



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



October 17, 2011

Office of the General Counsel – 70 Years of Commitment and Excellence

What you do supports those Sailors and Marines on the front lines... whether it is contracting support to ensure that our people get the things they need and taxpayers get fair value for their investment, or legal counsel to ensure the business of the Secretariat runs smoothly. Every single action the Department takes has to be on sound legal ground, so that thirty or forty years from now you can say we did things right. ~ The Honorable Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy

This year marks the [Office of the General Counsel's \(OGC\)](#) 70th year of dedicated service to the Department of the Navy (DoN). Created in September 1941 as the Procurement Legal Division, OGC was established to provide impartial advice to address legal issues arising from the procurement process. Today, OGC attorneys principally advise the Navy's business enterprise, specializing in areas ranging from acquisition and fiscal law, to civilian personnel/labor and intellectual property law. OGC is also modeled after civilian law firms, with the General Counsel of the Navy (GC) responsible for the supervision and evaluation of all attorneys in order to ensure the independence, consistency, and high quality of legal advice provided by OGC attorneys.

Supporting the DoN Mission

- Since 2007, OGC has provided civilian attorney individual augmentee (IA) support to Staff Judge Advocate legal offices overseas.
- OGC attorneys serve in various capacities during voluntary IA commitments. Currently, they are helping to develop a Legal Department for the [Afghan](#) Ministry of Defense. Previously, they have provided legal advice on the base turnover process in Iraq, supported the Military Commissions process in Guantanamo Bay, and provided fiscal and construction contracting support in Djibouti.

Providing Dedicated Legal Support

- As the only primarily civilian organization providing legal support to the DoN, OGC is unique in its ability to develop in-depth expertise in a variety of areas vital to the DoN mission and provide clients with continuity of support.
- OGC provides quality legal support to DoN leadership and the men and women of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps by recruiting, developing and retaining the best people to perform a variety of services while maintaining high professional and ethical standards.

Collaborative Effort

- OGC, together with the Office of the Judge Advocate General (OJAG) and Marine Corps Judge Advocates (JAs), works to ensure legal expertise and advice are provided at the right time and place to the DoN.
- Although [OGC, OJAG and Marine Corps JAs](#) have different areas of expertise, they also have common areas of practice, such as ethics and FOIA/Privacy Act law, federal court litigation and environmental law.

Key Messages

- OGC's primary function is to provide business and business-related legal advice and services to the Navy and Marine Corps, including the fleet and shore establishments.
- OGC enables the Navy and the Marine Corps to fulfill their missions as they deploy forward by providing candid legal advice and counsel, effective advocacy, and creative problem solving.
- OGC is a world-class legal organization, composed of talented, trained, and dedicated professionals, working together to aid clients in achieving the DoN mission.

Facts & Figures

- OGC is currently led by its 22nd General Counsel, The Honorable Paul L. Oostburg Sanz. The General Counsel is appointed by the President, confirmed by the Senate, and reports to the SECNAV.
- OGC has more than 700 attorneys, 30 uniformed Navy JAGs and Marine Corps JAs, and more than 191 support staff located in 145 offices in the United States and seven other countries.
- OGC has ten core practice areas, including: Fiscal, Acquisition, Civilian Personnel/Labor, Ethics, Real Estate, Environmental/Energy, Intellectual Property, and FOIA/Privacy Act law.