeting Safety of Midshipmen recommendations contained in its 2016 Annual Report¹ and makes

¹ These recommendations were listed under the Campus Culture area, one of the five elements of the 2012–2017 USMMA strategic plan (other areas included Cutting-Edge Programs, Leadership, Infrastructure, and Communication and Partnerships).

four new recommendations (for additional details, see Appendix B, Recommendation 3I: Safety of Midshipmen):

1. MARAD and the USMMA should continue to fund, carefully assess, and continuously improve the Sea Year Compliance Program to protect Midshipmen. They should ensure that the Sea Year experiential learning experience is constructive and contributes to achieving expected outcomes. This will build evidence that the Academy has embraced and is compliant with *MSCHE Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation (2015)*.
2. The Academy should fill open positions in the SAPRO, onboard staff, and ensure that the work of SAPRO is supported and integrated into the fabric of the Academy as quickly as possible.
3. The Academy should continue to use SAGR surveys to measure progress on preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault against peers, and use the data to continuously improve programs.
4. The Academy and MARAD should establish performance indicators and adjust them, as needed, to measure progress toward safety objectives so that Midshipmen and the Academy administration can be confident that appropriate efforts are being made to prevent sexual harassment and assaults, that incidents will be addressed promptly and forthrightly, and that there will be zero tolerance for retaliation against victims who report harassment or assault.

2. Maintaining Regional Accreditation – Governance, Leadership, and Administration

The Academy is regionally accredited by MSCHE. Regional accreditation is a primary indicator that an institution accomplishes its mission, achieves its goals, and has the resources and operating structure to provide its students with a quality education. In 2016, MSCHE placed the Academy on warning due to insufficient evidence that the institution was in compliance with five of 14 standards for accreditation and requirements for affiliation, specifically Accreditation Standards 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9 and Affiliation Standard 7.

Table 2 summarizes the MSCHE standards not met with accompanying explanation that is paraphrased from the MSCHE report.

Table 2. MSCHE Standards Not Met

Standards Not Met	Summary
Accreditation Standard 2: Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient evidence that resource allocation decisions directly link to mission and goal achievement at the institutional and unit level, including with Human Resources, Financial, and Procurement.
Accreditation Standard 3: Institutional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutes restrict the Academy from having access to the annual budget at the start of the fiscal year. • The Superintendent does not currently have direct control over the hiring process for faculty and staff to ensure adequate faculty, staff, and administration to support the institution’s mission and outcomes expectations.
Accreditation Standard 4: Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Superintendent does not currently have direct control over the institutional functions of personnel hiring, financial planning and management, and procurement. The Superintendent must have the means, authority, and responsibility to effectively and efficiently accomplish the Academy’s mission.
Accreditation Standard 5: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Institutional Assessment, Director of Admissions, Academic Dean, Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Officer, and other key administrator positions are all currently vacant or occupied by interim staff. While some of these positions, such as the Academic Dean, are filled on an interim basis with highly qualified, skilled, and dedicated individuals, the Academy must move forward with permanently filling these critical positions with administrative leaders who possess the appropriate skills, credentials, and training.
Accreditation Standard 9: Student Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the safety and climate of respect that all Midshipmen encounter during the Sea Year experience, the institution must take demonstrable steps in preparation for and upon return from the Sea Year experience. • The pervasiveness of sexual harassment on campus must be addressed as a pressing and substantial concern that has fostered a hostile environment for many cohorts of Midshipmen. The institution must implement specific steps to build a climate of mutual respect and trust among Midshipmen, faculty, and staff with respect to sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Standards Not Met	Summary
Affiliation Standard 7: Institutional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient evidence that institutional planning (a) integrates plans for academic, personnel, information resources and technologies, learning resources, and financial development; (b) includes goals and objectives, both institution-wide and for all individual units that are clearly stated, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, are linked to mission and goal achievement, and are used for planning and resource allocation at the institutional and unit levels; and (c) includes planning and improvement processes that are clearly communicated, provide for constituent participation, and incorporate the use of assessment results. • Insufficient evidence of an organized and sustained institutional assessment process, including evidence that assessment results are shared and discussed with appropriate constituents and used in planning, resource allocation, and renewal at all levels.

The underlying theme throughout the areas of noncompliance was the continued lack of authority and autonomy granted to the Academy Superintendent from Congress, U.S. DOT, and MARAD. In response to MSCHE’s decision to place the Academy on warning, the U.S. Congress altered language in the NDAA to restore to the Superintendent the standard discretionary authority and management resources that are typically afforded to all other U.S. DOT department heads and senior administrators at academic institutions, including the other Federal Service Academies.

U.S. DOT, MARAD, and the Academy also made changes to the Academy’s current governance and administration policies to restore authorities to the Superintendent that had been removed in response to issues that occurred under prior leadership. The faculty, Regiment, and Academy leadership made substantive improvements in institutional planning, institutional outcomes, and assessment strategies. The Academy compiled evidence of this progress toward meeting accreditation standards and submitted it to the MSCHE. A MSCHE evaluation team visited the Academy in March 2017 to assess progress; MSCHE’s determination on reaccreditation is expected by the end of June 2017.

The U.S. Congress, U.S. DOT, MARAD, and the Academy are to be commended for the substantive progress achieved in less than one year. The changes to governance and authorities, and the response to sexual harassment and assault have put the Academy in a good position to meet MSCHE reaccreditation requirements. The Academy has also developed solid plans to connect its new strategic plan (to be developed over the next 12 months) with institutional goals, resource allocation, and assessments. In addition, the

Academy is purchasing software to organize and track the detailed intersections between the strategic plan, learning outcomes, assessments, budget, and resource allocations. This will help put the Academy in a much better position to compile data that supports the institution's continuous improvement and demonstrate beyond a doubt that it fully meets accreditation standards.

Recommendations

To support the Academy in reaching its governance, leadership, and administration goals, and in maintaining regional accreditation, the Board makes the following recommendations:

1. The Academy, MARAD, and U.S. DOT should understand and comply with the governance, leadership, and administration requirements for accreditation. It is important to articulate key entities' roles, including their responsibilities for oversight and execution, and adjust policies and statutes to adopt best practices and requirements for accreditation. (This recommendation was also contained in the Board's 2015 and 2016 Annual Reports; for additional details see Appendix B, Recommendation 2B: Governance.)
2. The Academy should purchase and implement software to track and communicate evidence of compliance with accreditation standards and staff the office of Institutional Assessment at an adequate level to develop and manage ongoing institutional assessment processes and programs.

3. Strategic Plan and Performance Measures – Advancing Strategic Goals and Objectives

A strategic plan is a requirement for accreditation. It is used to develop and shape the Academy's programs and practices and evaluate success. A strategic plan is usually developed by faculty, staff, and students in collaboration with the institution's governing body. This best practice in higher education is strongly preferred to the top-down approach used to develop the 2012-2017 strategic plan. The 2012-2017 planning process was directed by U.S. DOT and MARAD with limited input from faculty. The process resulted in a plan that omitted mention of some essential aspects of the Academy, like athletics, and lacked support from those who became responsible for making it operational.

To develop the 2018-2023 strategic plan, the Superintendent and a representative group of members of the Academy have chosen to use a more collaborative and comprehensive strategic planning approach called Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI was developed at Case Western University and has been recognized as a powerful strategic planning and change

management method. AI focuses on the core strengths of an organization; through a structured, collaborative process, the organization's members and stakeholders build a positive vision for the future that creates momentum and accelerates positive change.

