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Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Shipmates,
I recently had the opportunity to meet with the Honors Program students of the Morgan State University Earl G. Graves School of Business and Management. My thanks to Representative Elijah Cummings, the Chairman of our House Authorization Subcommittee, for his partnership and collaboration in making this evening happen. Their questions were insightful and thoughtful. We had an opportunity to extend our discussion at a reception following the event. We also had the opportunity to discuss career opportunities in the Coast Guard with the faculty. I look forward to future visits.

ADM A



[Morgan State University visit](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [2/26/2009 08:53:00 PM](#) [1 comments](#)



Guest Post by VADM Vivien Crea, Vice Commandant.

As the Ancient Albatross, I am honored and humbled to announce the winging last week of the 4000th Coast Guard Aviator to be designated a Naval Aviator. Number One, of course, is our exalted hero, LT Elmer Stone, back in 1917. Number 4000 is LT Philip Wade, who was winged in a ceremony which included a total of six new Coast Guard pilots - surely a record itself. As the Director Navy Staff, VADM John Harvey noted in his email to me after presiding over the winging, they all "looked to be pretty fired up as well!" Congratulations to you all - makes me wish I could start all over again. Cliché, of course, but time sure flies! Be safe out there.

VADM Vivien Crea
Ancient AI #21

Posted at [2/26/2009 01:40:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Wednesday, February 25, 2009

CAPT Luann Barndt, Coast Guard Chair at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, left this great comment regarding field employment of social networking on my Facebook Fanpage. She gave me permission to share it here:

I am currently TAD helping to teach the [Seminar on Transatlantic Civil Security](#) (STACS 2009-2) to 38 international and US students (representing 25 countries) at the [George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies](#). One of the goals of the program is continued outreach and sharing of best practices among graduates and future Marshall Center students. While speaking with the Dean, he mentioned the Marshall Center was considering social media to meet that goal. I shared the articles on social media (included below) with the faculty and students and started a STACS 2009-2 alumni group. As I write this, I can see that 12 of the 38 students are online with 25 of the 38 included in the alumni group. Many of these students joined facebook for the first time. We are working toward helping the remaining students join facebook and our group before we graduate on Wed. This has been a fantastic tool to share professional information as we initiated threads relating to the course topics such as: pandemic flu; social media; and incident management. We are looking forward to keeping in touch to continue the professional dialogue as we return to our respective countries. I am proud that the USCG is leading the way in leveraging this valuable communication medium.

As described in the article "[Social Media and the National Security Professional](#)", social media is an emerging communication technology.


[11 Reasons You Can't Ignore Social Media in 2009](#)

[10 Principles of Social Media](#)

[Military brass joins wired troops. Admirals and generals hope to connect with soldiers via their own Facebook pages and blogs. But will they tweet?](#)

The article above describes the use of social media by senior military leaders including:

Gen. William Ward, Commander of US Africa Command
Adm. Thad Allen, Commandant of the Coast Guard
Gen. Gene Renuart, Commander of US Northern Command
Admiral Stavridis, Commander of US Southern Command

Posted at [2/25/2009 04:31:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 

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Coast Guard All Contingency Preparedness Summit

Guest Blog by CAPT Vincent Atkins (CG-53D), Deputy Response Policy,

Tuesday, Feb. 10, I had the honor and pleasure to kickoff the Coast Guard's 2009 All Contingency Preparedness Summit at the National Conference Center in Lansdowne, Virginia. There were over 150 Preparedness professionals, planners, and exercise staff from the Sectors, Groups, Marine Safety Units, Districts, Areas and various Headquarters offices in attendance at this 3-day conference.



Significant discussions focused on initiatives to: share best practices for more efficient and effective operations; improve training and exercises; define a career path for military and civilian personnel; and, improve the network of preparedness professionals in the Coast Guard's All Threats / All Hazards response environment.

A brief scan of the operational horizon reveals the Coast Guard living its motto of Semper Paratus, and being successful, in part, due to the contributions of its preparedness/planning community. Every Coast Guard District can point to recent responses that were anticipated, exercised and critiqued. Lessons were learned and plans improved. From mass rescues in D1 ([USAIR](#)) and D9 ([ice floe](#)); massive security operations in D5 (inauguration), D7 (Superbowl), and D13 (Olympic exercises); environmental responses in D14 (grounded vessel) and D17 (potential volcanic eruption); to critical LE operations in D11 (Southwest border), the preparedness community clearly played an important role in meeting the challenges of an all threats / all hazards environment. While the public often sees the end-game of operations that result in sensational rescues, averted disasters and successful law enforcement actions, these do not happen by luck and/or by the sole actions of the operators. As former Commandant Admiral Loy said quite frequently, "preparation equals performance."

Plans and exercises are great, but it is the process of planning and exercising that drives our best results. No plan survives first contact, but the intellectual capital and interagency/industry relationships that derive are sure to pay off when a response is required. Through the preparedness process, we gain a better picture of our capabilities, resources, gaps and most importantly, our critical relationships required to effectively respond to All Threats and All Hazards. It is through this cycle of Preparedness (Assess; Plan; Resource; Train; Exercise; Improve) that we create

future success. As a former Sector Commander, I relied on my preparedness team of planners, subject matter experts and exercise staff to guide my approach to operations. From my current seat as Deputy Response Policy, the question is how to best prepare the preparedness community so that operations across the Coast Guard remain successful.

During my Q&A period, I was struck by this group's sense of purpose; their sense of ownership for the Coast Guard's operational challenges; and their very real desire to improve their community of professionals. Clearly, the preparedness community is energized and is looking for the support of the chain of command (at all levels) to support the planning, exercising and self-learning so critical to the Coast Guard's success.

Semper Paratus.

Posted at [2/25/2009 11:29:00 AM](#) [5 comments](#) 



Tuesday, February 24, 2009

What's On Your Mind? Submit your Q's for the State of the Coast Guard Address

On Tuesday, March 3rd, I will deliver my third State of the Coast Guard speech. This is a unique year since I will be delivering this annual address before the President's formal budget submission to the Congress in mid-April; normally the President's budget is submitted in early February.

A new feature at this year's address is a Question and Answer session. Those in attendance will be able to ask questions directly but I'd also like to hear from the field and our external stakeholders. Just post your question as a comment to this blog entry. I'm encouraging you to use this opportunity to ask about Coast Guard-wide issues.

The theme of this year's speech is "The U.S. Coast Guard: America's Maritime Guardian." I want to highlight the Coast Guard's broad impact across the entire maritime domain...in the heartland, the ports, at sea, and around the globe. The Coast Guard provides a tremendous value to the Nation and this is another opportunity to tell our story to the American public. I'll also discuss some of our budgetary and legislative challenges in the coming year.

After the formal event, the text of the speech and video will be posted on Commandant's Corner. I encourage you to review it and discuss it with your shipmates so you can understand our current operating environment and the challenges we're facing in the 21st century.

