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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER EXPEDITIONARY STRIKE GROUP THREE
NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO, BLDG 73
3205 SENN ROAD
SAN DIEGO CA 92136-5090

5800
Ser N00J/256
1 Nov 23

From: Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group THREE
To: File

Subj: COMMAND INVESTIGATION INTO THE UNAUTHORIZED WI-FI DEVICE
FOUND ONBOARD USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) GOLD

Ref: (a) JAGINST 5800.7G

Encl: (1) ESG-3 ltr 5810 Ser N00J/223 of 21 Sep 23

1. The subject investigation was completed and reviewed in accordance with reference (a).
2. The investigation captures the facts and circumstances surrounding the installation and use of an unauthorized Wi-Fi device onboard USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) during her most recent deployment.
3. I approve the findings of fact and opinions as modified by the LCSRON THREE Commodore. Pursuant to enclosure (1), I have withheld disposition authority of CMDCS Grisel Marrero's case. I defer to the Commodore for all other disciplinary and administrative actions he deems appropriate for any other individuals implicated in this investigation.
4. No additional action on the command investigation is necessary. This matter will be retained at Expeditionary Strike Group THREE for two years.

(b) (6)

R. W. PECK

Copy to:
COMLSCRON THREE
USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) GOLD

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Dissemination Control:	FEDCON
POC:	(b) (6)

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
LITTORAL COMBAT SHIP SQUADRON THREE
3325 SENN ROAD SUITE 7
SAN DIEGO CA 92136-5049

5800
Ser N00J/086
20 Sep 23

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on (b) (6) ltr dtd 13 Sep 23

From: Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron THREE
To: Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group THREE

Subj: COMMAND INVESTIGATION OF THE UNAUTHORIZED WI-FI DEVICE FOUND
ABOARD USS MANCHESTER IN AUGUST 2023

Ref: (f) Command Investigation dtd 1 Jun 23
(g) MCHGOLDINST 5100.4 (CH-1)
(h) Manual for Courts-Martial, Appendix 2.1 (Non-Binding Disposition Guidance)

Encl: (39) CDR Moore email dtd 26 Aug 23
(40) CMDCS Marrero's Defrocking and Promotion Delay Page 13s
(41) MCH(G) Aloft Logs and Email dtd 16 Sep 23
(42) Summary Statement and Article 31b Rights Advisement of (b) (6)
(43) TAD Orders for (b) (6)
(44) TAD Orders for (b) (6)

1. I reviewed the Investigating Officer's (IO) command investigation (CI) of 13 September 2023 and approve findings of fact, opinions, and recommendations of the IO except as modified below. This investigation contains Controlled Unclassified Information, the marking criterion is provided below.

2. I am satisfied that the IO thoroughly investigated the allegations in a timely manner and acted appropriately in accordance with the information presented to (b) (6). No further investigation is necessary.

3. Executive Summary. In August 2023, CDR Colleen Moore, Commanding Officer (CO), USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) Gold (MCH(G)) was alerted to a commercially purchased Starlink Wi-Fi system installed onboard the ship. Following the NCIS declination to investigate, this CI was convened. The IO found that Command Master Chief (CMC) Grisel Marrero coordinated with other members of the Chiefs' Mess to purchase the system in April 2023 prior to deployment. Once on hull, they installed the antenna disc on the 05 weatherdeck with wiring running through the ship, installed amplifiers to extend the coverage, and operated the undisclosed Wi-Fi continuously through August 2023. When indications of the Wi-Fi network surfaced, initially in May 2023 and then again in July and August 2023, efforts to conceal the system were completed with sophistication – including lying to the CO and XO, renaming the network to appear as a printer, hiding a CO

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suggestion box comment, submitting a singular E-8 sacrificial party to accept responsibility, and altering data usage documents to confirm CPO admissions of pier side use only. All members of the Chiefs' Mess were aware of the network, with almost all utilizing and paying for the service fee via the Mess account; those who did not use and pay for the service also failed to alert the CO and XO to the network. The network did not interfere or connect with ship board systems. The system was removed from the ship, and the vessel remains deployed to the C7F AOR.

4. Prior Investigation. Reference (f) is the command investigation substantiating serious misconduct of the prior Executive Officer (XO) onboard MCH(G) leading to (b) relief from duty. The findings of an unduly familiar relationship with a subordinate enlisted crew member is referenced throughout the present CI, and the inquiry which preceded it. Moreover, the time period of (b) relief, the breakdown in trust associated with the XO's conduct, and experiences learned from the incident is relevant to the impact and level of trust forged between the CO and CMC.

5. Findings of Fact. I concur with the FoF 1 through 151 of the IO, with the following modifications and additions:

a. FoF 49 is accepted as written. However, (b) (6) executing Preventive Maintenance Availabilities (PMAV) will set a blanket aloft permission as a matter of policy. Once set, any personnel going aloft when scaffolding is erected would not be reflected in the deck log, but rather only in the aloft binder. [Encl. (41)]

b. FoF 50's picture note is modified to reflect: "Encl. (24): Starlink Dish captured as the white square on the bottom left corner, taken in port Guam by (b) (6) (June 2023)."

c. FoF 51 is modified to read: The dish was lying flat, but was visible from an O5 weatherdeck or higher vantage point. An individual standing on the aft 05 deck would have a direct view of the disc's presence when looking forward. The photographs taken and reflected in enclosure (25) were posted on the command's public Facebook page. [Encls. (8), (23), (24), (25)]

d. FoF 134 is accepted as written. However, following positive confirmation of the Wi-Fi being operated on 25 August 2023, an external search of the ship would have yielded negative results, as (b) (6) and (b) (6) removed the disc the day before.

e. FoF 152: As a result of the ongoing investigation, the MCH(G) CPO training season was cancelled. CPO selectees were directed to attend the USS GABRIELLE GIFFORDS (LCS 10) CPO training season while the ship remained in port Guam. [Encl. (39)]

f. FoF 153: Following the discovery of this system, MCH(G) executed a visual and signal sweep of the ship, in accordance with Type Commander tasking. The ability to conduct the electronic sweep required significant efforts to locate Own Force Monitoring (OFM) equipment while in Guam, due to the infrequent possession of the tool by shore commands. Additionally, Littoral Combat Ships do not possess a Ship's Signal Exploitation Space, are not fitted out with OFM, nor are they manned with Cryptologists. Following negative efforts with the local shore commands, MCH(G) was able to obtain one by borrowing a portable device from a local submarine tender. This sweep yielded negative additional results. The same tasker was applicable to all other LCS within the Squadron;

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due to the limited resources and availability of the equipment to accomplish the tasker, some LCS are still pending completion due to underway operations.

g. FoF 154: On 18 August 2023, following (b) (6) discovery of the Starlink dish (b) (6) the Combat Systems Officer, consulted with (b) (6) who confirmed the system and that CMC Marrero was running the network. (b) (6) did not disclose (b) (6) knowledge of a confirmed system to CDR Moore until she queried (b) (6) six days later. During this time the network remained active in port Guam. [Encls. (3), (5), (7), (11), (12),]

h. FoF 155: During the early part of the deployment, a Sailor observed a Chief looking at Facebook while underway. Following this discovery, CMC Marrero instructed the CPO Mess to only use the Wi-Fi in their staterooms. This message was sent out in the GroupMe CPO message. [Encl. (10)]

i. FoF 156: Between May and June 2023, while pier side in Indonesia, MCH(G) requested and obtained onboard Wi-Fi services via the logistics request to the husbandry service. This Wi-Fi was made available to the crew, and was kept in the aft mission bay. [Encl. (8)]

j. FoF 157: On 3 September 2023, CMC Marrero was relieved of duties as the Command Master Chief onboard MCH(G).⁴ As a result of her relief, CDR Moore removed her frocking to E-9 and temporarily withheld her promotion. [Encl. (40)]

k. FoF 158: Onboard an LCS Independence Variant, the 05 deck is divided into two sections to determine aloft status: the aft section is equipped with lifelines and is not an aloft area, but rather designated as an area for "working over the side"; the forward section (Frame 34 to 54) is an aloft area and part of aloft zone 1. To reach the aft section, one ascends a ladder from either the Helicopter Control Office or the Aviation Office through a hatch onto the deck. To reach the forward section, one either transits from the aft section over the lifelines or ascends a ladder from the port side bridge area. [Encl. (41), Ref. (g)]

l. FoF 159: A Sailor going aloft is required to request permission from the Command Duty Officer or the Commanding Officer, unless the ship is in a blanket aloft period. A Sailor must be equipped with a safety harness, which also must be checked in and out for usage. During a blanket aloft period, a single permission authorizes Sailors to work aloft, with a beginning notification via the IMC and a conclusion notification via the IMC; the word is then passed from watch to watch during the period. Entries into the OOD/Deck log are only made for the start and conclusion of the blanket aloft periods. [Encl. (41), Ref. (g)]

m. FoF 160: MCH(G) set blanket aloft periods between 12 and 18 April, 1 and 7 July, and 8 to 27 August 2023. [Encl. (41)]

n. FoF 161: The MCH aloft log recorded the 12 April 2023 entry into Zone 1. However, the 18 August, 19 August and 24 August entry into Zone 1 was not recorded in the aloft log. [Encl. (41)]

⁴ For consistency purposes, while CMDCS Marrero is and presents as an E-8, she will continue to be referred to as CMC Marrero or CMDCM Marrero to align with the underlying CI.