Recommendation

To gain greater buy in and support to achieve the next strategic plan's objectives, the Board offers the following recommendation (for additional details, see Appendix B, Recommendation 2E: Strategic Plan):

1. For accreditation purposes and for the success of the next strategic plan, the strategic planning process must be led and developed by the Academy. The Academy's governing bodies, alumni, and industry stakeholders are encouraged to support the process and refrain from unduly influencing the process so that the plan is truly owned by the people who are responsible for implementing it. (This recommendation was included in the 2016 Annual Report in modified format.)

Conclusion

The Board recommends that Secretary Chao and her administration prioritize the three areas discussed in this report: the safety of Midshipmen, regional accreditation, and the strategic planning process. Significant progress can be made using current budget and staffing resources.

Evidence of continuous improvement is characteristic of higher education and is a requirement for accreditation. Over the past five years, the Academy has demonstrated significant resilience and commitment to continuous improvement. Over this timeframe, the Academy rectified the issues identified in 2009 by the Government Accountability Office and advanced its management operating procedures, curriculum, leadership program, Regiment, athletics, student support services, Sea Year experience, culture, faculty development, and infrastructure.

Some of the changes made over the past five years have been controversial; a few have been divisive. The Academy is fortunate to have many stakeholders with such passion for the Academy and its mission. Stakeholders who are willing to understand different perspectives and collaborate are needed address divisions between all who care so deeply about the Academy.

The Academy, MARAD, and U.S. DOT should continue to work toward full implementation of the Capital Improvement Plan and prior secretarial directives. As time and budget allow, the Board's recommendations from its previous Annual Reports should be prioritized and resources allocated for their implementation.

While there is clearly more to be done, the Academy should be recognized for its accomplishments:

- Addressing issues of sexual harassment, assault, and retaliation on campus and at sea.
- Restoring to the Superintendent staffing, procurement, and budgeting authorities.
- Selecting the AI approach to develop the next strategic plan; this will increase the likelihood that the plan is widely accepted and will generate forward momentum toward shared goals. With shared goals and plans to achieve them it will be easier for the faculty to agree on desired learning outcomes and to allocate resources accordingly.

Collectively, the above accomplishments present mounting evidence that the Academy is headed in the right direction. The Academy is poised to earn its reaccreditation and the future of the institution looks bright.

Appendix A. Summary of the Academy’s Progress Toward Meeting Prior Secretary’s Directives and Board’s Recommendations

Table 3 provides a summary of then-Secretary Anthony Foxx’s immediate and long-term directives issued after the Board’s 2014 Annual Report, the Board’s assessment of progress made to date on meeting these directives, as well as reference information for Annual Reports.

Table 3. Secretarial Directives and Summary of Board’s Assessment of Progress

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Secretarial Directive	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
<u>Cutting Edge Programs</u>	Develop a faculty hiring strategy to ensure diverse and qualified faculty.	Partially achieved; need to adjust recruiting strategy to attract qualified, diverse faculty.	2014, Page 5, 1A
	Identify policy changes and resources to support greater professional development opportunities for faculty.	Achieved.	2014, Page 5, 1B
	Conduct a comprehensive review of education equipment, especially simulators and information technology (IT) infrastructure, and explore use of private funding.	Partially achieved; policy change needed to allow USMMA to accept equipment discounts and donations from manufacturers while making sure there are no conflicts of interest that violate applicable conflict of interest laws.	2014, Page 5, 1C
	Appoint an industry advisory entity.	Partially achieved; will be systematically implemented into the institutional assessment process in 2018.	2014, Page 5, 1D
	Develop a comprehensive leadership program.	Phase 1 implemented in 2015. Phase 2 implemented in September 2016. Assessing Learning Outcomes of the Leadership Program in 2017.	2014, Page 6, 2A 2014, Page 7, 2C 2014, Page 9, 3E 2015, Page 7, 1C
	Encourage faculty to be more available to Midshipmen.	Achieved.	2014, Page 9, 3F

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Secretarial Directive	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
<u>Leadership</u>	Hire an experienced individual to help USMMA leadership promote a positive campus culture and allocate appropriate funding to improve Midshipmen’s quality of life.	Achieved and obtaining desired results. The position will be vacated on June 1, 2017. The role should be backfilled as quickly as possible.	2014, Page 9, 3D
<u>Campus Culture</u>	Upgrade the dining experience for Midshipmen and visitors.	Partially achieved; policy modification needed to achieve objective. Air conditioning needs repair.	2014, Page 9, 3G 2014, Page 9, 3H
<u>Communication and Partnerships</u>	Improve relationships with USMMA alumni by strengthening and expanding communications.	In progress. Regular meetings established between Superintendent and Alumni Association and Foundation (AAF) President; discussing possibility of holding regular senior-level meetings/communications with the new AAF board chairman.	2014, Page 12, 3A

Table 4 provides a brief overview of the Board’s recommendations from the 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 Annual Reports, as well as a summary of the Board’s assessment of progress the Academy has made toward meeting these recommendations. It also includes reference information from this and previous Annual Reports.

See [Appendix B](#) for additional details on the Board’s 2014–2017 recommendations and the Board’s assessment of progress made toward meeting them.

Table 4. Board’s Recommendations and Summary Assessment of Academy Progress

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
<u>Cutting Edge Programs</u>	Backfill the Director of Institutional Assessment position to create processes and metrics to assess overall institution-level learning outcomes, including leadership development. Use the institutional assessment data for institutional planning, budgeting, and continuous improvement.	Completed. A committee of faculty and staff are developing institutional-level learning outcomes.	2014, Page 7, 2C 2015, Page 6, 4 2015, Page 7, C

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	Examine learning outcomes and success rates for each course, and develop a grading rubric that is transparent to Midshipmen.	In draft form until the strategic plan is formulated and then will align with institutional learning outcomes. Some progress on making grading rubrics transparent to Midshipmen.	2014, Page 9, 3A
	Develop and implement an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum development and programming that includes the four pillars of Academics, Regiment, Physical Fitness, and Sea Year.	Focus for second half of 2017. Will align curriculum while developing the strategic plan and continuously improve it as part of the institutional assessment program.	2014, Page 5, 1G 2014, Page 6, 2A
	Improve international visibility and collaboration by developing Kings Point as a venue for conferences and encouraging visiting professorships.	To be prioritized. No significant findings.	2014, Page 5, 1E 2014, Page 5, 1F
	The Academy should monitor its hiring processes and work with U.S. DOT to continuously improve them.	Faculty hiring strategy partially achieved. Recruiting and hiring processes have improved.	2014, Page 5, 1A 2017, Page 25, 1A
	Create a rolling three-year forecast of educational equipment capital investments and maintenance needs and report to the Secretary on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.	New.	2017, Page 26, 1C

