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The Navy Band Sonora del Mar originated two years ago, in South Texas, for the purpose of recruiting minorities, especially those of Mexican-American descent, for the Navy. The band has successfully performed for CNATRA, Navy Recruiting, Marine Corps, and Air Force commands along with numerous civilian organizations from Oklahoma to Mexico.

Each performance has brought praise from all commanding officers and civilian officials and recognition to the Navy as being a modern and equal opportunity employer.

If the Sonora del Mar has been so successful, why were there so few engagements booked and performed during the past fiscal year?

Do the citizens of the Southwestern United States truly have no desire for the use of a Navy Band, which is the conclusion of the officer in charge of the Navy Band Corpus Christi? Or, are there other reasons? And shouldn't these reasons be investigated before a decision, to pull the entire Navy Band out of Texas, is made?

Was there an insufficient amount of job requests because of the lack of proper public and military exposure of the band? Was there laziness on the part of the people who were responsible for finding jobs? Were these people ignorant of their responsibilities or was there a lack of care in giving audiences quality performances, or could the requests have come in to the Navy Band Corpus Christi but not been booked?

If the answer to any of these questions could possibly be yes, then, who is responsible? The band members, the recruiters, the officer in charge of Navy Band Corpus Christi, the officer in charge of the Music Branch of the Navy, or possibly someone higher in rank than him?

Doesn't it seem as though some one should honestly ask why this has happened to the only musical group, in all of our armed forces, which is geared towards entertaining, recruiting & retaining, in the Navy, Mexican Americans in the Southwestern United States?

*Hector P. Garcia*