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o. FoF 162: At the time relevant to the agreement, purchase and installation of the Starlink (b) (6) (b) (6) was attached to MCH(G). (b) (6) parent command is USS OMAHA (LCS 12) Gold. (b) (6) (b) (6) joined MCH(G) on 13 March 2023 and left MCH(G) on 19 June 2023. (b) (6) paid into CPO Mess account for use of the Wi-Fi system, and used the network during deployment prior to (b) (6) departure in late June. [Encls. (42), (43)]

p. FoF 163: On 4 July 2023, (b) (6) joined the crew while on deployment. (b) (6) elected to pay into the CPO Mess funds for use of the Wi-Fi network, and utilized the network during deployment. [Encls. (34), (44)]

6. Opinions. I concur with opinions 1 through 14 and 16 through 33 of the IO, with the following modifications and additions:

a. Opinion 5 is modified to read: "The mechanism of installation aloft highlighted the opportunities for stealth created by a blanket authorization by the CO. A reasonable commander grants the blanket while the ship is conducting maintenance. As such, tracking and ensuring accountability of working aloft is frustrated by the lack of precise records and oversight. This investigation revealed that standing policy requires further review and modification. [FoF (48), (49)]"

b. Opinion 15 is disapproved and substituted with the following: "CMC Marrero used her experience as an Information Systems Technician (IT) and trust built during the previous XO's investigation to manipulate the CO into believing everything she said was fact. While the CO took the CMC at her word, she conducted internal verification through ship inspections following each indication. Any further actions would presuppose the CMC was intentionally lying or negligently miscommunicating, and further presumes the CO knew or should have known that the Wi-Fi network was serviced by a topside antenna and not connected to the ship's local area network. [FoF (1), (3), (4), (17) (73), (77), (82)]"

c. Opinion 28 is accepted as written. However, the CPO Mess's election to take accountability is couched in the timing – only *after* the discovery of the disc by CSO. Each Mess member had multiple opportunities to come forward in the months prior. Each elected to remain silent, usurped the CO's authority, accountability and responsibility, and by doing so, intentionally put the ship, her crew and the mission at risk.

d. Opinion 29 is accepted as written, but its nature is a fact, not an opinion.

e. Opinion 30 is accepted as written, with the following comments and modifications. First, it would be prejudicial use of the chain of command to expect a CO to discuss and query an (b) (6) or (b) (6) in lieu of discussing the matter with the CMC (a former senior-rated IT with a Master's Degree in Information Security and Digital Assurance Management) or the appropriate Department Head. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the significant efforts to locate the appropriate equipment following the higher headquarters' tasker, the CO's resources in Guam were limited.

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f. Opinion 32 is accepted as written. However, reflected in reference (f) is the lessons learned from two prior experiences of CDR Moore in reporting alleged misconduct regarding her prior XO up the chain of command. Her conduct is consistent with the lessons learned to gather enough evidence to provide viable and actionable information in an initial report. Her utilization of the Judge Advocate was one means to ensure her actions, in this case, were supported by legal authorities.

g. Opinion 34: The photographs obtained from the public Facebook page do contain scant evidence of the disc just forward of the port Super High Frequency (WSC-6) antenna. However, in order to confirm presence of the item, one would first need to be queued to look in that specific location, and second, would then need to zoom in on the pixelated image to see what it is. A reasonable person viewing these photos outside the scope of this investigation would not readily observe the unauthorized equipment onboard. [FoF (51)]

h. Opinion 35: Based on the height of the 05 weatherdeck, and the location of the disc, it is more likely than not, that a person standing forward on the ship, or a person standing on a pier, would not have observed the disc. As such the location of the disc helped conceal its presence onboard. [FoF (47) – (51)]

i. Opinion 36: The egregious misconduct engaged in by CMC Marrero cannot be understated. In a time period in which the CO relied extensively on her to recover the Command's climate in the wake of the XO relief, CMC Marrero willfully and intentionally concealed the presence of an unauthorized system. Following the relief of the previous XO, it is reasonable that the level of trust and confidence with CMC Marrero increased, with heavier reliance on her to pick up the slack left behind. Moreover, based on the materials contained in reference (f), it is more likely than not that the CO's increased reliance began as early as December 2022 as XO's performance declined. Furthermore, when weighing the credibility of her XO in May 2023 just days before his relief, against the credibility of her CMC, it is reasonable to see the logic behind CDR Moore's actions following the May 2023 indication.

j. Opinion 37: The deep level of manipulation is only overshadowed by the level of corrupt dealings in which CMC Marrero used to conceal the system. CMC Marrero's assessment that the system was being used for morale is undermined by the selective availability of the Wi-Fi and strict control of its access to the CPO Mess only. Furthermore, her prior training as an IT should have made it known to her that commercial, off the shelf (COTS) assets would not be authorized onboard the ship without routing an Information Technology Procurement Request (ITPR) for approval at Echelon II. That same experience and training would have led her to recognize such a formal request would not have been approved due to a lack of emission control and system hardening. CMC Marrero even went as far as to remove a comment from the CO's suggestion box. CMC Marrero maintained a level of confidence to which she believed her assurances to the CO would not be questioned, resulting in the audacious submission of another comment card on the same topic to the CO. This then prompted confirmation from the CO to the entire crew that the network did not exist. Knowing the level of trust and confidence CDR Moore had placed in her, CMC Marrero exploited that trust relationship to perpetuate her and the CPO Mess's misconduct.

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k. Opinion 38: Those CPOs which noted they believed the system was authorized up until the July 2023 all-hands call lack credibility. Clear and obvious indicators from the outset of its use made clear the network was not permitted onboard. First, the network was not available to all members of the crew. Second, the CPOs were directed by CMC to not to use the network in the open, confining usage to their staterooms. Third, the ship sought and obtained authorized Wi-Fi while in port Indonesia. Finally, the network name was shifted from "Stinky" to an HP printer name. Any reasonable Chief should have known that with those conditions, CMC Marrero's assertions the CO was aware and authorized the system was unreasonable. To think otherwise would mean they believed CDR Moore intentionally authorized a concealed Wi-Fi network only for the CPO Mess, excluding all others from usage. [FoF (25), (57), (58), (77), (144), (145), (155), (156)]

l. Opinion 39: (b) (6) installation of the system during a blanket aloft period utilized an opportunity of limited situational awareness for the crew and command. [FoF (44) – (54), (158) – (160)]

m. Opinion 40: Consistent with the CPO's Mess practice to avoid detection, (b) (6) and (b) (6) elected not to comply with reference (g), obtaining permission and logging their activities aloft in removing/installing the Starlink disc. [FoF (158) – (161)]

n. Opinion 41: The 16 CPOs entered into an agreement to purchase and install the Starlink system. This agreement was a criminal conspiracy, supported by the overt act of bringing the purchases Starlink onboard USS MANCHESTER. Any new member of the CPO Mess which then paid into the services joined that conspiracy following the system's operational status. While (b) (6) elected not to join the conspiracy at its onset, once the system was operational, (b) (6) dereliction in duty as the (b) (6) and failure to report such matters as the (b) (6) as (b) (6) was required to do, constituted an overt act. By shirking (b) (6) duties, and preventing detection by senior command personnel, (b) (6) entered into the conspiracy in furtherance of the object of the agreement. (b) (6) elected not to join or further the conspiracy, and thus merely failed to report the UCMJ offenses in accordance with the U.S. Navy Regulations. [FoF (34) – (50)].