ADM A

Posted at [2/24/2009 08:20:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#) 



Final Honors Bestowed on CDR Keith A. Willis

Shipmates:

Yesterday, at the Veteran's Cemetery in Suffolk, Virginia, the Commanding Officer of the cutter TAHOMA, Commander Keith A. Willis, was laid to rest with full military honors. In attendance were his wife Carolyn, daughter Melissa, son Matthew, parents Harlon and Erlene Willis, sister Karen and her husband Jeff Stowe, as well as many family members, friends, and at least two hundred of his Coast Guard Shipmates. Coast Guardsmen from all over the country were in the crowd, as well as several current cutter commanding officers from along the east coast. A full platoon from the Coast Guard Honor Guard traveled from Washington and added to the professionalism as we honored our Shipmate, and observed "the manners of our profession."



[Final Honors Bestowed on CDR Keith A. Willis](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

I had the honor and great privilege of speaking at the funeral, and presented, posthumously, Commander Willis' Meritorious Service Medal to Carolyn and the Willis children. The citation, in part, read: "With his personal characteristics of kindness, generosity and faithfulness, he led, trained, and inspired countless shipmates during a career spanning more than two and a half decades." I also presented them with the flag from the casket "...on behalf of a grateful nation..."

I had a chance to talk to a large number of the TAHOMA crew about their CO during the wake on Sunday. Seldom have I heard a Commanding Officer spoken about in such loving terms. Commander Willis clearly left a lasting impression on all with whom he served, and he will not soon be forgotten.

I can't help but comment also on how proud I was/am of the entire Coast Guard Family that came together to assist the Willis Family over the past week - particularly Commander Wendy Calder of Training Center Yorktown who served as the Casualty Assistance Calls Officer. The Willis family is very grateful for the outpouring of love, admiration, and respect for the man who was their husband, father, son, brother, and the officer who was a cutterman, captain ... and SHIPMATE.

Fair winds,

VADM R. J. Papp, Jr.
Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area
and 13th Gold Ancient Mariner

Posted at [2/24/2009 01:06:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



Monday, February 23, 2009

Armed Services YMCA of Alaska Annual Salute to the Military

Shipmates,
Pam and I traveled to the 17th District this last weekend to attend the Armed Services YMCA Salute to the Military. Each year the ASYMCA sponsors a dinner to recognize the Enlisted Persons of the Year for all of the services, including the Reserve Components and National Guard. The Coast Guard was represented by AET1 James Nichols from Air Station Sitka and MST2 Lucas Ellis from Sector Anchorage who accepted the Reserve award on behalf of PS2 Sean Purcell who could not attend. PS2 Purcell is a detective with the Anchorage Police Department.

It was a great evening and we were joined by Senators Lisa Murkowski and Mark Begich. Senator Murkowski and I share some common history in that we are both Coast Guard "brats" and our fathers were stationed in Ketchikan in the 1950's at the same time. I attended first and second grade in Ketchikan when my Dad was stationed on the SWEETBRIAR (before it was homeported in Cordova).

Both Senators are very supportive of the efforts of RADM Gene Brooks and our D17 Team as they prototype operations off the North Slope.

Pam and I also made a quick visit to Elmendorf Air Force Base to meet with LTG Dana Atkins (Commander, Alaska Command). We have been working for over two years with the Air Force and the Fisher House Foundation to build a Fisher House at Elmendorf to support Wounded Warriors and our personnel who must travel from our widespread units to receive specialty care and inpatient treatment. We personally visited the site where land is being cleared for what will be a 21-suite Fisher House. This is extraordinarily good news. I have personally thanked Ken Fisher and General Norty Schwartz (Chief of Staff of the Air Force) for their support.

We also traveled to Kodiak where I held a very good All Hands Meeting and Chiefs Call. Master Chief Bowen made the trip with me. My thanks to our hard working folks in the "Last Frontier."

ADM A



[Armed Services YMCA of Alaska Annual Salute to the Military](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [2/23/2009 11:00:00 AM](#) [1 comments](#)



Friday, February 20, 2009

Maritime Enforcement Specialist Rating Update

Guest Post by RADM Sally Brice-O'Hara, Deputy
Commandant for Operations

Late last week, I had an opportunity to sit down with [VADM Pearson](#) and RADM Riker for an update on plans to implement the Maritime Enforcement Specialist Rating. I came away from that brief most impressed with what has been accomplished over a relatively short span of time. I appreciate the Commandant's willingness to share this space and to bring you up to date on this important and long overdue effort and to thank you for the role you've played in its success to date.

While much is left to be done, both VADM Pearson and I were most impressed at what has been accomplished since the Commandant's 23 June decision to [establish the new rating](#). Since that time, the implementation of the Maritime Enforcement Specialist (ME) rating (LETSGO III) has continued on track, overcoming numerous challenges along the way. Let me cite a few accomplishments for you. Last fall, the ME EPQs were published on the USCG learning portal and the [first ME E-9s](#) were selected: MECM Gordon J. Muise (RFMC); MECM Steven J. Lowry (SWE/Non-Resident Course Writer); MECM Randy L. Krahn (ME "A" School Chief); and MECM William Allred (PS RFMC). More recently,




[The first four Master Chief Maritime Enforcement Specialists](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

we selected the [USCG Maritime Law Enforcement Academy](#), Charleston, SC, as the location for ME "A" school.

More recently still, on 9 February, with your enthusiastic assistance, the ME rating [Manpower Requirements Survey](#) was completed. The Implementation Team sent this survey to more than 20,000 enlisted members at various units across the Coast Guard. I am pleased to report that more than 45% of those receiving the survey invested the time necessary to complete it. This impressive response is a credit to both the survey participants and the Coast Guard leaders who recognized the importance of this effort and made the time available to complete it. The survey is a significant part of our overall Manpower Requirements Analysis process. Your effort in providing timely, thoughtful answers to the survey questions will inform important decisions we will need to make in the coming months and provide the primary input to develop the billet map for the initial stand up of the ME rating.

The ME implementation is on track and on target. Stay tuned in the coming months for updates on the next major milestone, the Manpower Requirements Analysis and thank you for your commitment to seeing this effort through to completion!

Semper Paratus,

Posted at [2/20/2009 10:25:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Thursday, February 19, 2009

Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf Information Assurance/Tempest Update

Guest Post from CAPT Joseph M. Vojvodich (CG-933), C4ISR Acquisitions Program Manager

IA/Tempest on the BERTHOLF continues to be a point of interest and I wanted to provide a status update.

During the United States Coast Guard Cutter BERTHOLF's construction and post-delivery activities, the Coast Guard has remained focused on the cutter's Information Assurance (IA)/TEMPEST posture. IA and TEMPEST are important aspects to enable the full multi-mission C4ISR capability on our first-in-class National Security Cutter. The Coast Guard has appropriately addressed the security of its information systems and has periodically reported on the status towards certification.