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
<u>Leadership</u>	Reevaluate the governance structure of the Academy considering requirements for accreditation and operational effectiveness. Restore to the Superintendent the standard discretionary authority and management resources that are typically afforded to all other U.S. DOT department heads and senior administrators at academic institutions, including other Federal Service Academies. Adjust, as appropriate, to improve governance effectiveness.	Good progress in 2016/2017. NDAA language changed. Maritime Education and Training Executive Review Board (METERB) established. Superintendent’s Cabinet has been expanded. Faculty Forum is developing a new structure.	2014, Page 7, 2B 2016, Page 8, 2 2017, Page 12, 1
	Develop an interdepartmental planning and budgeting process to prioritize and optimize use of limited financial and human resources.	Preparation for Fiscal Year 2018 budget completed; planning for Fiscal Year 2019 is underway. Authority for hiring restored to the Superintendent in 2017.	2014, Page 5, 1G 2015, Page 7, C
	Develop a Human Capital Plan for staff and faculty to create and support a culture of continuous improvement and individual development.	Some progress. Will be a component in the Strategic Plan and the Institutional Assessment process.	2014, Page 7, 2D
	Investigate strategic planning best practices from other institutions of higher education and choose a more collaborative and comprehensive strategic planning approach to foster greater buy-in and ownership in the resulting plan from faculty, staff, and the Academy’s administration, Regiment, and governing bodies.	Completed. Funding for a consultant to guide the development of the strategic plan using AI methods.	2016, Page 9, 1 2017, Page 13, 1
	The Academy should purchase and implement software to track and communicate evidence of compliance with accreditation standards and staff the office of Institutional Assessment at	New.	2017, Page 12, 2

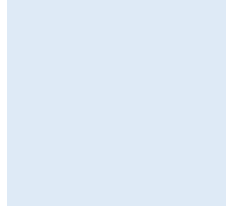
2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	an adequate level to develop and manage ongoing institutional assessment processes and programs.		
	Acknowledge the progress that has been made in moving ahead on leadership development for Midshipmen and maintain progress on this initiative.	Partially achieved. The addition of two required leadership courses is a great step forward.	2017, Page 30, 2A
	The Board encourages members of the Board of Visitors to ensure that the Academy is treated in the same manner as other Federal Service Academies during sequestrations, government shutdowns, and similar events.	New.	2017, Page 32, 2B
<u>Campus Culture</u>	Backfill the Admissions Officer position and make a higher level of commitment to diversity and social justice.	Completed and achieving desired results.	2014, Page 9, 3B
	Update job descriptions and performance measures for company officers. Resolve Midshipmen’s confusion on expectations and ensure equity in the disciplinary process.	Some progress. New disciplinary policies and processes approved; will be published for implementation at the start of academic year 2017-2018. Midshipmen survey results indicate a decline in the perception of equality and fairness at the Academy. Performance measures are in development.	2014, Page 9, 3C
	Continue to provide funding for cultural outings and community service. Incorporate cultural and community service activities into the Academy’s overall institutional goals and assessment program. Collect and use data for continuous improvement.	Partially achieved. Social and cultural activities have been expanded.	2017, Page 36, 3D
	Continue to monitor the quality and accessibility of food for all Midshipmen to	Partially achieved. Performance of food service provider is being monitored and documented.	2017, Page 37, 3G and 3H

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	<p>ensure Midshipmen are adequately nourished.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to expand the pool of potential food vendors by reevaluating the existing small business set-aside requirement.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of offering a fourth meal daily to ensure adequate nourishment and accessibility of food.</p>		
	<p>Provide opportunities for Midshipmen, faculty, and staff to work together to develop dynamic, engaging activities and opportunities for leadership development.</p>	<p>Good progress. Midshipmen more engaged in decision making.</p>	<p>2014, Page 9, 3E</p>
	<p>The Academy and MARAD should work with maritime industry leaders and seafaring union leaders to take precautions to ensure that the Midshipmen who join their crews will be safe from harassment and assault.</p>	<p>Good progress. With industry leaders, MARAD established eligibility requirements and a process to determine eligibility of companies to carrying USMMA Midshipmen aboard their ships, managed by a Shipboard Eligibility Compliance Team.</p>	<p>2016, Page 7, 1 2017, Page 9, 1</p>
	<p>Establish performance indicators to measure progress so that Midshipmen and the Academy Administration can be confident that Midshipmen will not be at undue risk, that incidents will be addressed promptly and forthrightly, and that there will be zero tolerance for retaliation against victims who report harassment or assault.</p>	<p>Good progress. Early stages. Performance indicators are in development.</p>	<p>2016, Page 7, 2 2017, Page 9, 4</p>

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	MARAD, maritime industry leaders, and seafaring union leaders must take a strong stand against sexual harassment, assault, and retaliation, and recognize that sexual harassment is not an acceptable practice that mariners should expect because of industry characteristics.	Early progress. See actions described in pages 4-8.	2016, Page 7, 3
	MARAD, maritime industry leaders, and seafaring union leaders should develop appropriate incentives and consequences for vessel captains, owners, and crew members to maintain a safe working and learning environment for Midshipmen and all mariners.	Early progress. See actions described in pages 4-8.	2016, Page 7, 4
	Seek out and implement best practices from other state maritime and service academies and higher education institutions to greatly reduce victims’ fear of reporting sexual harassment and assault crimes, and eliminate the retribution that victims experience.	Good progress. Enhanced Sea Year preparation; established new post-Sea Year debriefing and reintegrating process; revised Sea Year Guidebook; established SAPR Framework; established SAPRO.	2016, Page 7, 5
	Create an interdisciplinary program to develop a leadership culture in which Midshipmen have empathy toward victims and stand up to perpetrators, instead of ostracizing and retaliating against victims.	Good progress. Established Culture Campaign for roll out in June 2017. Will align curriculum while developing the strategic plan and continuously improve it as part of the institutional assessment program.	2016, Page 7, 6
	The Academy should fill open positions in the SAPRO, onboard staff, and ensure that the work of SAPRO is supported and integrated into the fabric of the Academy as quickly as possible.	New.	2017, Page 9, 2
	The Academy should continue to use SAGR	New.	2017, Page 9, 3

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	surveys to measure progress on preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault against peers, and use the data to continuously improve programs.		
<u>Infrastructure</u>	Restore the Superintendent’s discretionary ability to adjust budgeted funds to repair and maintain facilities, equipment, and grounds at the Academy level without multiple approvals and time delays.	Achieved. U.S. Congress altered language in NDAA to restore to the Superintendent the standard discretionary authority and management resources that are typically afforded to all other U.S. DOT department heads and senior administrators at academic institutions, including the other Federal Service Academies.	2014, Page 10, 4A 2016, Page 8, 1
	Increase staff and financial resources to maintain facilities and grounds at a higher standard. Repair facilities, equipment, and grounds more quickly to protect the health and safety of the Midshipmen, faculty, and staff.	Good progress. Adequacy of staffing and budget should be reassessed. The Superintendent’s standard discretionary authority and management resources were restored.	2014, Page 10, 4B
<u>Communication and Partnerships</u>	Backfill approved External Affairs positions.	Hiring freeze has been lifted. Position is currently advertised.	2014, Page 12, 5C
	Continue the work of the Meaningful Communication and Partnerships Team to identify characteristics that distinguish Kings Point graduates.	To be prioritized when External Affairs positions are filled.	2014, Page 12, 5D
	Develop and maintain an alumni database and deepen alumni connections to expand opportunities for Midshipmen.	To be prioritized when External Affairs positions are filled.	2014, Page 12, 5E
	Expand efforts to highlight accomplishments of graduates to the U.S. Navy, Strategic Sealift Officer Program, U.S. Army, National Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,	To be prioritized when External Affairs positions are filled.	2014, Page 12, 5F

2012–2017 Strategic Plan Goal	Board Recommendation	2014–2017 Progress Assessment Summary	Annual Report Cross Reference (Year, Page, Recommendation)
	U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard.		
	Develop and expand partnerships with Kings Point graduates who have leadership roles in industry.	Some progress. Should be more systematic.	2014, Page 12, 5G
	Arrange for Midshipmen to accompany faculty and staff to relevant maritime conferences and events to expand their professional networks.	Partially achieved and well received. Funding for travel to scholarly conferences has increased to \$86,000 over the past four years.	2014, Page 12, 5H



Appendix B. Details on the Academy’s Progress Toward Meeting the Board’s Past Recommendations

Appendix B provides details of the Board’s assessment of the Academy’s progress toward meeting recommendations included in the 2014, 2015, and 2016 Annual Reports.² It also includes the Board’s updated recommendations for 2017 that reflect progress made to date. The sections below are organized according to the five elements of the 2012–2017 strategic plan (Cutting-Edge Programs, Leadership, Campus Culture, Infrastructure, and Communication and Partnerships).