o. Opinion 42: CDR Moore's reporting of the incident up the chain of command was reasonable under the circumstances. While operating in Guam, MCH(G) was 17 hours ahead of San Diego. On 25 August 2023, when (b) (6) came forward and made admissions of limited usage, CDR Moore elected to gather additional facts to confirm the story; those additional facts increased the scope of usage both in port and underway. Her reporting following the admission of the CPO Mess on the 26 August 2023 was reasonable based on the time difference and solidified information. Moreover, based on CDR Moore's prior experience in reporting up the chain allegations and suspicions, as demonstrated in reference (f), she sought basic confirmation of material facts. When viewed with both time and experience, CDR Moore's timeline is reasonable and does not demonstrate a deliberate act to withhold information. [FoF (110) – (128)]

p. Opinion 43: Since its installation, any crew member going aloft within Zone 1, or higher in Zone 2, had the opportunity to observe the Starlink disc. Despite dozens of personnel permitted in the area between April and August 2023, this investigation revealed that no one observed and

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reported the incident until (b) (6) on 18 August 2023. Reflected in enclosure (41), this pool of potential observers includes E-5 through O-3 crew members. [FoF (44) – (53), (158) – (161)]

7. Recommendations. Having thoroughly reviewed reference (h), I concur with the IO recommendations 1 through 7, with the following modification.

a. Recommendation 5 is accepted as written, however, the decision for administrative separation or detachment for cause will be made following any appropriate accountability action by the Convening Authority.

b. Recommendation 8 is disapproved. All E-8/E-7 who knew of, used, paid for or helped conceal the unauthorized equipment will be notified for Nonjudicial Punishment (NJP) at Commodore's Mast.

c. Recommendation 9 is disapproved.

d. Recommendation 10 is disapproved. The decision for administrative separation will be made following any appropriate accountability action by the command. A determination of which, if any, E-8/E-7 adjudicated to have engaged in the commission of a serious offense will be made following adjudication.

e. Recommendation 11 is disapproved. (b) (6) will be notified for NJP for the dereliction of duty and conduct unbecoming an officer observed in this report. Further additional administrative action may be warranted following NJP.

f. Recommendation 12 is disapproved. (b) (6) will be issued a NPLOC.

g. Recommendation 13 is accepted as written, and I find a LOI, with additional administrative actions, is the most appropriate accountability measure. I have reviewed CDR Moore's performance over the course of her command tour, and find as follows:

(1) CDR Moore has consistently performed at the top of her peer group to include having been observed by the previous Commodore as an above RSCA early promote CO. Since my assumption of Command of Mine Division TWELVE (and subsequently Littoral Combat Ship Squadron THREE) on 27 April 2023, that trend of performance relative to her peers continues. Her ability to Command has been tested significantly over the course of this tour: preparing USS MANCHESTER for deployment on a compressed timeline; relief of an Executive Officer following a commission of a serious offense; and robust maintenance and repairs requiring specialized planning and execution. Through her tour, she earned my trust and confidence in her ability to command. Furthermore, she has demonstrated the ability to learn from experiences, take ownership of her lapses in judgment, and incorporate those lessons into self-assessment and self-correction. I maintain no concern with her potential of future service to the Fleet.

(2) When viewed in isolation, this incident shakes my confidence in her questioning attitude and alignment with sound shipboard operating principles. However, the abhorrent misconduct and

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conspiracy within the Chiefs' Mess mitigates, in part, her culpability for not taking a more aggressive inquiry into the presence of an unauthorized system. As a foundational point, implicit trust between a CO and her CMC is necessary for an effective Triad and command. Although she could never abdicate her accountability and responsibility pursuant to U.S. Navy Regulations (Chapter 8), a CO must rely on other Triad members for sage counsel. Moreover, the significant acts of concealment, including diverting a CO's suggestion box comment, limited the amount of information getting to the CO. Taken together, and when viewed within the totality of the circumstances, CDR Moore still has my trust and confidence.

(3) Finally, while the current TAD XO is providing the support needed, the impacts of the previous XO's relief cannot be understated. Documented in reference (f), even prior to his relief, the prior XO's performance was impacted by both his personal life and the misconduct he was engaging in. Those impacts necessitated compensation from others within the crew, and prompted a closer trust relationship between the CO and CMC. The conspiracy and acts of concealment traversed the changeover in May 2023. As a result, a perfect storm of limited situational awareness, detrimental reliance, and criminal misconduct prevented CDR Moore's full understanding of the situation.

(4) In over 25 years of commissioned naval service, I have never seen such heinous and egregious conduct by a Command Master Chief and an entire CPO Mess. While CDR Moore's failure to exercise an appropriate questioning attitude against the environment she was operating in, I find that her conduct does not warrant relief from duty. Reflecting on my own experience in O-5 Command and that of her peers, I temper my expectations on that which is expected of an officer at that stage in their career when met with these obstacles to success. As such, and absent direction to the contrary, CDR Moore will remain the CO of MCH(G) until her relief arrives in December 2023. This does not in totality, absolve her of accountability and responsibility pursuant to U.S. Navy Regulations (Chapter 8). As such, I intend to take non-punitive administrative action cited below.

8. Action. By this endorsement, I have or intend to:

a. Direct the permanent withdrawal of CMDCS Marrero's selection for advancement to Command Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9) by the FY-24 Command Master Chief Board, remove the 8CSC NEC (Command Senior Chief), and revoke her Command Senior Enlisted Leader identification badge.

b. Notify CMDCS Marrero, (b) (6)
(b) (6)
(b) (6) for Nonjudicial Punishment (NJP) at Commodore's Mast.

c. Following Mast, determine which, if any, member of the CPO Mess should be notified for administrative separation processing.

d. Notify (b) (6) for NJP at Commodore's Mast.

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- e. Issue (b) (6) a Non-Punitive Letter of Caution (NPLOC) regarding (b) lack of a questioning attitude.
- f. Issue CDR Moore a LOI regarding her substandard performance in this incident, specifically, her shortfall in being sufficiently vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all persons placed under her command, and having not adequately guarded against and suppressed all dissolute and immoral practices.
- g. Remove CDR Moore's Major Command Afloat recommendation, via a special evaluation in accordance with reference (e). In my assessment, CDR Moore is capable of redemption and should be afforded an opportunity to recover from this event in a post CDR Command afloat or ashore Flag staff or appropriate equivalent.
- h. Forward a copy of this investigation to Commander, Destroyer Squadron SEVEN for lessons learned and force posture monitoring.
- i. Host a CPO Mess recalibration summit with the support of the Force Master Chief and area Master Chiefs to right the rudder of this Mess. This summit will focus on the way forward, honest and frank discussions of leadership, and develop lessons learned for other Chiefs' Messes across the waterfront. Upon review of that process and that of their progress, a decision to redistribute members of this CPO Mess may be warranted, as the trust in confidence in this group of leaders, if held intact, may be unrecoverable.
- j. Remove the 741A NEC (Information System Security Manager) from (b) (6)
- k. Forward a request to Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CNSP), to resource and outfit all LCS Independence Variant ships with OFM equipment.
- l. Following final endorsement on this investigation, forward a redacted copy of this CI to the CNSP N6 to reenergize and develop training tools under reference (b) and (c) within the IT force. This forwarding will include the recommendation on updating the Information Technology Procurement Request (ITPR) process to ensure improved level of knowledge, and more expeditious review and adjudication.
- m. Forward a request to the NCIS Director regarding internal case review criteria for matters and vulnerabilities which impact counter-intelligence measures and ship operational security. The declination in this case will be used as the fact pattern for the request.
- n. Following final endorsement on this investigation, forward a redacted copy of this CI to the following school houses and instructional courses to highlight lessons learned and produce a case study on leadership: Naval Justice School, Naval Leadership and Ethics Center, Surface Warfare Schools Command, and Naval Education and Training Command-Senior Enlisted Academy.

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o. Review and issue an updated COMLCSRON THREE Working Aloft/Over the Side instruction, closing any gaps in record keeping for the conduct of aloft/working over the side. This instruction will be applicable to all subordinate units.

p. Continue the discussion between COMLCSRON THREE and subordinate units on potential vulnerabilities within the crews. On 31 August 2023, COMLCSRON THREE took an operational pause with all command Triads with support from the Force Master Chief to discuss Triad intervention, recalibration and expectations. This philosophical discussion will continue through Commodore calls and Triad trainings via my "brown bag lunch" continuum.

9. My point of contact for this matter is (b) (6); Staff Judge Advocate. He may be reached by phone at (619) 556-2473 or by e-mail at comlcsronthreesja@us.navy.mil.