The Coast Guard has worked diligently at identifying IA discrepancies, including TEMPEST, and continues to capture lessons learned to make the next cutters better. We are taking the appropriate steps to make our National Security Cutter IA compliant including using certified experts to assist in inspecting and correcting discrepancies. The staffs from the Acquisition Directorate and the Technical Authority oversee the work to ensure it is properly completed and also use 3rd parties to perform Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) to ensure we have secure systems on the cutter. We are now taking the final steps to resolve any remaining issues and protect our systems against cyber attacks.

Information Assurance incorporates the practice of analyzing and auditing software, hardware, and devices for known threats and involves the remediation of vulnerabilities. Our team evaluates external changes, ensures documentation is accurate, and maintains an acceptable security posture. By scanning our systems for vulnerabilities, we update and deploy software and make necessary adjustments in our systems that address IA risks while maintaining the operating capability of the system. Our next planned software load is in March and we will immediately follow the installation with an on board IV&V assessment of the system. Like previous versions, this version of software will have IA incorporated into its development and is a product of best practices and findings of the past.

TEMPEST is an important aspect of managing BERTHOLF's Information Assurance risks and our recent efforts are captured as lessons learned for future cutters. Testing and workmanship activities related to TEMPEST reduce the chances of unintended compromising emanations. We have taken an active role by having our Coast Guard TEMPEST certified field agents and CTTA (Certified TEMPEST Technical Authority) monitor the execution of these lessons learned as new assets are being built. We have performed a rigorous Visual TEMPEST Inspection, corrected the deficiencies that we have discovered, and continue to make the system more robust. In December, the Coast Guard verified that the remaining 122 visual TEMPEST discrepancies identified during the preliminary delivery of the ship (DD-250) were resolved. The test-fix-test methodology over the recent months has proved to be a sound approach. Before U.S. Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR), under contract by the Coast Guard Technical Authority, conducts a final Instrumented TEMPEST Survey (ITS) in April on the BERTHOLF, we will continue to employ the services of a National Security Agency certified TEMPEST test services facility throughout the month of March to prepare for final ITS by inspecting and correcting any newly discovered deficiencies. Improvements in our processes, relationships with industry & SPAWAR, and our oversight program have contributed significantly to our progress.

I can report continued progress in the security posture of the BERTHOLF and I am confident that we will achieve the appropriate authorizations and certifications in the near future.

Captain Joseph M. Vojvodich
C4ISR Acquisition Program Manager
Coast Guard Acquisition Directorate (CG-933)

Posted at [2/19/2009 09:36:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



A Great Day to be Commandant! -- Part Two -- Updated with Photos

Following today's [award ceremony for the Good Samaritan mariners](#), I joined Secretary Napolitano on a waterside tour of the Port of New York/New Jersey on board one of our remarkable [Response Boat-Mediums](#). The Secretary had a great opportunity to speak directly to the boat Coxswain and Crew Members who are our first line of defense in the maritime domain. As always, they superbly represented their fellow Guardians and continue to impress our new Service Secretary.



[Sec. Napolitano gets Waterside Tour of NY on RB-M](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Once at Sector New York, we recognized the Sector and other units who coordinated the rescue and salvage operations for Flt 1549. From beginning to the end, this multi-unit response flawlessly ensured the safety and environmental health of the waterway, while actively supporting the critical efforts of the NTSB investigators. For their efforts, they were recognized with a Unit Commendation ([UnitComm.pdf](#)). It was also my privilege to recognize one of our true Guardians with a Meritorious Service Medal ([MSMCitation.pdf](#)). BM2 Ben Foster was a boat crewman on a 33' SPC that immediately diverted from a security patrol to assist in the rescue efforts. Upon arrival, he saw an elderly woman fall into the near freezing water. He immediately entered the water and was able to rescue her and get her onboard one of the several responding vessels, he then continued to assist with the removal of survivors from the sinking aircraft. It was not until the rescue efforts were completed that he realized he was injured.

One interesting side story discovered in this case is that of MK3 Brittany Catanzaro (USCGR). At just 20 years old, Petty Officer Catanzaro has already attained her 100-ton license and is a New York Ferry Captain. She was serving in this capacity on the afternoon of the FLT 1549 crash and was one of the first vessels on scene, ultimately rescuing 26 people. Today she was recognized in her civilian capacity with a Meritorious Public Service Award. PO Catanzaro drills at Station Barnegat Light. It was great to be able to recognize PO Catanzaro on this day, [the 68th Anniversary of our critical Coast Guard Reserve](#).

ADM A

Posted at [2/19/2009 09:25:00 AM](#) [2 comments](#)



Marine Insurers Meeting with Coast Guard Commandant

I had the pleasure to meet with executives from the marine insurance industry yesterday in New York City -- something I've wanted to do for some time.

I was joined by Judge Advocate General [RADM Bill Baumgartner](#), Asst. Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship [RADM Brian Salerno](#), and Director of the National Pollution Funds Center [Mr. Craig Bennett](#)

Marine insurance is as old as commercial seafaring itself. The collective action of traders to hedge against the risk of plying the seas goes back to antiquity. This is a sophisticated industry that is vital to trade and transportation.

The Coast Guard and insurance industry often work together, but today was unique in my memory. My top leaders and I sat down with hull, cargo, P&I (liability), pollution, reinsurance and brokerage executives to discuss common objectives across the industry sector.

Not surprisingly we share a lot of similar thinking about reducing maritime risk. It's also a pleasure to work with experts who think systematically about the entire maritime environment. Our conversation criss-crossed safety, security and environmental concerns. In today's global maritime system, this kind of integrated thinking and action is essential to addressing risk.

This was an important time to meet, too. Broad trends in the size and scale of shipping are mixed with today's sharp downturn in the economy and trade. We touched on these trends and related risks. We also discussed pollution response and incident command structure, safety management, fishing vessel safety, data sharing and shortfalls, terrorism risk and security measures, theft loss trends, value accumulation and much more.

I enjoyed the morning and thank everyone who participated. This gathering follows the spirit of last September's [Evergreen strategic workshop](#), where we met with key shipping industry sectors to think about how the future will shape business and government. Such in depth discussions with industry are an essential part of our marine safety improvement plan, and I intend to continue regular meetings with the insurance industry on risk reduction. We hope to focus on pollution risk and response in the next month.

ADM A

Posted at [2/19/2009 08:57:00 AM](#) [3 comments](#)



A Great Day to be Commandant! -- Part One -- Updated with Photos

Today was one of those days that I truly cherish as Commandant of the Coast Guard...A position I often describe as the best job in the World.

This afternoon, Secretary Napolitano, [Senator Lautenberg](#), [Congressman Nadler](#), [Congressman Sires](#), [Congressman McMahon](#) and [Congressman Hall](#) joined me at an [award ceremony to honor 108](#) of the maritime professionals who participated in the [rescue of 155 passengers](#) and crew from US Airways flight 1549.