1. Cutting-Edge Programs

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: USMMA aspires to “deliver integrated and innovative academic, professional, and Regimental programs to prepare Midshipmen for leadership and service to the Nation.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Build and maintain highly effective faculty, up-to-date educational equipment, and an interdisciplinary academic curriculum.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 1A: Faculty Hiring

Develop a faculty hiring strategy to ensure adequate numbers of hires and the flexibility to hire adjuncts with unique skill sets.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: USMMA employs 147 part- and full-time faculty, 74 percent of whom are tenured or tenure-track. Many of the faculty in the two major-granting departments, Marine Engineering and Marine Transportation, hold unlimited master’s Merchant Mariner Credentials or unlimited chief engineer’s Merchant Mariner Credentials. Instructional faculty consist of a balance of civilians and active duty military officers. The pool of qualified faculty candidates who meet the rigorous standards for employment at the Academy is limited.

Over the past 12 months, recruiting and hiring processes have improved. U.S. DOT and the Academy have worked together to create an orderly process to transition Academy hiring processes, resources, and authorities for higher education-specific positions from the U.S. DOT to the Academy. Centralized U.S. DOT recruiting staff have made concerted efforts to learn about the unique skills and competencies required to work in higher education and become more familiar with the higher education-specific terminology in position descriptions and academic vitae. Academy faculty and staff are now involved in recruiting, screening, and hiring processes and the Superintendent has more authority to determine and approve compensation for new hires. Except for the January 2017 hiring freeze, the time to fill open positions has been shortened.

Updated Faculty Hiring Recommendation

The Academy should monitor its hiring processes and work with U.S. DOT to continuously improve them.

² In 2015, the Board recommended that the Academy, MARAD, and U.S. DOT continue to work toward achieving all 2014 recommendations and proposed one additional recommendation.

Recommendation 1B: Faculty Support

Provide support for faculty to improve their teaching effectiveness, such as release time for curriculum improvement and development, as well as time for peer observations, teaching evaluations, and other feedback mechanisms.

Make modest policy changes to provide release time flexibility and encourage faculty attendance at conferences and participation in other professional development activities.

Summary of Status: Achieved

Details of Status: Faculty effectiveness is assessed in two ways: survey responses from Midshipmen and faculty observations by Department Heads. Based on the 2014 directive from the Secretary, the Academy has established a program to routinely evaluate faculty teaching methods in the classroom. Faculty have increased the frequency of feedback and observations over the past three years and are developing methods to utilize the data for continuous improvement.

Professional development funding, including funding for travel to scholarly conferences, has increased over the past three years with the Secretary's support and 2014 directive to identify policy changes and resources that provide greater professional development opportunities for faculty. Delegation of budget management to the Superintendent has enabled him to allocate funding to support travel by faculty.

Recommendation 1C: Educational Equipment and Infrastructure

Conduct a comprehensive review and upgrade of educational equipment, particularly the engine room simulator, and include IT infrastructure.

Explore opportunities to use private funds to develop this infrastructure, including renovating academic buildings and enabling wireless connectivity access across campus.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Academy's faculty use audio-visual equipment, computer technology, lab equipment, and simulators to teach Midshipmen the essential knowledge and skills they need to master their disciplines and learn the critical skills they need to serve our Nation in peacetime and war. With support from the Secretary, capital expenditures for learning technology, equipment, and simulators have increased appropriately over the past three years and some end-of-life equipment has been replaced. However, standard procurement procedures used by non-educational departments of the government are being applied to the Academy. The number of permissions required and the timeline to repair equipment is unreasonable for an educational institution. As a result, faculty and Midshipmen do not consistently have access to the learning equipment and technology they need to teach and learn.

To operate effectively, the Academy must continue to have sufficient capital funding for educational equipment. It must also have more authority to use operating expenses to maintain equipment, as needed, to ensure that working equipment is available for teaching and learning.

Updated Educational Equipment and Infrastructure Recommendation

Create a rolling three-year forecast of educational equipment capital investments and maintenance needs and report to the Secretary on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.

Recommendation 1D: Curriculum Development

Appoint an industry advisory entity by December 2017 with the specific mandate to assist the USMMA with curriculum development.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: A hallmark of higher education is regular and systematic input on curriculum from industry and education experts. Faculty members have expressed the need for ongoing interactions and information exchanges with the industry. These interactions are fundamental to their ongoing professional development, and for the placement of Midshipmen upon graduation. In 2014, then-Secretary Foxx issued a directive to appoint an industry advisory entity with the specific mandate to assist the USMMA faculty with curriculum development. The Marine Engineering and Marine Transportation faculty have made some progress to comply with this directive by soliciting input from marine industry professionals through an informal Engineering Industry Roundtable. This informal entity should be formalized and advisory entities should be established for the other degree programs. This is a higher education best practice and will provide evidence for the faculty to use in institutional assessment and during the upcoming 2017 Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology programmatic reaccreditation review. Feedback from the Roundtable can be used to substantiate the relevance of the Marine Engineering and Marine Engineering Systems degree programs and show that they are providing Midshipmen with a high-quality education.

Recommendation 1E: Professional Development

Provide concrete support for faculty to attend international conferences.

Develop Kings Point as a venue for conferences. This would increase the visibility of USMMA and offer faculty and Midshipmen more interactions with the scientific community.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: USMMA has talented faculty, many of whom are considered subject matter experts and have received numerous accolades. They also contribute to the literature in their fields by writing and editing books and articles for peer-reviewed publications. Professional development activities, such as attending and presenting at professional conferences, would further enhance the faculty's credentials and increase the visibility of USMMA. Prior to Fiscal Year 2015, the Academy's budget for faculty professional development ranged from \$26,000 to \$40,000. In Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016, the budget was increased to \$86,000. Funding is sufficient and should cover training requirements and other faculty professional development activities, such as making presentations at professional conferences.

Changes in budget management authorities and practices have minimized the previous travel obstacles discussed in detail in the Advisory Board's 2016 report.

Updated Professional Development Recommendations

Continue to provide funding for faculty to participate in conferences so that they contribute to their profession and enhance the reputation of the Academy.

Develop Kings Point as a venue for conferences. This would increase the visibility of USMMA and offer faculty and Midshipmen more interactions with the scientific community.

Recommendation 1F: International Collaboration

Encourage visiting professorships (such as sabbaticals) to foster international collaboration.