(b) (6)

D. K. MEAGHER

Copy to:
COMDESRON7

CUI

13 Sep 23

From: (b) (6)

To: Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron THREE

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Ref: (a) JAGINST 5800.7G (CH-I), Ch. II
(b) COMUSFLTFORCOM/COMPACFLTINST 2075.1A
(c) COMNAVSURFPAC/COMNAVSURFLANTINST 5239.1A
(d) U.S. Navy Regulations (1990 ed. as amended)
(e) BUPERSINST 1610.10E

Encl: (1) Appointing order dtd 29 Aug 23
(2) USS MANCHESTER Deployment Timeline
(3) Summary Statement of CDR Colleen Moore, USN
(4) Summary Statement of (b) (6)
(5) Summary Statement of CMDCM Grisel Marrero, USN (w/Article 31b Rights)
(6) CMDCM Marrero FLTMPs Jacket
(7) Summary Statement of (b) (6)
(8) Summary Statement of (b) (6)
(9) Summary Statement of (b) (6) (w/Article 31b Rights)
(10) Summary Statement of (b) (6) (w/Article 31b Rights)
(11) Summary Statement of (b) (6) Article 31b Rights)
(12) Summary Statement of Article 31b Rights)
(13) Summary Statement of Article 31b Rights)
(14) Summary Statement of Article 31b Rights)
(15) Summary Statement of Article 31b Rights)
(16) Summary Statement of Article 31b Rights)
(17) Summary Statement of (w/Article 31b Rights)
(18) Summary Statement of (b) (6)
(19) Starlink specifications and monthly plan specifications
(20) Summary Statement of (b) (6) (w/Article 31b Rights)
(21) USS MANCHESTER CPO Recall Roster
(22) USS MANCHESTER Deck Log 11 – 20 Aug 23
(23) Starlink Installation Area Photos
(24) Aloft Photo of USS MANCHESTER
(25) USS MANCHESTER at sea photos
(26) Modified Starlink Data Usage Log
(27) Unmodified Starlink Data Usage Log
(28) CMDCM Marrero text messages

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CUI

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(29) Navy Federal Banking Information

(30) Photographs of Starlink

(31) Article 31b Rights Advisement of (b) (6)

(32) Article 31b Rights Advisement of

(33) Article 31b Rights Advisement of

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Preliminary Statement

1. In accordance with reference (a), and as directed by enclosure (1), this command investigation was convened to investigate the facts and circumstances of an internet router device found onboard USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) in August 2023. This report will contain Controlled Unclassified Information; the marking criteria is below.

2. All reasonably available relevant evidence was collected, and all original evidence is maintained by the Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron THREE¹ Legal department. No extensions were requested nor granted. All witnesses suspected of committed violations under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) were properly advised of their rights under Article 31b.

3. (b) (6) COMLCSRON THREE Staff Judge Advocate was consulted during the course of this investigation.

4. At the time of this investigation, USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) was deployed to the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet (C7F) area of responsibility (AOR). All interviews were conducted onboard the ship while it was in port in Guam, or onboard Naval Base Guam. Dates and times are reflected in Chamorro Standard Time.

5. USS MANCHESTER (LCS 14) is manned by two alternating crews, LCS Crew 214 (BLUE) and LCS 228 (GOLD). During all times relevant to this investigation, the GOLD crew was on hull (referred to as "MCH(G)"). For clarity of timelines, MCH(G) assumed the hull on 9 March 2023. USS MANCHESTER departed Naval Base San Diego on 19 April 2023. While in transit, a port stop was completed at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) between 28 April 2023 and 2 May 2023. A brief stop for fuel (BSF) was completed at Port Majeuro between 9 May 2023 and 10 May 2023. USS MANCHESTER arrived at Naval Base Guam in Santa Rita on 15 May 2023. [Encl. (2)]

¹ At the time of the appointing order, COMLCSRON THREE was previously named Commander, Mine Division TWELVE.

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6. During this deployment, Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 21 was embarked onboard executing the air detachment duties.
7. MCH chopped into the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet (C7F) area of responsibility (AOR) on 07 May 2023.
8. The Starlink was retrieved from USS MANCHESTER, transported back to San Diego, and is in the possession of the COMLCSRON THREE Legal Office.

Findings of Fact

1. CDR Colleen Moore is the Commanding Officer (CO), MCH(G). She assumed those duties on 17 June 2022. [Encl. (3)]
2. CDR Samuel Moffitt is the acting Executive Officer (XO), MCH(G). He assumed those duties on 19 May 2023 following the relief of the crew's prior XO. [Encl. (4)]
3. CMDCM Grisel Marrero is the Command Master Chief (CMC²), MCH(G). She assumed those duties on 12 January 2022. This is her second CMDCS tour. She previously served as the Senior Enlisted Leader to the Navy element of U.S. SOUTHERN Command. [Encls. (5), (6)]
4. Previous XO was removed 19 May 2023, for disciplinary actions due to a command investigation. [Encls. (3), (4), (7), (5), (8)]
5. (b) (6) is the (b) (6) MCH(G). (b) (6) assumed those duties on 15 September 2021. At time of this investigation, (b) (6) has submitted (b) (6) request to transfer to the Fleet Reserve in 2025. [Encl. (9)]
6. (b) (6) is the Operations Officer (OPSO) and originally checked into MCH(G) as the Chief Engineer in December 2020. (b) (6) became the OPSO in December 2022. [Encl. (8)]
7. (b) (6) is the Combat Systems Officer (CSO) and checked into MCH(G) in April 2023. [Encl. (7)]
8. (b) (6) is the Damage Control Assistant on MCH(G) and checked in November 2017. [Encl. (10)]
9. (b) (6) is executing Temporarily Assigned Duties (TAD) from the USS CINCINNATI and arrived on MCH(G) in April 2023. [Encl. (11)]

² At the time of this investigation, CMDCM Marrero was frocked to E-9. For the purposes of this report, her rank will be referred to as CMDCM. Her advancement date is 16 September 2023.

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10. (b) (6) has been assigned to MCH(G) since August 2017 and is the Combat Systems Leading Chief Petty Officer (LCPO). [Encl. (12)]
11. (b) (6) has been assigned to MCH(G) since October 2020. (b) (6) is an Operations Department Chief Petty Officer. [Encl. (13)]
12. (b) (6) is the MCH(G)'s Information Systems Security Manager (ISSM) and has been onboard since October 2022. [Encl. (14)]
13. (b) (6) is a Combat Systems Chief Petty Officer assigned to MCH(G), and arrived onboard in March 2023. [Encl. (15)]
14. (b) (6) is the Supply Chief Petty Officer and Chief Petty Officer Association (CPOA) Treasurer assigned to MCH(G). (b) (6) has been on board since March 2020. [Encl. (16)]
15. (b) (6) is the First Lieutenant and Operations Department LCPO assigned to MCH(G). (b) (6) arrived in January 2020. [Encl. (17)]
16. (b) (6) is the CE Division Leading Petty Officer assigned to MCH(G). (b) (6) has arrived in March 2022. [Encl. (18)]
17. CMC Marrero was an Information Systems Technician (IT) prior to becoming a Command Senior Chief. [Encls. (5), (6)]

Starlink Information

18. Starlink is a world-wide constellation of low Earth orbit satellites to provide broadband internet capabilities to consumers anywhere in the world, including vessels at sea. The capabilities include global-positioning systems services (GPS) services, and high-speed internet for commercial and personal usage. [Encl. (19)]
19. Starlink is comprised of a single use dish, attached via a wire to a router and power supply. [Encl. (19)]
20. The Starlink dish is 22.6 inches by 20.1 inches in size and weighs 15 lbs. Its power consumption is 110-150w. [Encl. (19)]
21. The Starlink router is a 5th generation 802.11ac dual band router. It weighs 2.2 lbs and has a range of 2000 square feet. It can connect up to 128 devices and has WPA2 security. Its capabilities is dual band at -3 x 3 multi-user, multiple input, multiple output (MIMO). [Encl. (19)]
22. The Starlink operates using 100-140V – 6.3A 50 – 60 Hz. [Encl. (19)]

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23. Starlink offers a variety of plans for service, based on coverage and streaming capabilities. Plans range from \$90 per month to over \$5,000 per month. [Encl. (19)]
24. Once purchased and installed, Starlink network settings are controlled by an application via a cell phone on iOS or Android devices. [Encl. (19)]
25. To pay bills and track data usage, subscribers must log onto the Starlink website with an email and password. [Encl. (19)]
26. To connect the dish to the router, Starlink provides a cable of approximately 25 feet. [Encl. (19)]

Unauthorized Equipment

27. Reflected in reference (b), the expanded use of personal wireless devices that emit radio frequency (RF) signals “poses an increased risk of RF detection and enables possible location detection, monitoring of critical information, network compromise, and data exfiltration by potential adversaries and criminal elections.”
28. Intentional and unintended emissions could inadvertently jeopardize unit emission control posture, degrade operational security and compromise tactical situation conditions requiring additional positive controls and monitoring by the force to mitigate risks. [Ref. (b)]
29. While pier side, Morale, Welfare and Recreation funded Wi-Fi capabilities and operations are authorized, but may be modified in certain foreign ports where there is a potential threat of intrusion in the device from local sources or foreign actors. [Ref. (b)]
30. Portable Electronic Devices (PED) is any non-stationary electronic apparatus with singular or multiple capabilities of, but not limited to, recording, storing and transmitting data, voice, video, or photo images. [Ref. (b)]
31. The command’s ISSM is responsible for implementing policy and procedures, operational management, protecting and accounting for all PEDs. [Ref. (b)]
32. PEDs that contain the capability for cellular or Wi-Fi, or devices with the capability to perform RF transmission at greater than 100mW are to be controlled using the following restrictions when onboard an underway vessel.
 - a. Must be brought aboard no earlier than 72 hours prior to local underway, in a powered down state for storage purposes.
 - b. Once underway, must be stored in berthing in a powered-down state when not in use.