On the CGDN, click [here](#)



[FLT 1549 Good Sam mariners](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

While a truly remarkable feat, I must be clear that this flawless rescue, that millions witnessed on TV and the Internet, did not happen by accident. The performance of the pilot and crew has been widely and justly lauded as extraordinary. However, the role of the local mariners was critical as well. Every day in the Port of New York/New Jersey and in ports across the country, professional mariners like those recognized today work side by side with their local, state and federal partners to keep American waterways safe, secure and open for business.

With an emphasis on communication, coordination, training, and exercises, the entire maritime community prepares daily to respond to all hazards and all threats. In doing so, they are able to prevent disasters, as they did here Jan. 15. Similarly, when mishaps or crises do occur, these fine professionals are able to save lives, preserve the environment and restore the vital flow of commerce as quickly as possible. This was demonstrated several times this past year including: the Western River floods in June, the New Orleans oil spill in July, and when hurricanes Ike and Gustav hit the Gulf Coast in September. It was also demonstrated in the evacuation of lower Manhattan following the attacks of 9/11.

Maintaining America's preparedness to prevent, respond to or recover from disasters, natural or man-made, is a team effort requiring all levels of government, and both the private and public sectors. The port of New York/New Jersey is a model of that robust preparation and partnership.

While we are part of this team, this system of safety, it is the acts of the individual men and women who work on our waterways every day that accomplish remarkable things like the Miracle on the Hudson. Their commitment to professionalism, good seamanship and their fellow citizens, enables them to respond with no notice, even to risk their own safety, to the most harrowing events.

The opportunity to meet and talk with these selfless, dedicated citizens is one of the greatest sources of satisfaction I have in representing the men and women of the Coast Guard. Therefore, it is my pleasure and my honor to thank each and every one of the mariners and shore side support personnel for their dedication. Well done, shipmates.

ADM A

Click the photo to see more

Posted at [2/19/2009 08:43:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Wednesday, February 18, 2009

[Award Protest of Sentinel Contract Award Dismissed from U.S. Court of Federal](#)

Claims

Guest blog by RADM Gary Blore (CG-9), Assistant Commandant for Acquisition

On February 9, 2009, Marinette Marine Corporation (MMC) gave notice to the U.S. Department of Justice of its intent to file a post-award protest in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims. MMC protested the Coast Guard award of the Sentinel-class patrol boat project to Bollinger Shipyards. On February 10, 2009, MMC filed these proceedings under seal at COFC and requested the Court to restrict them from public disclosure.

MMC requested a preliminary injunction and a temporary restraining order to prevent performance of the current contract that, if granted, would have stopped all work on the Coast Guard's new Sentinel-class patrol boat under the contested contract.


Previously, on January 12, 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress, [denied MMC's first bid protest](#) (filed on October 7, 2008), and upheld the U.S. Coast Guard's [award of the Sentinel-class patrol boat](#) to Bollinger Shipyards, Inc. The [GAO found](#), "...the agency's evaluation of MMC's and Bollinger's proposals to be reasonable, and (that) the SSA reasonably explained and documented the bases for his selection of Bollinger's proposal for award and the reasons that MMC's proposal was found ineligible for award. MMC's contentions here provide no basis for overturning the award determination."

On February 12, 2009, a hearing took place on the MMC post-award protest of the Sentinel contract award. The judge denied the request for a temporary restraining order that would have stopped performance of the current contract pending resolution of MMC's recent protest. Work continued as planned at Bollinger Shipyards on the Coast Guard's new Sentinel-class patrol boat as the bid protest process progressed with the U.S. Court of Federal Claims.

Update

On February 17, 2009, MMC submitted a Notice of Voluntary Dismissal to the Court, effectively withdrawing their protest. The judge subsequently dismissed the protest with prejudice, which will in effect, preclude MMC from filing another protest on these issues.

It has continued to be my position that this award was accomplished through full and open competition, demonstrating due diligence in the careful evaluation of proposals to choose the most viable solution and best value to the government, and I am pleased both that MMC has withdrawn their protest and that the Court has precluded further actions on these issues, so that we may continue the critically important replacement of our aging patrol boat fleet with the Sentinel-class of cutters.

Posted at [2/18/2009 08:46:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Tuesday, February 17, 2009

Coast Guard Modernization Update: SILC Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Guest Post from VADM Cliff Pearson, Chief of Staff.

Shipmates,

Today, I participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Shore Infrastructure Logistics Center (SILC) held near its

headquarters in Norfolk, VA at the Integrated Support Command Portsmouth in Portsmouth, VA. Today's event marks the fourth in a series of five new mission support entities to stand-up this spring that functionally realign the mission support organization for sustainable mission execution excellence.

The SILC's first Commanding Officer, CAPT Mark S. Carmel, served as the Master of Ceremonies. CAPT Carmel stood-up the Coast Guard's first asset-based product line at what is now the Aviation Logistics Center, helping to pioneer asset-based product line support concept. This concept evolved to become the Coast Guard's [logistics business model](#). CAPT Carmel is the ideal choice to lead the SILC's application of the Coast Guard business model to develop product lines for the service's 23,000 shore facilities worldwide.



SILC Ribbon Cutting Photos

The SILC will develop configuration standards to acquire, maintain, alter, repair, and dispose of all shore facilities. Each year, the 1,500 men and women of SILC will be responsible for and award more than \$1 billion worldwide in new construction and recapitalization projects; disaster recovery contracts; facility maintenance and repair contracts and leases; and contracts to support Coast Guard facilities and missions, including oil spill cleanup contracts. From acquisition through decommissioning and disposal, the SILC will centrally manage Base Operating and Support Services (BOSS) such as grounds keeping, facility access control and security, port services, and motor pool management, but will execute locally to provide standardized support services. The SILC will consolidate support currently provided by Coast Guard Facility Design and Construction Centers, Civil Engineering Units, Maintenance Logistic Commands and Integrated Support Centers' base services functions through local detachments or detached duty assignments remote from the SILC's command in Norfolk, VA.

The SILC, [C4IT Service Center](#), [Surface Forces Logistics Center](#), [Asset Project Office](#), and [Aviation Logistics Center](#) with the remaining Personnel Service Center will unify logistics support enterprise-wide, forming the backbone of our improved mission support organization. In the future these logistics and services centers will embody the following four corner stones of the proven Coast Guard logistics business model: Bi-level Maintenance, Configuration Management, Single point of accountability through [Product Line Managers](#), and Total Asset Visibility. By modernizing our business processes and organizational design, we will help to ensure the Coast Guard meets our call to be "Always Ready."

Visit our [modernization website](#) for more details.

Posted at [2/17/2009 03:51:00 PM](#) [@comments](#)

Share |

Coast Guard Logistics Transformation: The Future of Semper Paratus

Guest Post from [VADM Cliff Pearson](#), Chief of Staff.