Summary of Status: Progress made

Details of Status: Starting in the second term of Academic Year 2015-2016, the Academy has granted a sabbatical to one faculty member for each term through Term Two of Academic Year 2016-2017. Future expectations are to grant at least three instructors a sabbatical each year. One faculty member is presently on sabbatical and traveling internationally to research the use of liquefied natural gas in the maritime industry.

Recommendation 1G: Institutional-Level Learning Outcomes

Encourage interdepartmental coordination (particularly between students' academic and Regimental lives) on planning and budgeting to leverage resources.

Take a more integrated approach to curriculum development and programming.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Academy has established a committee to develop institution-level learning objectives in accordance with higher education best practices and accreditation standards. The leadership development program is also addressing how to best integrate curriculum needs and Regimental training to optimize the Midshipmen's development. With clarity and agreement on institutional objectives and priorities, the Academy will be able to more effectively develop its Fiscal Year 2018 and 2019 budgets.

Recommendation 1H: Data Collection and Analysis³

Strengthen the Academy's capability to collect and use data in a meaningful way to support decisions and align with MSCHE's *Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Requirements of Affiliation and Standards of Accreditation*.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: To support student learning, in 2013 the Superintendent created the Institutional Effectiveness Council to review and document improvements in overall institutional well-being. Each department and program was directed to establish a mission and goals, mapped to the USMMA strategic goals. The Director of Institutional Assessment drafted an Institutional Effectiveness Handbook and many divisions, programs, and units across the Academy have been using the Handbook. The Director of Institutional Assessment left the Academy in February 2015 and progress toward an integrated and systematic institutional assessment process stalled. In 2016, a new Director of Institutional Assessment was hired and has been working closely with the faculty and Regiment leaders to establish a systematic assessment strategy and process to share assessment results; discuss results with appropriate constituents; and use the data for institutional planning, resource allocation, and institutional renewal, in accordance with accreditation standards.

³ Recommendation 1H is from the 2015 Annual Report and was identified as recommendation "C" in that report (see 2015 Annual Report, page 7).

2. Leadership

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: USMMA aspires to “strengthen leadership, organizational capacity, and governance of the Academy at all levels.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Develop and evaluate a comprehensive leadership and governance approach to leverage synergies between academic and Regimental arenas and effectively address accreditation needs.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 2A: Leadership Development

Develop a comprehensive approach to leadership development that addresses synergies between academic and Regimental student experiences. This could involve engaging all segments of the USMMA community, including students, faculty, administrators, alumni, the Advisory Board, the Board of Visitors, and MARAD, drawing on best practices from other institutions, including but not limited to, the other service academies. This could also involve developing leadership programs for Midshipmen that help enhance students’ understanding of leadership and acquiring the skills necessary for exercising leadership effectively.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Board is pleased to report that there has been continuing, significant progress in developing programs for Midshipmen to become leaders in times of peace and war. Then-Secretary Foxx’s priority item in his letter and directives to the Superintendent in July 24, 2014, was “the development of a comprehensive leadership development program.”

The faculty have embraced the addition of leadership to the academic program and a faculty committee created a sequence of two required core courses in leadership for the 2016–2017 academic year. In addition, an elective course on leadership has been well received. Increased attention to leadership is now an element of the athletics program. The Commandant’s Department has substantially revamped Regimental training to focus more on leadership skills. For Academic Year 2017-2018, the Commandant has reorganized the Regiment to create more formal leadership positions for Midshipmen in their sophomore, junior, and senior years.

Updated Leadership Development Recommendation

Acknowledge the progress that has been made in moving ahead on leadership development for Midshipmen and maintain progress on this initiative. The addition of two required courses is a great step forward. The faculty and Regiment should continue their work together to create a comprehensive leadership development program that integrates academic and Regimental student experience and places leadership development at the forefront of the Academy experience.

Recommendation 2B: Governance

Analyze each area of the accreditation process where additional governance structures and oversight are needed and articulate key entities' roles, including responsibilities for oversight and execution. Key entities are senior administrators at USMMA and MARAD, the Advisory Board, and the Board of Visitors.

MARAD and Congress should initiate an expedited process to change U.S. DOT policies and alter the language in the next National Defense Authorization Act to restore to the Superintendent the standard discretionary authority and management resources that are typically afforded to all other U.S. DOT department heads and senior administrators at academic institutions, including the other Federal Service Academies.

Summary of Status: Achieved

Details of Status:

Overview of Academy Governance Structure

The Secretary has delegated responsibility for policy development and decision making at the Academy to the MARAD Administrator. U.S. Code (46 CFR 310.67) states that “the Superintendent of the Academy is delegated authority to issue all regulations necessary for the accomplishment of the Academy’s mission.” The relationship between the Superintendent, MARAD, and the U.S. DOT is strong. The statutory and regulatory guidance on authority for operating the Academy appear sound. Historically, however, these relationships and internal controls were ineffective. Primarily in response to the 2009 GAO audit of the Academy, key business processes such as financial management, procurement, and human resources were transferred from USMMA to the U.S. DOT.

Changes introduced in late 2016 and 2017 have provided the Superintendent, as the Chief Executive Officer of the institution, with the means, authority, and responsibility—assigned or delegated—to effectively and efficiently accomplish the Academy’s mission. As a result, the former issues regarding hiring timelines, key personnel vacancies, resource allocation, maintenance approval, funding increments and statutory authorities are well on their way to being resolved.

Assessment of Current Academy Governance Climate

With the 2016–2017 changes in governance restoring authorities to the Superintendent, the USMMA leadership and governance structure appears sound and generally consistent with accepted practices in higher education. There continues to be measurable progress at the Academy itself. METERB, a MARAD and U.S. DOT advisory board, was established in late 2016 to provide support to the Superintendent to address leadership and governance concerns of the MSCHE in the areas of Human Resources, Procurement, and Financial Management. METERB has contributed to increased collaboration and efficiency in matters that intersect with U.S. DOT, MARAD, and the Academy. Its purpose is not to manage Academy Operations but to provide strategic guidance and facilitation within DOT.

Under Rear Admiral Helis’s tenure, management roles and responsibilities have been clarified, and there has been an increase in two-way communication with faculty, staff, and students; overall, high-priority issues have been addressed. Midshipmen complete surveys anonymously about their academic experience in individual courses every trimester. There are periodic faculty and staff satisfaction surveys. The Board experienced positive change in its regular, off-the-record conversations with Midshipmen, staff, and faculty during visits to the Academy. Helis holds regular town meetings. The senior staff is substantially more cohesive and aligned than the Board sensed previously. Faculty attitudes, as measured in surveys and observations made by Board members during open meetings with faculty and in small groups and one-to-one discussions, indicate that faculty attitudes are improving.

Faculty morale, which had been uncharacteristically low compared to faculty morale at peer Federal Service Academies and institutions with which Board members are familiar, continues to improve. USMMA morale as measured on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey has substantively improved and shows a positive trend. Faculty members are taking a more active role in governance and a vote on new governance practices is anticipated in June 2017.

Regular civil communication between the Superintendent and the USMMA AAF occurs periodically after years of contentiousness. While the issues have by no means been resolved, the fact that there has been continued communication is a step in the right direction. The Superintendent has been appropriately attentive to his relationships with MARAD, the U.S. DOT Office of the Secretary (OST), and the Board of Visitors. The Superintendent's leadership was recognized in the 2016 MSCHE report.