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33. Most Surface ships are equipped with wireless communications systems that allow for contacting crew member throughout the ship with cellular like Program of Record (POR) communications devices (e.g. BAT phones, IVCS, Hydra, iPods, iPads, etc.). However, commercial or non POR cellular telephone repeater, by design, transmit non secure cellular signals over a broad area external to the hull, and constitute a serious security vulnerability which compromise operations. Commercial or non POR cellular tele phone repeaters are not authorized onboard Surface ships. [Ref. (c)]

CPO Purchasing of Starlink

34. In March 2023, prior to deployment, CMC Marrero and (b) (6) developed the plan to purchase and install the unauthorized Wi-Fi Network. [Encls. (5), (10)]

35. The Starlink High Performance Kit with the 1 Terabyte Mobile Priority plan was purchased by the MCH(G) Chief's Mess. [Encl. (10)]

36. During the planning and purchasing of the Starlink Kit, (b) (6) became aware that the standard delivery period of 4-6 weeks would not comport with the ship's deployment schedule. However, (b) (6) contacted Starlink to secure a faster delivery. [Encl. (10)]

37. In April 2023, (b) (6) purchased the Starlink High Performance Kit with (b) (6) personal credit card prior to deployment; the kit cost approximately \$2,800 total. [Encls. (5), (10) – (12), (16)]

38. (b) (6) was reimbursed back separately for the initial purchase by the other members of the Chief's Mess, individually through private transfers. [Encls. (5), (10) - (12), (16)]

39. CMC Marrero established payment plans for the Chief's Mess, either monthly or all up front. [Encls. (5), (9) – (12), (16), (17), (20)]

40. (b) (6), the Chief Petty Officer Association treasurer, collected \$62.50/monthly or \$375/upfront for deployment into the Chief's Mess's Navy Federal checking account. [Encls. (5), (9) – (12), (16), (20)]

41. (b) (6) would pay the \$1,000 monthly Starlink bill with the CPOA mess Navy Federal debit card. [Encls. (10), (16), (29)]

42. 16 MCH(G) Chiefs and one HSC 21 Chief for a total of 17 individuals used and paid for the unauthorized Starlink Wi-Fi network. [Encls. (5), (9) – (12), (16), (17), (20), (21), (31) – (38)]

43. Two MCH(G) Chiefs, (b) (6), knew about the unauthorized Starkink Wi-Fi network, but did not use or pay for the network. [Encls. (5), (10), (14), (15)]

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Installation of Starlink

44. (b) (6) had the Starlink system delivered to his residence one week prior to the 19 April 2023 deployment. [Encls. (5), (10)]
45. On or about 12 April 2023, (b) (6) bought the Starlink system to the USS MANCHESTER, and it was stored in (b) (6) stateroom. [Encls. (5), (10)]
46. After realizing the cable provided in the kit was too short, (b) (6) ordered a 150 foot long cable for the Starlink system from Amazon. [Encls. (5), (10)]
47. (b) (6) installed the Starlink dish on the port side 05 level weatherdeck in mid-April 2023, prior to deployment. [Encl. (10)]
48. During the installation, (b) (6) installation occurred during a "blanket" aloft period. [Encl. (4)]
49. The "blanket" aloft was verbally granted by the Commanding Officer during these times. As such, execution of duties aloft are not reflected in the deck logs or OOD logs. [Encls. (3), (4), (22)]
50. (b) (6) affixed the dish to a wood pallet, and used white tie down straps to secure it to the 05 weatherdeck. [Encl. (10)]



Encl. (24): Starlink Dish captured as the white square in the bottom left corner, taken in port Guam (May 2023).

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51. The dish was laying flat, but was visible from an O5 weatherdeck or higher vantage point.
[Encls. (23), (24), (25)]

52. (b) (6) ran the cable for the Starlink Wi-Fi network through the following pathway:

a. From Dish on O5 weatherdecks (on top of pilothouse) to Dish Equipment Room (05-40-0-Q) via Improved (Chemical Agent) Point Detection System – Lifecycle Replacement (IPDS-LR) ventilation tube for the single cable;

b. From the ventilation tube, the single wire continued through Classified Dish Equipment Room (05-40-0-Q) to the Battery Pack / Power Pack hidden between IPDS-LR Port Detection Unit Assembly and bulkhead in the Classified Dish Equipment Room (05-40-0-Q);

c. The Battery Pack / Power Pack then produced two cables, the Ethernet cable and the power cable. Both cables transverse through the stuffing tube to ICC 1 (04-40-0-C);

d. The power cord then is plugged in behind the CSM chair;

e. The Ethernet cable went from ICC 1 (04-40-0-C) via cable way to stuffing tube to Electrical Service Trunk (01-44-2-T); from Electrical Service Trunk (01-44-2-T) to Stairwell Passageway (1-42-8-L) via stuffing tube; from Stairwell Passageway (1-42-8-L) to Passageway (01-31-0-L) via stuffing tube; and from Passageway (01-31-0-L) via cableway to DC Repair Locker 4 (01-40-2-A) via stuffing tube.

f. The wire terminated at the router, located in the DC Repair locker, inside in a trunk.

[Encls. (5), (10), (11), (23), (30)]

53. The photographs reflecting the locations were taken following the removal of the system. The holes in the stuffing tube represents the location where the cables were located during the system's operation. [Encl. (23)]

54. The Starlink Wi-Fi system was first powered on the night before deployment by CMC Marrero; she was the first to use the unauthorized network. [Encl. (5)]

55. There is no power on/power off switch for the system. [Encls. (5), (19)]

56. CMC Marrero downloaded and maintained the sole Starlink Application on her phone.
[Encls. (5), (10)]

57. CMC Marrero was the only individual responsible for confirm the Chief's personal devices were added the network and hand type the passwords into their device. CMC Marrero was the only CPO with the password to the network. [Encls. (5), (9) - (12), (17)]

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58. No other Chief had the capability or authorization to add others to the network or share passwords between devices. [Encls. (5), (9) - (12), (17)]

59. Following the observation that the Wi-Fi signal was not adequately covering all desire areas of the ship, CMC Marrero bought repeaters and a CAT-5 cable at the Navy Exchange in Pearl Harbor between 28 April 2023 and 2 May 2023. [Encl. (5)]

60. These repeaters and cables amplified the Wi-Fi service within the ship. [Encls. (5), (10)]

61. (b) (6) ran CAT 5 cable from the router located in DC Repair Locker 4 (01-40-2-A) to a repeater in the Chief's Mess for better signal. [Encls. (5), (11), (12)]

62. A second wireless repeater was also placed in one of the Chief's staterooms. [Encls. (5), (10) - (12)]

63. Upon request, the repeaters were not turned over to the investigating officer during the course of this investigation.