Shipmates,

Please take a moment to view the newly released [Logistics Transformation Video: The Future of Semper Paratus](#). This video highlights our logistics transformation efforts, especially as they apply to a unit's day to day operations. It communicates how logistics transformation will improve efficiency and mission readiness through the daily activities experienced in transformed sectors. The video explains the new logistics business model and the four cornerstones of that model: Configuration Management, Total Asset Visibility, Bi-Level Maintenance, and the Product Line. Also demonstrated are the new IT tools, such as the Electronic Asset Logbook, ALMIS, and color-coded electronic forms. Finally, the video explains how the new logistics model contributes to the [future of the Coast Guard](#) by providing better support to mission execution. (Approximately 14 minutes.)

VADM Clifford I. Pearson

Moderator's Note: RADM Breckenridge posted on the [Modernization Communications Assessement Survey on Coast Guard All Hands Blog](#). If you haven't received a link to the survey, check with your Command and let us know what you think.

Posted at [2/17/2009 10:58:00 AM](#) [@comments](#)

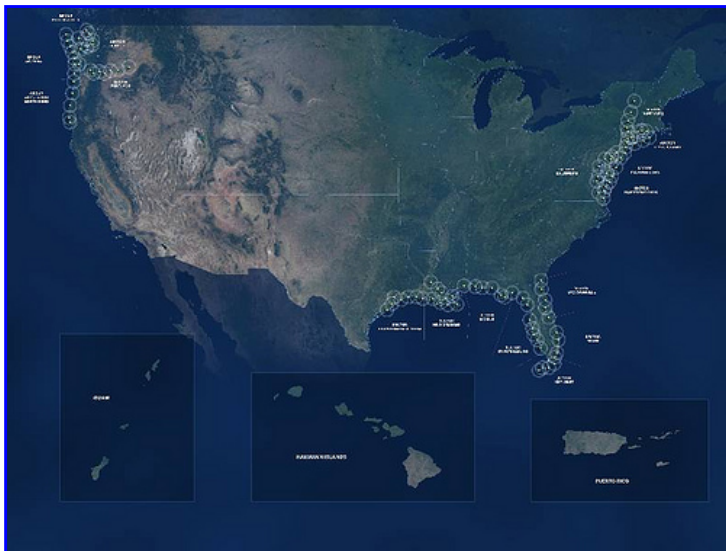
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Monday, February 16, 2009

Rescue-21 Program Review and Update

A couple of comments on an earlier [modernization blog](#) reminded me to post this follow up on the Rescue 21 program:

Last week, along with RADM Wayne Justice and RDML Ron Rabago, I received the annual program review of [Rescue 21](#) and I am pleased to announce that things are going well with the fielding of this critical system.



Here are a few of the program's highlights from 2008:

- 11 new sectors operating on Rescue 21 (bringing the total to 18). This brings the total coastline covered by Rescue 21 to 24,758 miles.
- Rescue 21 was used in more than 4,000 rescue cases.
- Met or exceeded all system availability requirements (which means being available greater than 99.5% of the time.)
- Support to Sector New Orleans for Hurricane Gustav. This included relocating the Sector Watch to OSC Martinsburg, WV and deploying Satellite back-up systems to set up a network bridge to restore the system pending permanent repairs.

This meeting underscored two significant aspects of this program. First, the capability provided to our field commanders through Rescue 21 is saving lives and can't be delivered soon enough. Second, through teamwork and collaboration General Dynamics and the Coast Guard have established a solid technical baseline for this project. As we move forward our goal is to be flexible and adaptable as we deploy these systems in a variety of operating environments to meet the needs of our field commanders and the public we serve. The system is scheduled to be fully deployed along the coasts of the lower 48 and the Great Lakes by 2012.

Posted at [2/16/2009 04:38:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Thursday, February 12, 2009

Cyberspace is the New Frontier -- Guest Post by VADM Nancy Brown, Director, J6, Joint Staff

Shipmates,

I expect this post will prompt some comments and may dive into the discussion. Our good friend VADM Nancy Brown, the Joint Staff J-6 (CIO) , offers the following post.

ADM A

Cyberspace is the New Frontier -- Guest Post by [VADM Nancy Brown](#), Director, J6, Joint Staff

One of the significant actions that took place in 2008 was that DoD declared Cyberspace a warfighting domain. Along with this designation came several challenges, not the least of which is how we maintain freedom of access and movement in a domain that is heavily contested. We know we face sophisticated adversaries in this domain and that they have the same tools as we do. So how do we design a security framework that enhances our freedom of movement rather than restricting it, one that promotes agility and one that takes advantage of the potential power that this domain promises. We must transform how we treat our network from an administrative instrument to that of a multi-mission system capable of operating in both friendly and contested environments. We must learn how to operate within cyberspace to achieve our national objectives, while recognizing that others operate in cyberspace as well. We

successfully operate in the littorals and on the open ocean today because we have made it a point to purposely operate in these waters and not keep our ships in port. Likewise, we need to operate within cyberspace to be an influential element within the domain. It is time that we learn to leverage the web 2.0 tools to our advantage and not shun them as simply the play tools of the young. The answers are not just technical but are more about changing our culture and building trust.

The Joint Staff is actively using Web 2.0 tools to help us accomplish our mission. When we first started using these tools to make ourselves more effective, we found that there were some disagreements over the security of using the tools versus the benefits to be gained from them; we ran into the Cold War mentality that "nothing could be released, until it had been cleared for release." And we continually are faced with the fear that the internet is a dangerous place and so the risk to our networks is too great for us to move freely within. Nevertheless, we chose to begin using them to fully determine the benefits and observe the vulnerabilities associated with their use. We have found that the largest threats to using these tools effectively is not the loss of sensitive data, or the potential for infection, but the lost benefit and cost associated with not sharing information and collaborating. In a world where Cyber is a warfighting domain, we have learned that the "responsibility to share" information demands that we understand the risk, mitigate it and not allow ourselves to overly restrict our movement or access.

Social networking tools provide capabilities that will revolutionize the way we do business. If we make our networks garrisons with impenetrable security boundaries we are denying ourselves a valuable resource that we should embrace. We live in a new world of blogs, wikis, myspace, facebook, google, etc; if we secure ourselves in garrison we will become irrelevant. This world is about not accepting the way we have always done business but building on the power of Web 2.0 and 3.0 and embracing the limitless capabilities they promise.

Every time we have been faced with a new dimension to our operations, we have learned how to change our tactics to succeed, cyberspace requires the same shift from old think to ensure that we gain and maintain the information advantage that we need to win in this environment. Like any advance in technology, either we will become proficient in its use, or our adversaries will.

In the end, we have decided that the benefit from properly using these tools outweighs the risk.