Updated Governance Recommendations

The Board encourages members of the Board of Visitors to ensure that the Academy is treated in the same manner as other Federal Service Academies during sequestrations, government shutdowns, and similar events.

The Academy should purchase and implement software to track and communicate evidence of compliance with accreditation standards and staff the office of Institutional Assessment at an adequate level to develop and manage ongoing institutional assessment processes and programs.

Recommendation 2C: Sound Leadership

Refine existing and define new performance measures to measure progress toward meeting the Sound Leadership goal; evaluate these metrics with the Advisory Board.

Summary of Status: Not started

Recommendation 2D: Human Capital Plan (HCP)

Develop an HCP for staff and faculty to emphasize the need for continuous improvement and individual development.

Examine best practices at other service academies on how to effectively develop and assess HCPs. HCP activities should be part of the USMMA culture.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: Human resource services are centralized at U.S. DOT and the Academy has no human resource professionals on staff to provide required services, such as compensation planning, succession planning, strategic human resource planning, counseling, and managerial coaching and development. The U.S. DOT resource responsible for these essential tasks has been on long-term leave since the summer of 2015 and there is no near-term plan to provide these services to the Academy. This means the HCP is on hold until U.S. DOT Human Resources staff have the capacity to work on this recommendation.

Recommendation 2E: Strategic Plan

The Superintendent and a representative group of members of the Academy should investigate strategic planning best practices from other institutions of higher education and should choose a more collaborative and

comprehensive strategic planning approach to foster greater buy-in and ownership in the resulting plan from faculty, staff, and the Academy's administration, Regiment, and governing bodies.

Summary of Status: Completed

Details of Status: To develop the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, the Superintendent and a representative group of members of the Academy have chosen to use AI, a more collaborative and comprehensive strategic planning approach.

Updated Strategic Plan Recommendation

For accreditation purposes and for the success of the next strategic plan, the strategic planning process must be led and developed by the Academy. The Academy's governing bodies, alumni, and industry stakeholders are encouraged to support the process and refrain from unduly influencing the process, so that the plan is truly owned by the people who are responsible for implementing it.

3. Campus Culture

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: USMMA aspires to have a “vibrant, diverse, and inclusive culture to attract and educate maritime leaders who excel.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Promote a positive campus culture through enhanced student body diversity, increased student life opportunities, more transparent grading structures, improved food quality, and more accessible faculty.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 3A: Grading Rubric

Examine learning outcomes and success rates for each course and develop a grading rubric that is transparent to students.

Summary of Status: Unknown Progress

Recommendation 3B: Admissions and Diversity

Increase the pay and benefits budget to fund the approved admissions officer position.

Make a higher level of commitment to diversity training and social justice to help the Academy expand its diversity among women and minorities; this could include producing a formal Academy statement outlining the institution’s commitment to increasing diversity.

Summary of Status: Achieved

Details of Status: The Academy has made strong progress toward the goal of increasing racial and gender diversity. As shown in Table 5, females comprise 20 percent of admitted students for the graduating classes of 2019 and 2020 versus 13 percent of admitted students for the graduating class of 2014. Racial diversity of admitted students has increased as a percentage of total students admitted for five of the past six years, as shown in Table 6.

Table 5. Female Student Enrollment, Graduating Class Years 2014- 2020

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Enrollment	44	42	41	38	47	50	55
Percentage of Class	13%	15%	15%	16%	19%	20%	20%

Table 6. Minority Enrollment, Graduating Class Years 2014- 2019

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Academy Student Enrollment	342	285	273	237	252	255	279
Minority Enrollment	52	48	55	54	69	54	67
Percentage of Class	15%	17%	20%	23%	27%	21%	24%
African-American	9	5	6	8	10	5	5
Asian	19	17	22	18	22	18	24
Latino/Hispanic	19	23	25	26	30	24	32
Native American	5	3	2	2	7	7	6

Recommendation 3C: Company Officers

Update job descriptions and establish performance measures for company officers to ensure they have recent industry and command experience.

Provide opportunities for officers to increase their campus presence and encourage ways for them to serve as role models for Midshipmen. The preferred method for hiring company officers should be term appointments, subject to review from experienced officers (company officers are usually hired as civil servants and after several years in this position tend to have less relevant experience).

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: Midshipmen survey results indicate a decline in the perception of equality and fairness at the Academy. The new Commandant who joined the Academy in 2015 began to address these concerns head on with a focus on effectiveness of company officers, communication and fairness when enforcing regulations, and quality of Midshipmen mentorships. A new Commandant hired in 2017 is continuing to focus on these tasks.

Recommendation 3D: Campus Culture and Student Life

Hire a staff member, such as a Vice President of Student Life, with experience in building a positive campus culture, in addition to two support staff.

Allocate an appropriate budget for student life, leadership development, and cultural programs.

Summary of Status: Completed

Details of Status: An experienced Director of Student Activities was hired in 2015 and had an immediate positive impact on the quality and tone of student life at the Academy. The position will be vacant as of June 5, 2017, and should be backfilled as soon as possible. Over the past two years, with support from alumni, opportunities for recreational and intercollegiate sports have improved. Social and cultural

activities have been expanded, particularly on weekends, giving Midshipmen who do not have liberty to leave the Academy options for constructive social interaction. A robust schedule of events is planned and coordinated by Midshipmen with guidance and leadership from the Director of Student Activities. The Superintendent and members of staff and faculty regularly volunteer to chaperone Midshipmen on cultural outings.

Updated Campus Culture and Student Life Recommendations

Backfill the Director of Student Activities position.

Continue to provide funding for cultural outings and community service.

Incorporate cultural and community service activities into the Academy's overall institutional goals and assessment program.

Collect and use data for continuous improvement.

Recommendation 3E: Faculty and Student Collaboration

Provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to work together to develop dynamic, engaging student life activities and opportunities for leadership development.

Summary of Status: Completed

Details of Status: This recommendation is being accomplished in several ways. The Director of Student Activities is collaborating with faculty, staff, and Midshipmen to create dynamic, engaging student life activities and opportunities for leadership development. Through a new strategic planning process, it is anticipated that faculty, staff, and Midshipmen will also work together to create a vision, set goals and performance measures, and identify strategies to achieve these goals.

Recommendation 3F: Faculty Office Hours and Teaching

Ensure that faculty honor office hours and evaluate their curriculum and teaching methods on a rotating schedule to ensure up-to-date content and teaching methods.

Summary of Status: Completed

Details of Status: The former Academic Dean and the current interim Academic Dean have addressed this recommendation. Midshipmen regularly complete course evaluations. Faculty routinely receive feedback from peers and/or managers and use it to improve their teaching effectiveness. With support from MARAD and U.S. DOT, the Academy will have the funding and discretionary authority to maintain essential teaching and learning equipment, and will make it readily available to faculty and Midshipmen. With the implementation of the new industry advisory entity and institutional assessment program, data and input will be used to continuously improve the curriculum and ensure it is cutting edge, relevant, and effective in accomplishing the mission of the Academy.

Recommendation 3G: Nutrition and Dining Services

Hire a nutritionist to work with Dining Services to plan and prepare high-quality meals and snacks that meet students' nutritional and dietary needs, and upgrade the dining experience.

Make food available for purchase during times when the dining hall is closed.