64. The cable which went through a classified space was not capable of intercepting or receiving information. [Encl. (19)]

65. The Starlink router was stored in an unclassified work space. [Encls. (5), (10), (11)]

66. The Starlink dish was installed at an unclassified location. [Encls. (5), (10)]

67. The Starlink power supply was stored in a classified space, but does transmit or receive signals. [Encls. (11), (19)]

68. The Starlink Alternating Current (AC) power, Ethernet, and router cables were routed through both classified and unclassified spaces. [Encls. (10), (11)]

69. The unauthorized Wi-Fi network was never connected to the ship's computer network or any other system. [Encls. (5), (10), (11), (14), (18)]

Identification of the Wi-Fi Network

70. After being in the Port of Majuro 9-10 May 2023, previous XO asked (b) (6) knew anything about an authorized Wi-Fi network. (b) (6) stated (b) (6) didn't know what (b) (6) was talking about. [Encls. (5), (13)]

71. Information on how the previous XO became suspicious of a Wi-Fi network was not known to this investigation. [Encls. (3), (5), (13)]

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72. On or about 13 May 2023, previous XO heard a rumor the Chief's Mess had an unauthorized Wi-Fi system onboard and informed the CO. [Encl. (3)]

73. CDR Moore asked CMC Marrero if the Chief's Mess had an unauthorized Wi-Fi onboard. CMC stated "No, the CPO Mess does not have Wi-Fi onboard." [Encls. (3), (5)]

74. On or about 13 May 2023, the CO and previous XO could not find any physical evidence of Wi-Fi systems after walking the ship. [Encl. (3)]

75. During this walking of the ship, the CO and previous XO did not conduct an exterior inspection of the ship. [Encl. (3)]

76. While underway in mid-May 2023, (b) (6) noticed available networks on (b) (6) personal electronic device starting with "STINKY..." (b) (6) then asked CMC Marrero about the network and she denied knowing anything about the network. [Encls. (5), (18)]

77. After being asked by CDR Moore about the Wi-Fi network on or about 13 May 2023, CMC changed the name to look like "HP" printers. [Encls. (5), (17)]

78. USS MANCHESTER does not have general use wireless printers onboard. [Encls. (14), (18)]

79. In mid-June 2023, (b) (6) asked CMC Marrero for the second time about the Wi-Fi network. (b) (6) was being confronted by junior Sailors who believed (b) (6) was hiding the password from the ship. CMC Marrero denied the existence of the Wi-Fi network. [Encls. (5), (18)]

80. Between 14-18 June 2023, the Starlink network was disabled as the allotted data usage had been exhausted. Service started again at the next billing cycle beginning 18 June 2023. [Encls. (5), (10), (26), (27)]

81. In mid-July 2023, in port Guam, CDR Moore received a CO's Suggestion Box input asking for the password to the ship's Wi-Fi network. [Encls. (3) -(5), (8), (7), (17), (18)]

82. CDR Moore again asked CMC Marrero if a Wi-Fi network existed onboard. CMC Marrero said absolutely not. [Encls. (3), (5)]

83. The July 2023 CO Suggestion Box comment was not the first comment received regarding the Wi-Fi onboard. In June, CMC Marrero intercepted a CO's Suggestion Box comment regarding the Wi-Fi and did not provide it to the CO. [Encls. (5), (18)]

84. After the CO Suggestion Box input, CDR Moore asked the Combat Systems Officer, (b) (6) if the ship had a sniffer. [Encls. (3), (7)]

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85. USS MANCHESTER did not have one onboard, nor is a sniffer part of the allotted equipment for an LCS. [Encls. (3), (7)]

86. CDR Moore and CDR Moffett searched the ship for the second time looking for Wi-Fi network equipment immediately following receipt of the CO Suggestions Box input in mid-July 2023. No Wi-Fi network was located. [Encl. (3)]

87. Again, this physical inspect was internal to the ship only. [Encls. (3), (4)]

88. In mid-July, networks appeared on the CO and XO's personal devices during their search of the ship that appeared to be HP printers. [Encls. (3), (4)]

89. No additional inquires were conducted when a wireless printer was observed on the personal device of CO and XO. [Encls. (3), (4)]

90. On 14 July 2023, the CO held an All-Hands Call and informed the crew there is no secret Wi-Fi on board the ship. [Encls. (3), (4)]

91. On or about 10 August 2023, ETI Nettles, a TAD Sailor, at his check out with the CO and XO, mentioned he believed there was a Wi-Fi network onboard, but did not provide amplifying information. [Encls. (3), (4)]

92. A third inspection was conducted, and was internal only. [Encls. (3), (4)]

93. On or about 15 August 2023, (b) (6) approached the OPSO who was the command duty officer after a Preventive Maintenance Availability (PMAV) morning meeting and mentioned the Starshield installers may find something that shouldn't be there. [Encls. (8), (20)]

94. No additional data was provided by (b) (6) and no additional question were asked by OPSO regarding that comment. [Encls. (8), (20)]

95. On 18 August 2023, (b) (6) was OOD and informed by a civilian Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Starshield³ installer of an unauthorized Starlink dish installed on the portside 05 weatherdeck. [Encls. (7), (18)]

96. At the time, NIWC Starshield, the authorized satellite communication system, was being installed onboard USS MANCHESTER. [Encls. (4), (7), (8)]

97. Starshield install dates in port Guam were between 6-20 August 2023. [Encl. (4)]

³ Starshield is the authorized broadband technology for government customers, tailored with additional protections and restrictions.

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98. Prior to the Starshield install starting 6 August, a discussion took place with CMC Marrero and other members of the Mess regarding concerns of getting caught with the dish installed on the same level that workers will be installing Starshield. The decision was made to leave the unauthorized dish up. [Encls. (5), (9) - (11)]

99. (b) (6) informed the Combat Systems Officer (CSO), (b) (6) about the report of the unauthorized device. [Encls. (7), (18)]

100. (b) (6) went to the 05 weatherdeck and observed the unauthorized dish with (b) (6). (b) (6) At the time of the inspection, CSO took a photo of the dish. [Encl. (7) (23, pg. 16)]

101. Later that day on 18 August 2023, CSO called (b) (6) to (b) (6) stateroom asking (b) (6) if (b) (6) knew anything about the dish. (b) (6) informed (b) (6) yes, and directed CSO to CMC Marrero for more information. [Encls. (7), (11)]

102. Following his meeting with CSO, (b) (6) texted CMC Marrero to inform her the dish had been found and CSO had a picture. CMC Marrero responds questioning if the CO knows. [Encls. (5), (10), (11), (28)]

103. CMC Marrero responded in the text messages "the gig is up". [Encls. (11), (28)]

104. On the same day, 18 August 2023, (b) (6) removed the Starlink dish installed on the 05 level weatherdeck once the dish had been discovered. (b) (6) informed CMC Marrero that the dish would remain removed until authorization to reinstall was received. [Encls. (5), (12), (26), (27)]

105. On 19 August 2023, CMC Marrero informed (b) (6) the Starlink was approved for in port use; (b) (6) reinstalled the dish back onto the 05 level weatherdeck once. [Encls. (5), (12)]

106. On 24 August 2023, (b) (6), Operations Officer (OPSO) walked into the CO's office to discuss second hand information (b) (6) became aware of, regarding hearing a Wi-Fi dish was found. [Encls. (3), (8)]

107. After the discussion with OPSO, the CO called CSO to her stateroom and asked what (b) (6) knew of the dish. CSO stated (b) (6) found out about it on 18 August 2023, but didn't tell the CO as (b) (6) was discussing with (b) (6) mentors. [Encls. (3), (7)]

108. (b) (6) knew of the dish for six days prior to being asked by the Commanding Officer. [Encls. (3), (7)]

109. On 24 August 2023, OPSO located pictures that were taken on deployment showing the dish installed while underway. [Encls. (3), (8)]

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110. On 24 August 2023, CO questioned CMC Marrero about the unauthorized dish and if it belonged to the Chief's Mess. CMC Marrero stated no, she was not tracking, but would have a meeting with the mess. [Encls. (3), (5)]

111. CMC Marrero called for a Chief's meeting in the mess, where she informed the Chiefs the CO was aware of the Wi-Fi. [Encl. (5)]

112. In response, (b) (6) volunteered to take the fall for the unauthorized Wi-Fi. [Encls. (5), (9), (17)]

113. On 24 August 2023, following the Chief's meeting (b) (6) and (b) (6) removed the Starlink dish installed on the 05 level weatherdeck. [Encls. (10), (20)]

114. Following her discussion with OPSO and CSO, CDR Moore contacted the LCSRON THREE Staff Judge Advocate, (b) (6) to discuss the discovery of the dish, and her legal authorities to convene an investigation and inquiry. [Encl. (3)]

115. The next day, on 25 August 2023, (b) (6) went to the CO's office and falsely stated (b) (6) installed the dish and that (b) (6) was solely responsible. (b) (6) also noted that it was only used in port. [Encls. (3), (5), (9)]

116. Following her discussion with (b) (6) CDR Moore noted to CMC Marrero she did not believe the system was only in use in port. [Encls. (3), (5)]

117. (b) (6) downloaded data usage charts from the Starlink billing website and emailed them to CMC Marrero. [Encls. (5), (10)]

118. CMC Marrero and (b) (6) doctored billing cycle usage charts to appear as they only used the system while in port. [Encls. (3), (5), (10), (13), (17), (26), (27)]

119. The actual, undoctored billing cycle statements show usage while underway. [Encl. (27)]

120. CMC Marrero then placed a folder with doctored billing cycle usage charts on the CO's desk. [Encls. (5), (10)]

121. After her review, CDR Moore did not trust the data usage charts as they appeared to be poorly doctored. [Encl. (3)]

122. The morning of 26 August 2023, CMC Marrero went into the CO's office and admitted to her about lying the whole deployment about the Wi-Fi and apologized. [Encls. (3), (5)]