VADM Nancy Brown

Posted at [2/12/2009 04:33:00 PM](#) [6 comments](#) 



Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Coast Guard Cutter Acquisition Updates

Guest Post by RADM Gary Blore (CG-9), Assistant Commandant for Acquisition

The following question came in on our blog regarding the [outcome of the GAO protest](#) on the FRC contract award: "Admiral A substantial increase in installed power, increased displacement and higher speed than the parent all look risky. Are technical warrant holders and ABS as confident in a successful outcome?"

This is a great question, and goes to the very core of being very selective when using a parent craft strategy and ensuring the modifications are technically mature, and in most cases, already demonstrated. The modifications had strict limits in how they could affect displacement and center of gravity, in the case of the Sentinel it was no greater than plus or minus 10 percent displacement and plus or minus 1 percent for center of gravity. A larger, already in production MTU engine was proposed -- adding the shaft horsepower for the increased speed -- after careful calculations on engine room design, hull efficiency, etc. Lastly, the shafts and propellers were actually simplified -- going to a direct drive shaft coupled with a fixed pitch propeller, which is optimized for speed. The Coast Guard Technical Authorities carefully reviewed all the modifications.

Additionally, the government required the involvement of the [American Bureau of Shipping](#) (ABS) and the original designers throughout industry preparations of proposals and modifications to the parent craft to ensure technical risk was minimized. In the case of the Bollinger/Damen selection (Damen, Netherlands, is the designer of the Sentinel), there are examples throughout the world of successful modification of their 40 meter series of patrol boats built outside the Netherlands by non-Damen shipyards.

Update on the Bertholf:

The Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf is currently conducting the underway portion of Combat Systems Ships Qualification Trials (CSSQT). For the next two weeks the cutter will train and conduct live fire and other operational exercises. Prior to the underway portion of the trials the crew successfully completed testing and training events in port.

At the completion of CSSQT, the crew will have demonstrated capability and proficiency in the tactical use of the installed weapon systems.

In addition, the Bertholf will conduct a "tow and be towed" evolution with another cutter. This will allow the Bertholf to test its capabilities for towing a disabled vessel in search and rescue, or an intercepted vessel in law enforcement operations.

Last week I participated in the DoD Blogger's Roundtable to discuss [continuing progress](#) in our acquisition efforts. You can [read](#) or [listen](#) to it. Here are a couple of opinions from others in the discussion: [CGBlog](#) and [Information Dissemination](#).

Posted at 2/11/2009 03:29:00 PM 2 comments



Coast Guard International Ice Patrol -- Relying on Unit Core Values of Partnerships, Improvement and Commitment

"Titanic: How it Really Sank" will be shown at 4pm, 16 Feb on [National Geographic Channel](#). It includes interviews with International Ice Patrol personnel and footage, including a Titanic Memorial Ceremony IIP held in Fairview Lawn Cemetery in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The below provides a little insight into the IIP, its missions and its value.

Guest blog by CDR Scott Rogerson, CO of the International Ice Patrol.

The mission of the [International Ice Patrol \(IIP\)](#) is to monitor the iceberg danger near the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and provide the limit of all known ice to the maritime community. This requires regular aerial reconnaissance of [500,000 square miles of ocean](#); an in-depth understanding of dynamic weather conditions and complex ocean currents; monitoring and predicting the drift and deterioration of thousands of icebergs; transmission of warnings to mariners in a host of different formats; and nearly daily interactions with over 30 organizations and agencies in the United States, Canada, and Europe.



Because we rely heavily on international and national cooperation, Partnerships is the first of our three Core Values. Some of our many key Coast Guard partners are [Air Station Elizabeth City](#), [CAMSANT](#), the [Coast Guard Academy](#) and the [Research & Development Center](#). We also work very closely with the [Canadian Ice Service \(CIS\)](#) and the [U.S. National Ice Center \(NIC\)](#), among many others. In fact, CIS, IIP & NIC collectively form the [North American Ice Service \(NAIS\)](#) and are part of the [International Ice Charting Working Group \(IICWG\)](#), a consortium of the world's ice services.

Change is necessary for Improvement, our second Core Value. IIP is managing three major changes in 2009, which is very exciting. Along with the [Research & Development Center](#) and the [Marine Safety Lab](#), IIP will move from Avery Point in Groton, CT to new facilities near Fort Trumbull in New London, CT in mid-February. Through 2008, we conducted our aerial iceberg reconnaissance with aging HC-130H aircraft with a dual radar system but are transitioning to [HC-130J aircraft](#) with all new sensors for the 2009 iceberg season. And we are an [Atlantic Area](#) unit today but will soon transfer to the [First District](#) as a leading part of Modernization. In short, from where we do the mission, how we do the mission and for whom within the Coast Guard we work will all change this year. These changes and many smaller ones will ultimately result in an improved IIP.

As a small Coast Guard command with just four officers, three civilians and ten enlisted members, IIP executes a major mission for the international maritime community. Commitment, our third Core Value, is absolutely essential. IIP members are committed to the unit mission and to assertively working towards our vision of eliminating the risk of iceberg collision. We understand how critically important it is to provide mariners with the accurate and timely information necessary to keep them safe from icebergs.



HALIFAX, Nova Scotia - Coast Guard Petty Officers David Luke and Kevin Deininger, stationed at Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, N.C., hold wreaths at the 96th Annual Titanic Memorial Service at the Fairview Lawn Cemetery, Tuesday, April 15, 2008. The International Ice Patrol dedicated the wreaths to the sea on Friday, April 18 at the location of the Titanic's sinking. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Charly Hengen)

Did You Know?

- We trace our roots to the tragic loss of RMS Titanic on 15 April 1912 (which we memorialize with great reverence every year) and our mission pre-dates the United States Coast Guard, as two Revenue Cutters patrolled the Grand Banks in 1913.
- Formally established by the first Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention in 1914, IIP continues to operate today under the regulations set forth in SOLAS by the [International Maritime Organization \(IMO\)](#) and U.S. federal statutes codified in Title 46, Section 738a.
- Icebergs still pose a significant threat to mariners in the North Atlantic Ocean, especially when seas are high and/or visibility is low, which is frequently the case. Three different large merchant ships that were not heeding IIP warnings collided with icebergs in 1993; as did a large fishing vessel in 2004.
- Nearly 1,000 icebergs passed south of 48°N and into the transatlantic shipping lanes last year, making 2008 our most active season in the last decade and 14th most active year since 1912.
- The percentage of icebergs that survive the [2-3 year journey](#) from Greenland's glaciers to the Grand Banks is quite small and highly dependent on environmental factors, and as such, is [highly variable from year to year](#).
- IIP has been featured on The Weather Channel and in numerous other national & international broadcasts (e.g., BBC, [CBC](#), CNN, and WNPR).
- We are working with several partners to evaluate the feasibility of iceberg detection by satellite. While great strides have been made, the imagery presently available is not sufficient to replace aerial reconnaissance. However, this is expected to improve dramatically through the next decade with the launches of the RADARSAT Constellation Mission and Sentinel satellites, which may reduce our reliance on USCG aircraft for iceberg reconnaissance.
- An ice-diminished Arctic could result in increased maritime traffic through and especially to the north of our [current OPAREA](#). Indeed, climate change may require an expansion of the current IIP mission as more vessels begin to transit the sea-ice free but iceberg laden waters of Baffin Bay, the Labrador Sea, and the Northwest Passage.
- You can [click here](#) for many Frequently Asked Questions and their answers.