Summary of Status: In process

Details of Status: A review of the current food service provider's contract identified nutritionist services were included. A nutritionist now works with the food service provider on a regular basis. The nutritious quality of food has improved, healthy snacks are available for purchase when the dining hall is closed, and all Midshipmen can now keep approved snacks in the barracks. The performance of the food service provider is being closely monitored and documented. Lapses in service quality are being corrected more quickly, but occur at an unacceptable frequency.

Updated Nutrition and Dining Services Recommendations

Continue to monitor the quality and accessibility of food for all Midshipmen to ensure Midshipmen are adequately nourished.

Explore opportunities to expand the pool of potential food vendors by reevaluating the existing small business set-aside requirement.

Explore the feasibility of offering a fourth meal daily to ensure adequate nourishment and accessibility of food.

Recommendation 3H: Food Vendors

Explore opportunities to expand the pool of potential food vendors by reevaluating the existing small business set-aside.

Summary of Status: Incorporated into recommendation 3G

Recommendation 3I: Safety of Midshipmen

MARAD, maritime industry leaders, and union leaders must take a strong stand against sexual harassment, assault, and retaliation, and recognize that sexual harassment is not an acceptable practice that mariners should expect because of industry characteristics.

The Academy should create an alternative to Sea Year as it is currently designed unless the systemic cultural issues that lead to sexual harassment and assault are adequately resolved. Adequate resolution means that Midshipmen and the Academy Administration are confident that Midshipmen will not be at risk, that incidents will be addressed promptly and forthrightly, and that there will be zero tolerance for retaliating against victims who report harassment or assault.

MARAD, maritime industry leaders, and union leaders should develop appropriate incentives and consequences for vessel captains, owners, and crew members to maintain a safe working and learning environment for Midshipmen and all mariners.

The Academy's faculty, regiment, and staff should seek out and implement best practices from other academies and higher education institutions to greatly reduce victims' fear of reporting sexual harassment and assault crimes, and eliminate the retribution that victims experience.

The Academy's faculty, regiment, and staff should create an interdisciplinary program to develop a leadership culture whereby Midshipmen have empathy toward victims and stand up to perpetrators, instead of ostracizing and retaliating against victims.

Summary of Status: In process

Details of Status: The Academy and MARAD, in partnership with industry leaders, took several actions to make progress toward implementing the recommendations outlined above:

MARAD engaged with the maritime industry leaders to highlight the issue of sexual harassment and assault and discuss ways to provide more consistent support for victims and discipline for perpetrators, with a focus on protecting Midshipmen.

Then-Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx established a Sea Year Stand Down to allow time for the USMMA, MARAD, and the maritime industry to strengthen policies and practices to prevent and end sexual harassment and assault, hazing, bullying, coercion, and retaliation toward Midshipmen. Alleged occurrences of sexual harassment, assault, hazing, bullying, coercion and retaliation toward Midshipmen were identified for over a decade as a problem in varying degrees of frequency and severity by victims, witnesses, and DMDC SAGR Surveys. Then-Secretary Foxx issued a directive for an audit to: 1) identify the current institutional climate at USMMA and any contributing subcultures; 2) analyze the nature and scope of the problem of sexual assault and sexual harassment on campus and at sea derived from recent reports, research, survey data, policies, and interviews; and 3) provide recommendations for improvement. The full report is available at:

<https://www.usmma.edu/sites/usmma.edu/files/docs/USMMAReport%20508.pdf>.

The Academy and MARAD established a strong public-private partnership between the government, private industry, and labor which resulted in the following actions:

- Establishment of Sea Year Eligibility requirements which include, but are not limited to, zero tolerance for sexual harassment and assault; vetted mentors to work with Midshipmen during Sea Year; and a no-fraternization policy between crew members and Midshipmen.
- Requirement for all vessel crew members to be trained about sexual harassment and assault and requirement for shipping lines to verify that crew members understand the issue, their responsibilities, penalties for not reporting an incident, and the company's disciplinary procedures.
- Requirement for each company to provide USMMA with a written summary of the Midshipmen's experience on the company's vessel and note areas of concern and opportunities for improving the Sea Year experience.
- Support for the creation of the SCCT, comprised of 10 licensed mariners (four of whom are female), sexual harassment and assault experts, and civil rights experts. The initial SCCT was led by two MARAD officials who are USMMA graduates. The SCCT reviews documents submitted by companies that seek to participate in the Sea Year program to ensure compliance with the criteria. A full list of requirements is available on MARAD's website at <https://www.marad.dot.gov/criteria/>.

The Academy's faculty, Regiment, and staff sought out and implemented best practices from other SMAs, service academies, and higher education institutions to reduce victims' fears of reporting sexual harassment and assault crimes, and eliminate the retribution that victims experience. Best practices that have been implemented in the past 12 months include:

- Enhanced Sea Year preparation for Midshipmen. The Sea Year Committee was established in the summer of 2016 to review the Sea Year experience and make recommendations for future improvements to the program. The committee is working to ensure that Midshipmen are adequately prepared to go to sea by reviewing Academy-wide preparation strategies, with particular focus on training offered during indoctrination, regimental training, and lectures

delivered during the program. The committee is also exploring communication methods to ensure Midshipmen have adequate ability to communicate with the Academy and access necessary resources during Sea Year. Specifically, the committee is investigating satellite-based communication devices that will provide Midshipmen with an immediate and confidential manner to communicate with the Academy.

- New post-Sea Year debriefing and reintegration process and workshop. On November 7, 2016, the Academy delivered its first Reintegration Program workshop for Midshipmen returning from sea. At this workshop, Midshipmen were given the opportunity to debrief on their at-sea experience and reorient to the rigid environment in the Regiment after living in the environment at sea. At the workshop, professional facilitators and executive coaches guided activities and encouraged involvement of all participants. The Homefront Foundation helped deliver this program. After the first successful Reintegration workshop, the Academy developed a group of interdepartmental faculty and staff, led by the interim Commandant of Midshipmen's staff and the Sea Year Coordinator, to facilitate future workshops. Three successful Reintegration workshops have been held as of May 2017. The Academy is developing a plan to assess and continuously improve the program.
- Progress made toward developing substantive revisions to the Sea Year Guidebook.
- Approval of a comprehensive and integrated SAPR, which outlines the Academy's strategic approach to sexual assault prevention and response.
- Establishment of the SAPRO, with a dedicated manager who is responsible for strategic planning, oversight, and integration of the sexual harassment and assault prevention education program development, education, and response across all Academy stakeholders.

Twelve USMMA faculty and staff attended the Military Service Academy Summit on Sexual Assault Prevention. They returned with ideas on how to frame the prevention of sexual harassment and assault message in terms of human dignity, which has been positively received on campus. Other Midshipmen have joined this group to develop a campaign and are actively engaged in enhancing the Academy's culture.

An interdepartmental committee comprised of members from faculty, Midshipmen, and the Regiment created a Culture Campaign to highlight and integrate core values and achieve a shared vision to evolve the USMMA culture.

Updated Safety of Midshipmen Recommendations

MARAD and the USMMA should continue to work toward the goal of preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault.

MARAD and the USMMA should fund, carefully assess, and continuously improve the Sea Year Compliance Program to protect Midshipmen, ensure that the Sea Year experiential learning experience is constructive and contributes to achieving expected outcomes, and build evidence that the Academy has embraced and is compliant with the MSCHE *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation (2015)*.