123. Later that day, on 26 August 2023, the Chief's Mess requested and conducted a meeting with the CO where they admitted to having the unauthorized Wi-Fi network and using it both in port and underway. [Encls. (3), (5)]

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124. (b) (6) was not present at the meeting, and noted (b) (6) did not attend because (b) (6) could not face the CO. [Encls. (3), (5), (9)]

125. CMC Marrero was present for a small portion of the meeting, but at the Chief's Mess request, she departed the meeting. [Encls. (3), (5)]

126. Upon completion of the Chief's Mess meeting with the CO, (b) (6) removed the Starlink cable. [Encl. (10)]

127. After the CPO Meeting, CDR Moore informed CDRE Meagher, COMLCSRON THREE and Deputy Commodore, CAPT Matthew Scarlett, COMDESRON SEVEN of the unauthorized Wi-Fi system. [Encls. (3)]

128. The CO knew of the unauthorized Wi-Fi network for two days prior to informing her Operational and Administrative Chain of Command. [Encl. (3)]

Post Discovery Actions and Additional Information

129. On 27 August 2023, a Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) investigator came to MCH and determined they would not be opening an investigation, nor would take possession of the device. [Encl. (3)]

130. On 27 August 2023, the XO and ship's legal officer read the Chief's Mess their 31b rights, en masse, and asked the mess to voluntarily deliver the Starlink system to the XO's office. The Chief's provide the system to the XO shortly after the meeting. [Encls. (3), (20)]

131. Emissions Control Condition Delta (EMCON D) was set for the majority of deployment. [Encls. (3), (4), (7), (10), (12), (18)]

132. MCH went out of EMCON D for the COMDESRON SEVEN directed Distance Verification Exercise (DIVE), on 11 – 15 May 2023. [Encls. (3), (7), (12), (14)]

133. The unauthorized Wi-Fi network was never connected to the ship's computer network or any other system. [Encls. (5), (11), (12), (14), (18)]

134. At no point, following indications or positive confirmation of the Wi-Fi network did any Triad member go aloft to search for the unauthorized Wi-Fi dish. [Encls. (3), (4)]

135. CMC Marrero never assisted in the search for the unauthorized Wi-Fi network. [Encls. (3), (5)]

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CMC Marrero's Leadership, Mess Culture and Usage

136. CMC Marrero hung a print out on a door stating the differences between an E-7 and Chief. This was directed towards (b) (6) following (b) (6) handling of a situation with a Sailor that she did not concur with the outcome. [Encls. (14), (20)]

137. CMC Marrero was verbally counseled by the CO and XO for how she talks to people in July 2023. [Encl. (3)]

138. CMC Marrero was rough on Combat System Department. [Encls. (7), (11), (19)]

139. CMC Marrero, (b) (6) were known as the "Chief's Triad." [Encls. (8), (7)]

140. CMC Marrero berated (b) (6) in front of the mess and did not allow him to defend himself. [Encls. (14), (20)]

141. Chiefs used the unauthorized Wi-Fi network for checking sports scores, texting home, streaming services, and work related items. [Encls. (5), (9) - (13), (17), (20)]

142. Chiefs were able to access unauthorized Wi-Fi while MCH's Super High Frequency (SHF) communications were down. [Encls. (5), (18)]

143. Enlisted advancement quotas were obtained by CMC while Super High Frequency (SHF) communications were down in May 2023. [Encl. (18)]

144. No MCH officers had access to the unauthorized Wi-Fi network. [Encl. (5)]

145. No MCH E-6 and junior Sailors had access to the unauthorized Wi-Fi network. [Encl. (5)]

146. (b) (6) berated (b) (6) in front of the other Chief's with insulting language after (b) (6) voted against the Wi-Fi network. [Encls. (14), (15)]

147. (b) (6) observed (b) (6) berate (b) (6) for not voting for the Wi-Fi network. [Encl. (15)]

148. Prior comments were made by CMC Marrero regarding (b) (6) the command's former ombudsman, including labeling (b) (6) a "troll". [Encl. (14)]

149. Some of those interviewed described (b) (6), in substance, as CMC Marrero's bull dog or worker bee. [Encl. (14), (20)]

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150. Some members of the CPO Mess arrived following the decision to purchase the Wi-Fi system, and were encouraged by CMC Marrero to both use and pay for the system. [Encls. (32), (34)]

151. Of the two CPOs which did not use the system, neither reported the matter to the command Triad. [Encls. (3), (5), (14), (15)]

Opinions

1. The Starlink system is a PED, and is not authorized without compliance with references (b) and (c). The installation, usage and continuous transmission of the Starlink onboard USS MANCHESTER did not comply with references (b) and (c). [FoF (27) – (33), (54) – (56), (141)]
2. The installation and usage of Starlink, without the approval of higher headquarters, poses a serious risk to mission, operational security, and information security. The danger such systems poses to the crew, the ship and the Navy cannot be understated. [FoF (27) – (33)]
3. In this case, the Starlink system was not connected to any shipboard device, nor impacted the capabilities of USS MANCHESTER while underway. The limited underway activities and operational taskings reduced the risk that the Starlink system revealed ship's movements. The Starlink system was not connected to any MCH system and ran completely independent of all other systems, other than ship's power. [FoF (50) – (52), (64) – (69)]
4. The device's location also reduced the risk of interference with the classified spaces of the ship. Instead, the cable and power device which entered the classified space was not capable of receiving or emitting signals. [FoF (22), (52), (67), (69)]
5. The mechanism of installation aloft highlighted the concerns with a blanket authorization by the CO. While a reasonable commander would grant the blanket while the ship is conducting maintenance, the accountability of working aloft was frustrated by the lack of records. [FoF (48), (49)]
6. CMC Marrero, as a prior IT, knew or should have known the applicable instructions governing the use of PED onboard a ship and while underway. Her time in service and specialized training makes it clear the member knew or should have known the risks associated with an unauthorized Wi-Fi system. [FoF (3), (17)]
7. CMC Marrero and (b) (6) were the original developers of the plan to purchase and install the unauthorized Starlink Wi-Fi network prior to deployment. Through concerted efforts, including requests to expedite the delivery of the system, both members sought to ensure usage while underway. [FoF (34), (36), (37), (39), (44) – (46), (50), (56)]

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8. Based on the totality of the circumstances, CMC Marrero was the ring leader, and single point of authority associated with the system. Her conduct in maintaining the system, its usage, and in concerted efforts to conceal the system from detection aggravates her culpability. [FoF (39), (56) – (58)]

9. CMC Marrero was able to limit who had access to the unauthorized Wi-Fi network by controlling both the password distribution and the need to confirm the individual user's devices to the network application. In my opinion, this is the only way the use of the Wi-Fi network was limited to only the Chiefs Mess and it was not slowly passed around to junior Sailors and officers. [FoF (56) – (58)]

10. Through the approximately five months the system was active, multiple opportunities were presented to discontinue usage. Despite those opportunities, CMC Marrero and the Chief's Mess elected to continue the unauthorized practice, changing the signal name and denying its existence to members of the crew. [FoF (70) – (77), (79), (81) – (83), (86), (90), (91), (93), (95)]

11. CMC Marrero intentionally mislead (b) (6) by informing (b) (6) the system was authorized for re-installation. [FoF (104), (105)]

12. Moreover, CMC Marrero led the Chief's Mess to believe the CO was informed of the purchase and install of the unauthorized Wi-Fi network. Most of the mess continued to believe this until the All Hands Call on 14 July where the CO stated there was no secret Wi-Fi onboard. [FoF (150)]

13. CMC Marrero intentionally mislead and provided false statements to the CO regarding the existence of the Wi-Fi system. [FoF (73), (77), (82), (83), (110), (118)]

14. CDR Moore trusted CMC Marrero even more than in a normal Triad relationship, due to the investigation and relief of the previous XO. During that investigation and action, prior to the arrival of the TAD XO, the CO reasonably believed that CMC Marrero was the only sounding board she could trust. [FoF (1), (3), (4), (73), (77), (82)]

15. CMC Marrero used her experience as an Information Systems Technician (IT) and trust built during the previous XO's investigation to manipulate the CO into believing everything she said was fact. The CO took the CMC at her word and did not verify on at least three occasions in regards to the Wi-Fi. [FoF (1), (3), (4), (17) (73), (77), (82)]

16. (b) (6) took the fall for the mess regarding the Wi-Fi network and intentionally lied to the CO because (b) (6) felt (b) (6) had the least amount to lose with (b) (6) retirement paperwork in process. [FoF (112), (115), (124)]