International Ice Patrol -- A Small Unit with a BIG Job!

Posted at [2/11/2009 10:41:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#)

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Monday, February 9, 2009

Coast Guard Working to Clear Mariner Backlog

Guest Post by RDML James Watson (CG-54), Director of Prevention Policy

A little over a year ago the Coast Guard stood up the [National Maritime Center](#) (NMC) to centralize its mariner documentation process to improve customer service. The NMC has achieved notable progress toward this end, including: (Source: [2008 MLD Program Performance.pdf](#))

- Increasing the number of credentials issued by 135%
- Decreasing the average inventory age of applications by 49%
- Reducing cycle time to conduct professional qualification and safety and security evaluations.
- Achieving compliance with [ISO 9001](#).

Despite the mostly positive trends, we have identified a shortfall that is creating a processing backlog and hindering the NMC from serving the merchant mariner as effectively as we would like. Delays are being caused by an increase in the number of physical exams and insufficient medical screening personnel. The medical screening requirement is directly linked to marine safety and based on recommendations from the [National Transportation Safety Board](#).

Measures are being taken to permanently expand the capacity of the medical evaluations branch to prevent the current bottleneck from reoccurring. New full time medical staff positions have been established and solicitations for medical professionals to fill them will be published soon. We expect these new employees to be on board at NMC later this year. Additionally, improvements to the credentialing database have been identified and plans are being prepared to improve the efficiency and quality of screening and evaluation through an electronic workflow system.

In the meantime, the Coast Guard is taking immediate actions to clear the existing backlog, these include.

- Prioritizing renewals to keep working mariners employed. 2,225 credentials have been produced and mailed out since last week. We will return to the first-in-first-out prioritization as soon as the capacity improvements reduce delays enough to prevent credential from expiring.

- Surging Coast Guard active duty, reserve, and Auxiliary medical professionals, as well as Public Health Service and contracted medical personnel to the NMC medical branch to assist. These personnel must be trained to evaluate merchant mariner medical records, so we expect this surge to be at full capacity in about two weeks.

- Conducting aggressive outreach to the maritime public via the call center, NMC website, list server, and over the counter at the RECs. About 40% of medical review delays are due to incomplete documentation or a need for more information about a particular medical condition.

We regret the work disruptions that may have resulted from the current bottleneck in the medical evaluation portion of the credentialing process. Fortunately, we have seen cycle time improvements elsewhere in processing mariner credentials. The NMC processed 36,000 credentials in the last six months, of those, more than half met the NMC's goal of reducing processing time to thirty days. We expect to see our overall cycle time statistics reach a new higher performance plateau when these medical enhancements kick in at full capacity.

Looking forward, the Coast Guard and the NMC are committed to continuing improvement in our marine safety mission and service to the commercial mariner. It is [our vision](#) that the NMC will become a model of e-government, leveraging technology to better serve the public.

Posted at [2/09/2009 03:54:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#) 



Coast Guard Modernization Update -- C4IT Service Center Ribbon Cutting

Guest Post by VADM Cliff Pearson, Chief of Staff.

Shipmates,

Today, I was joined by ADM Allen and Congressman Jim Moran at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Coast Guard Command, Control Communications, Computers and Information Technology Service Center (C4IT SC) held at the Coast Guard Telecommunication and Information Systems Center (TISCOM) in Alexandria, VA. Today's event represents the third in a series of five new mission support entities to stand-up this spring that will provide centralized, bi-level support to power Coast Guard mission execution. This marks another significant step towards the functional realignment of the mission support organization.



We were joined by [Mr. Mark Powell](#), who I assigned as the first Director of the C4IT SC. I have every confidence in his ability to lead the organization through its transition to full establishment by June 1st, 2009, and integrate our Service's enterprise applications, decision, communications, navigations systems, and IT Infrastructure into the Coast Guard Business model for Logistics transformation.

Upon full establishment, more than 3,000 people in the C4IT SC will execute an annual budget of over \$300M to provide C4IT services in support of Coast Guard missions. Managing a diverse portfolio of services and systems ranging from enterprise computers and applications, maritime and intelligence sensors, and integrated knowledge and information systems, the C4IT SC has the lead to ensure interoperability with other DHS agencies, the Department of Defense, and numerous State and Local agencies and Port Partners. They will provide "one stop shopping" for all Coast Guard technology requirements.

The C4IT SC, [Surface Forces Logistics Center](#), [Asset Project Office](#), [Aviation Logistics Center](#), with the two remaining planned logistics and service centers (Shore Infrastructure Logistics Center and Personnel Service Center) will unify logistics support enterprise-wide, forming the backbone of our improved mission support organization for sustainable mission execution excellence. In the future these logistics and services centers will embody the following four guiding principles of the proven Coast Guard business model: Bi-level maintenance, Configuration Management, Single point of accountability through [Product Line Managers](#), and Total Asset Visibility. By modernizing our business processes and organizational design, we will help to ensure the Coast Guard meets our call to be "Always Ready."

Visit our [modernization website](#) for more details.

Posted at [2/09/2009 02:45:00 PM](#) [6](#) comments 

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Welcome our SELs to the blogosphere

Shipmates,

Welcome [Master Chiefs Bowen and Smith](#), our Active and Reserve Senior Enlisted Leaders, to the blogosphere. The [purpose of their blog](#) is:

to be a forum where "deckplate" issues affecting the active duty and reserve workforce can be discussed freely (well...somewhat freely, within the bounds of the ground rules stated below). We intend to focus on topics important to mission executors/mission supporters around the organization. Sometimes we will post observations/thoughts/ideas surrounding Coast Guard issues, policies, missions, careers and family life. And sometimes we'll just talk about where we have been, what we've been doing, or Coast Guard people and units we've met along the way.

I look forward to following the discussion.

ADM A

Posted at [2/09/2009 02:10:00 PM](#) [2](#) comments 

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Saturday, February 7, 2009

Coast Guard Mass Rescue on Lake Erie: Update

Ninth District Commander, RADM Peter Neffenger provides an update on today's mass rescue on his new [blog](#).

Posted at [2/07/2009 08:32:00 PM](#) [1](#) comments 

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Coast Guard Mass Rescue on Lake Erie

Shipmates,

We are currently responding to a mass rescue case in Western Lake Erie between Sandusky and Toledo, OH. The exact location is [Locust Point](#). While no one in danger at this point, we have an estimated 300-500 ice fishermen that have been stranded on a floe that separated and drifted offshore due to a shift in the wind. I have been briefed by our Atlantic Commander, VADM Bob Papp, and all available assets are being diverted to the case. The local commander is Rear Admiral Pete Neffenger who is headquartered in Cleveland.