The Academy should fill open positions in the SAPRO, onboard staff, and ensure that the work of this office is supported and integrated into the fabric of the Academy as quickly as possible.

The Academy should continue to use SAGR surveys to measure progress on preventing and ending sexual harassment and assault against peers, and use the data to continuously improve programs.

The Academy and MARAD should establish performance indicators and adjust them, as needed, to measure progress toward safety objectives so that Midshipmen and the Academy administration can be confident that appropriate efforts are being made to prevent sexual harassment and assaults, that incidents will be addressed promptly and forthrightly, and that there will be zero tolerance for retaliation against victims who report harassment or assault. Performance measures will include: (1) Number of Midshipmen and USMMA staff and faculty trained to identify, prevent, report, and assist victims of sexual harassment and assault; (2) frequency of alleged and reported incidents on campus and during Sea Year; and (3) number of perpetrators punished.

The Academy's faculty, Regiment, and staff should evolve an interdisciplinary program to develop a leadership culture in which Midshipmen are encouraged to have empathy toward victims and stand up to perpetrators.

4. Infrastructure

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: USMMA aspires to “modernize its infrastructure and strengthen administrative services to support outstanding scholarship.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Maintain Capital Improvement Funds to continue the implementation of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Increase maintenance resource levels and flexibility in applying resources to ensure a well-maintained infrastructure.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 4A: Funding Approval

Restore the Superintendent’s discretionary ability to adjust budgeted funds to repair and maintain facilities, equipment, and grounds at the Academy level without multiple approvals.

Summary of Status: Achieved

Recommendation 4B1: Capital Improvements

Increase staff and financial resources to maintain facilities and grounds at a higher standard.

Repair facilities, equipment, and grounds more quickly to protect the health and safety of Midshipmen, faculty, and staff.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: In February 2012, OST established a USMMA CIP working group to monitor project progress. The primary responsibilities of the working group, which is chaired by the U.S. DOT Office of the Secretary of Transportation’s Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs, are to review the status of and current issues affecting all CIP projects and implement and monitor a tracking system for all ongoing projects. The Academy has made progress with capital improvements over the past few years:

- Renovations of the barracks and dining hall were completed, and heating and cooling issues have largely been resolved.
- Mallory Pier, the Academy’s major waterfront asset, has been reconstructed.
- The water main and distribution system were replaced between 2012 and 2015.
- A space utilization study was completed.
- Renovation of Zero Deck, which houses many Midshipmen support and recreation spaces, has been completed.
- The design for the first academic building to be renovated, Samuels Hall, was completed in 2017; construction is scheduled to begin in 2018.
- Campus security has improved by adding emergency lighting, emergency call boxes, surveillance cameras, a security command center, armed security guards, and improved locks on dormitory entrances and academic buildings.
- A comprehensive review of IT needs has been completed. The Academy purchased new IT servers and digital storage devices that comply with the U.S. Federal standard. The Academy is no longer at risk of network failure due to antiquated servers.
- The Academy repaired existing fiber-optic cable and expanded the network to include a separate security local area network (LAN) capable of supporting additional video surveillance cameras, access control in buildings, and emergency call boxes. Wireless access points were installed in the

barracks, increasing connectivity for Midshipmen and providing the Academy with the ability to install wireless room door locks if needed in the future.

U.S. Congress, U.S. DOT, MARAD, and the Academy made changes to the Academy's current governance and administration policies to restore authorities to the Superintendent that had been removed in response to issues that occurred under prior leadership. These changes are enabling the Superintendent and his staff to operate the Academy in a more effective and efficient manner and the backlog of routine maintenance issues are being addressed.

5. Communication and Partnerships

2012-2017 Strategic Plan Goal: The USMMA aspires to “improve communication and build strong and lasting relationships with external stakeholders.”

Overall Board Recommendation: Strengthen alumni relationships and highlight alumni professional contributions to enhance students’ educational and professional development opportunities.

Recommendations and Status of Academy Progress

Recommendation 5A: Alumni Relationships and Communication

Improve USMMA’s alumni relationships, which have been strained in the past.

Strengthen and expand communications with alumni to share more information about the accomplishments and needs of the Academy.

Summary of Status: Partially achieved

Details of Status: The Academy and the USMMA Alumni Association and Foundation (AAF) both recognize their strained/fractured relationship and have shown a desire to improve this relationship. There are regular monthly meetings between the Superintendent and the AAF President. There are also regular senior-level meetings/communications with the new AAF board chairman. The Director of External Affairs serves as the Alumni Liaison. Town Hall meetings are conducted by the Superintendent for the public and alumni each trimester and include participation by MARAD senior officials (however, no Town Hall meetings have been held since the start of the new Presidential administration in January 2017). The Academy hosted a call-in to discuss the roll-out of the President’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposal. There is also a newsletter published bi-monthly. Alumni have generously donated funding for items on the Needs List. Their support for the Midshipmen and the Academy is appreciated by multiple stakeholders, including Midshipmen and their parents; Academy staff, faculty, and administrators, as well as MARAD and U.S. DOT.

Recommendation 5B:

Identify external stakeholders who are willing to partner with the Academy to fund needs on the Margin of Excellence list.

Recommendation 5C:

Increase the pay and benefits budget to fund the approved External Affairs staff.

Recommendation 5D:

Continue the work of the Meaningful Communication and Partnerships Team to identify characteristics that distinguish a graduate of Kings Point; use these as a centerpiece for communications and for evaluating progress toward the Strategic Plan goals.

Recommendation 5E:

Develop and maintain an alumni database to retain and deepen alumni connections (e.g., encourage alumni to sponsor sea tour opportunities for Midshipmen).

Recommendation 5F:

Expand efforts to highlight contributions made by graduates to the U.S. Navy, Strategic Sealift Officer Program, U.S. Army, National Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Coast Guard.

Recommendation 5G:

Develop and expand partnerships with Kings Point graduates who have leadership roles in industry. This is an opportunity for private donors to contribute resources to meet the Academy's needs.

Summary of Status: On hold

Details of Status: Overall, there has been some progress toward meeting the objective of improved communication to build strong and lasting relationships with external stakeholders. There are efforts to educate the local community on the Academy and to establish stronger relationships with the mayors of Kings Point and Great Neck. Events such as a car show and Beat Retreat are open to the community. The color guard and band are participating in parades and other events. Weekly sports events are sent to the local press. Most press inquiries are from professional maritime magazines/journals.

However, substantive progress has been hampered by delays in filling the approved External Affairs positions.

Recommendation 5H: Professional Networks

Send faculty/staff representatives accompanied by Midshipmen to relevant maritime conferences to expand their professional networks.

Summary of Status: In process

Details of Status: Over the past four years, the number of faculty attending professional and industry events and conferences has increased; frequently, Midshipmen are selected to accompany faculty to these events. Industry members participate in career fairs on campus and provide opportunities for Midshipmen to sail aboard approved vessels and gain real-world experience on working ships.

Signature Page

Kathy Humphrey, Ph.D., Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement and Chief of Staff, University of Pittsburgh

Marty Linsky, J.D., Faculty, Harvard Kennedy School and Co-founder, Cambridge Leadership Associates

William Pennella, Executive Vice President, Crowley Maritime Corporation

Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Global Studies and Geography, Hofstra University

Sharon van Wyk, Ph.D., Chair of U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Board of Advisors and Senior Vice President and Chief Student Experience Officer, Walden University