



DEPARTMENT OF THE CHESAPEAKE  
**SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR**  
INCORPORATED BY ACT OF CONGRESS



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## DEPARTMENT ADVISORY 2020-2021 #9

**TO:** Department of the Chesapeake Camp Commanders

**DATE:** January 1, 2021

**FROM:** Jay Rarick, Department Commander

**SUBJECT:** Use of Chain of Command on Policy Questions.

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**Dear Camp Commanders,**

1. I have received guidance from Commander-in-Chief Brian Pierson in an e-mail addressed to all Department Commanders dated 31 Dec 2020, Subject as Above. I believe this outlines a fair and reasonable approach to raising concerns of our Brothers to higher headquarters. For your information, here is the guidance in the Commander-in-Chief's own words:

*Dear Brother Department Commanders,*

...

*I have a quick matter I wish to bring to your attention. In recent days, several direct communications from our Brothers pertaining to matters of policy and guidance have arrived at headquarters. While I enjoy discoursing with our Brothers and am grateful for their constructive and thoughtful feedback, I am also concerned that such one-on-one communication increases the risk that you and your Department leaders may be inadvertently left out of the loop regarding important questions or comments originating from individual Brothers and Camps within your respective Departments. I also want to ensure that the Council of Administration and others in National leadership are equally informed of the comments and questions from Brothers dealing with policy issues.*

*Therefore, I respectfully ask that you remind your Brothers that the best policy on questions relating to governance and policy is to observe the chain-of-command through the Department leadership. This protocol will keep Department leaders in closer communication with their Camps and promote meaningful discussion within the Departments. Additionally, there will be an opportunity for the Department leadership to vet questions and comments, handle issues that can be properly addressed at the Department level, and forward those that need to be addressed by National leadership.*



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*As you compile your Department Commander reports for the upcoming Council of Administration meeting in late January, I would encourage you to share any comments or questions you have received/collected in your report. Remember that these reports provide a formal way (i.e., for the record) for you to forward concerns, questions, recommendations, proposals, and resolutions to the entire Council of Administration. This will enable the entire National leadership to address these concerns in a deliberate, thoughtful, and consistent manner.*

2. I am in agreement with the Commander-in-Chief's sentiments. Presently, several of the Camps in our Department have either been considering or are actively coordinating questions of policy for the National Headquarters. I heartily encourage such activity and request that such questions be consolidated and passed to the Department for discussion and possible inclusion in the Department Commander's quarterly report to the National Headquarters for consideration by Council of Administration.

3. On a related note, I must emphasize that **only the Commander-in-Chief speaks for the Order as a whole** [CinC Mark Day: General Order No. 02, Series 2017-2018, 21 August 2017]. No one is saying that you cannot publicly express your opinion or concerns. However, when opining on social media (especially Camp related pages, but also on your own) or to the public, Brothers should earnestly avoid representing *their* opinion as the policy or position of the order. [You might ask yourself, "How would what I said sound if quoted in *The Washington Post*?"]

4. Please disseminate this correspondence to all the Brothers of your Camp for their information.