17. The Starlink usage was facilitated both in port and underway. [FoF (117), (118), (122), (123)]

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18. CMC Marrero and other members of the Mess were aware that (b) (6) was going to provide false information to the CO, and elected not to intervene or inform either the XO or CO. [FoF (112), (115), (124)]

19. To bolster the lies provided by (b) (6) CMC Marrero and (b) (6) intentionally doctored documents to reflect in port usage only. The obscuring of those documents were meant to divert the CO attention from potential impacts to the mission while underway, and to minimize the culpability of (b) (6) [FoF (112), (115), (124)]

20. The MCH(G) Chief's Mess was toxic. During the course of the investigation, and through one-on-one discussions with individual members, there was a clear fear of retribution. The general consensus is that if you didn't fall in line with what the main clique (consisting of CMC Marrero, (b) (6), you should worry about how you were to be treated, with the potential for being ostracized. [FoF (136) – (140), (146) – (149)]

21. A specific note should be made regarding the effectiveness of CMC Marrero to lead the mess into active deception and unauthorized practices. Collectively, this Mess has more than 200 years of active service across each member. To encourage and maintain a disregard for their oath and committed to our Core Values, takes effective action and decisive leadership. [FoF (42), (43), (70), (73), (83), (102), (105), (111), (144), (145), (150)]

22. (b) (6) as the (b) (6) failed to adequately protect the established Information Systems onboard, by knowingly allowing the installation of an unauthorized Wi-Fi network on the ship. (b) (6) did not communicate (b) (6) concerns to (b) (6) CO due to fear of retribution after how (b) (6) saw MNC Smith was treated for pushing back against the Wi-Fi. (b) (6) chose the Chief's Mess over doing what was right, which is not what is expected of a Chief with (b) (6) knowledge, age, experience and training. [FoF (12), (31), (43), (136), (137), (139), (140), (147), (149), (151)]

23. Although (b) (6) was vocal against the installation on the Starlink Wi-Fi network, (b) (6) failed to communicate up (b) (6) chain of command the concerns (b) (6) had with the unauthorized network. (b) (6) truly felt (b) (6) would be ostracized and/or retaliated against. [FoF (13), (43), (137), (139), (147) – (151)]

24. While the fears of retaliation or ostracism motivated both (b) (6) their failure to report the matter to the Triad is wholly unsatisfactory, and demonstrates an election to maintain loyalties to a Mess despite knowing the activities were wrong/unauthorized. Such conduct falls below that expected of a Chief, or any Sailor regardless of rank. [FoF (151)]

25. The CSO, (b) (6) waited multiple days to inform the CO of the dish being discovered. The waiting falls below that expected of a CSO, operating in a forward deployed environment. While additional time to gather more facts could have been appropriate, waiting a week to inform the CO is wholly substandard. [FoF (107), (108)]

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26. The OPSO, (b) (6) also failed to see issues in front of (b) (6). When the Starshield team was coming onboard, (b) (6) was given an unusual warning. (b) (6) warning should have prompted (b) (6) to inquiry more, and conduct a review. A reasonable officer would have ensured any contractor operating onboard would not experience potential harm or danger, and thus would inspect the work space upon receipt of a warning, like (b) (6) [FoF (93), (106)]

27. Each member of the Chief's Mess knew or should have known their practices were wrong and/or unauthorized. The requirement to hide and lie about the existence of a system and capabilities for the crew necessitates their knowledge that it was wrong. This conduct is not expected of a Chief's Mess. [FoF (90), (93), (98), (102), (103), (125)]

28. Each member of the Chief's Mess elected to waive their right to remain silent, elected to provide amplifying information on the installation and usage of the Starlink, and was cooperative during the entire investigation. This incident is a black eye for this Chief's Mess, but their election to take responsibility, correct the issues, and willingness to accept accountability adds credibility to their collective commitment. [FoF (42), (43), (123), (130)]

29. The U.S. Navy Regulations make the charge and duties of a CO clear: "The responsibility of the commanding officer for his or her command is absolute, except when, and to the extent to which, he or she has been relieved therefrom by competent authority, or as provided otherwise in these regulations. . . . All Commanding Officers are required to show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination; to be vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all persons who are placed under their command; to guard against and suppress all dissolute and immoral practices; and to take all necessary and proper measures, under the laws, regulations, and customs of the Naval service, to promote and safeguard the morale, the physical well-being, and the general welfare of the officers and enlisted persons under their command or charge. . . While the Commanding Officer may, at his or her discretion, and when not contrary to law or regulations, delegate authority to subordinates for the execution of details, such delegation of authority shall in no way relieve the commanding officer of continued responsibility for the safety, well-being and efficiency of the entire command." [FoF (70) – (128), Ref. (d)]

30. In my opinion, the CO failed to verify that an unauthorized Wi-Fi network did not exist on her ship while deployed in the C7F AOR. She was made aware of the network at least three times prior to its discovery on 18 August 2023. She never sent any member of the ship's force, or herself, aloft to check for unauthorized equipment. Although she asked her CSO about a sniffer in July, she did not utilize all her tools and resources available. The ship was in port Guam during two of the Wi-Fi incidents and she did not reach out to any outside entities for support, including multiple commands that are permanently stationed in Guam. Besides asking her CSO if the ship had a sniffer, she failed to use her Combat Systems Department to eliminate the possibility of the unauthorized network. (b) (6) was aware of the network and may have confirmed its existence, had (b) (6) been questioned. (b) (6) wanted to discuss the Wi-Fi, as (b) (6) had confronted the CMC two times before. Inquiry with (b) (6) could have possibly provided some resources in attempting to locate the device. [FoF (70) – (128)]

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31. While hindsight may be 20/20, a reasonable commander presented with this many indications and warning would and should have taken additional actions with the information received. The device was visible, was picked up from personal devices, and was the subject of multiple rumors and submissions. [FoF (70) – (128)]

32. Moreover, while the Staff Judge Advocate is an excellent resource for commands, a JAG is not a substitute for prompt and direct communications to a superior in command. CDR Moore elected to wait two days to inform both her Administrative and Operational Chain of Command. [FoF (114), (127)]

33. A culture has developed onboard MCH(G), which prevents forceful back up of their leadership. Given the small size of crew and the tight working environment, to assume that no junior Sailor did, or attempt to, notify an Officer for the entirety of the deployment is less than believable. (b) (6) was the sole individual referenced who came forward to question the rumors and shed light on the situation to the Triad members, but only during his check out. (b) (6) attempted to utilize only (b) (6) enlisted chain of command, but did not bring (b) (6) concerns to (b) (6) division officer, department head, or other command Triad members. As such, the culture's impact on a Sailor's comfortability and confidence in leadership to address concerns and questions severely hampered detection of this threat. [FoF (76), (79), (91)]

Recommendations

1. No further investigation is warranted.
2. CMDCM Marrero's advanced to E-9 should be withdrawn. Her conduct, intentional deception and failure to maintain the Navy's Core Values makes clear she does not deserve the privilege to promote to Master Chief Petty Officer.
3. CMDCM Marrero's Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL) Identification Badge should be revoked.
4. CMDCM Marrero should be taken to Captain's Mast and awarded nonjudicial punishment for violating UCMJ Articles 81, 92, 107 and 131b.
5. CMDCM Marrero should notified for administrative separation. In the absence of administrative separation, the member should be detached for cause from the command.
6. (b) (6) should be taken to Captain's Mast and awarded nonjudicial punishment for violating UCMJ Articles 81, 92 and 107.
7. (b) (6) should be taken to Captain's Mast and awarded nonjudicial punishment for violating UCMJ Articles 81, 92:

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8. The following E-7s should be given Letter of Instructions (LOI) regarding the serious deviation from the standards expected of deck plate leaders:

- (b) (6)
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9. (b) (6) should be issued a Non Punitive Letter of Caution (NPLOC).

10. No Chief, other than CMDCM Marrero, should be notified for administrative separation.

11. (b) (6) should be issued a NPLOC regarding (b) (6) individual failure in inspecting, communicating and notifying the CO.

12. (b) (6) should be provided a verbal counseling regarding forceful back up and a question attitude.

13. CDR Moore's actions denote a serious lapse in judgement, which does not conform to her knowledge, training, experience and trust as a Commanding Officer. Her conduct amounts to a disregard to a known threat to the operational safety of her ship, her crew and her mission. Her decision not to reasonably investigate the concerns prevented her situational awareness and such a deviation from her charge of command undermines her ability to remain as the Commanding Officer. At a minimum, CDR Moore should be issued a Letter of Instruction regarding the substandard performance. I recommend her record in command be reviewed, and following that review, relief from duty may be appropriate.

(b) (6)