Helos are being provided from our Air Stations in Detroit and Traverse City, Michigan to support our local search and rescue stations in Marblehead, Belle Isle, St. Clair, and Toledo. Additionally we are dispatching a C130 fixed wing aircraft from Elizabeth City, NC to provide overhead coverage and comms relay. Finally, our Great Lakes icebreaker MACKINAW is enroute to assist.

ADM A

Posted at [2/07/2009 01:29:00 PM](#) [2 comments](#)



Friday, February 6, 2009

Coast Guard Reserve Officer Association Awards

This week I was privileged to participate in the Reserve Officer's Association Annual Coast Guard Reception and recognize some of our outstanding Reservists and Reserve Programs.

I presented the Waesche Award, recognizing the District and Integrated Support Command that demonstrated the greatest commitment to Reserve Readiness, to the Eighth District and ISC's New Orleans and St. Louis. Particularly impressive were the strides made to increase the readiness of the District's reserve force and the efficient use of the new Mobilization Readiness Tracking Tool. Additionally, ISC St. Louis sponsored small boat training that resulted in increased numbers of qualified reserve coxswains and reserve boat crewmembers. ISC New Orleans' effective management of its RT appropriation resulted in increased qualifications of coxswains, crew, and boarding team members as well as increased attendance at anti-terrorism training and leadership and management schools. These examples effectively reinforced the district's reserve force as indispensable in managing day to day and surge mission requirements.



[ROA Awards](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

LT Davide Cripe, Sector San Francisco was recognized as the Coast Guard Reserve Outstanding Junior Officer. LT Cripe demonstrated exceptional leadership abilities that strengthened working relationships between enlisted and officer personnel. His participation in three OCS Accession boards imparted knowledge and leadership examples to future Coast Guard officers. LT Cripe served as PACREA's Planning Section Chief for the successful Rim of the Pacific Maritime Exercise. In civilian life, he serves as a fire department rescue swimmer where he is also responsible for training for the 20-member team. In that capacity, he regularly works closely with Coast Guard Commands, State and Local Civic and rescue agencies. LT Cripe is active in his community as a school board president and as a volunteer coach where he teaches 70 low income and diverse young men and women. He received the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal and was recently selected for the DHS Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service.

CWO Michael Reilly was recognized as the first-ever Coast Guard nominee for the CW4 Michael J. Novosel Award for the Reserve Officers Association Outstanding Warrant Officer of the Year Award. This award has been given since 2001, but this is the first year the Coast Guard has competed for it.

Thank You to all of our Reserve Guardians, their families, and their employers who enable them to volunteer their service to our nation.

Posted at [2/06/2009 04:40:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



Thursday, February 5, 2009

National Security Cutter Fatigue Life Assessment

Guest Post from Mr. Jeffery Orner, Deputy Assistant Commandant for Engineering and Logistics (CG-4)

The Navy's Surface Warfare Center, Carderock Division (NSWC-CD) recently completed its review of planned fatigue design enhancements for the Legend Class National Security Cutter (NSC). Fatigue is the accumulation, across the structure of a ship, of cyclic loads (stress) due to waves that may manifest over time as small cracks. NSC fatigue design enhancements were developed by the dedicated professionals at the Engineering Logistics Center (ELC) and afterwards, the Coast Guard paid with the Naval Sea Systems Command's (NAVSEA's) NSWC-CD to provide an independent assessment of those designs. A report outlining NSWC-CD's findings was provided to the Coast Guard on January 30, 2009 by NAVSEA. See the NSWC-CD letter here: [/NSCAssessment.pdf](#)

To conduct this analysis, NSWC-CD used advanced computer fatigue modeling software which led to two main conclusions. First, NSWC-CD determined that the Coast Guard's planned modifications to the hulls of NSCs three through eight will be adequate to achieve the desired 30-year fatigue life. NSWC-CD also identified the need for improvement in several localized areas, which the Coast Guard will review. Second, the report identified that major fatigue life improvements will result from modifications planned to be retrofitted on BERTHOLF and WAESCHE (NSC #1 & #2, already constructed), however there remain two areas that are still modeling a less than 30-year fatigue life. Consequently, NSWC-CD recommends more data be gathered for those areas to better validate the proposed modifications.

The Coast Guard is reviewing the findings identified by NSWC-CD, comparing them with the planned operational profile of the NSC, and will address those issues prior to implementing any related design solution. We plan to

continue collaboration with NAVSEA in the future to conduct further analysis and may employ them to re-validate any potential design changes that may result from this report.

Because fatigue life assessment is an evolving science, the Coast Guard is partnering with an international consortium of shipbuilding industry experts and certification agencies, such as the American Bureau of Shipping and the Netherlands Maritime Research Institute, through an innovative program to advance technology in this complex field. This project will combine sophisticated data-gathering techniques employed on CGC BERTHOLF with industry-pioneering model testing to improve the ability of shipbuilders worldwide to analyze and estimate fatigue life. CGC BERTHOLF has already been outfitted with strain gauges and other sensors to measure actual fatigue stresses experienced while in an operational capacity and this data will be used to improve the methods for fatigue modeling. With what we've learned so far and will learn in the near future, I look forward to our results making a difference in the field of fatigue life assessment and in shipbuilding.

Once final design updates for BERTHOLF and WAESCHE are complete, upgrades will be made within the first three to five years of operations.<

Posted at [2/05/2009 09:19:00 PM](#) [3 comments](#) 



Tuesday, February 3, 2009

My Best Day at CGHQ

Guest Post by Command Master Chief Kevin Isherwood on his [recent meeting with the other Service Senior Enlisted Leaders and President Obama](#).

The Senior Enlisted Leaders (SEL), SMA Army Kenneth Preston, SgtMaj Marine Corps Carlton Kent, CMSgt Air Force Rodney McKinley, MCPON Rick West, and I were driven from the Pentagon to the White House. Upon arrival at the White House gate we were escorted through security and into the Roosevelt Room. Mr. Mark Lippert (National Security Council Chief of Staff) met us and provided a pre-brief of what to expect. The major take away was, President Obama wants to hear from us and wants it straight. No policy droning, a true discussion of what is impacting your folks is the goal.

National Security Advisor General Jones entered the room, greeted us and asked each of us about our careers then engaged us in other small talk. A short while later, Vice President Biden and Secretary of Defense Gates entered the Roosevelt Room and welcomed each of us. The Vice President asked each SEL how long they have served the people of United States. He thanked us for our dedicated service and mentioned that there would be no line for us, we all will go straight to heaven for our service to the Nation. I was last to share my time in service with the Vice President, being the most junior by two years, I responded, "unlike my colleagues, I have only 27 years in and have not yet decided if I would make a career of it". This got a good laugh and shifted the topic down memory lane for the Vice President's and Secretary's first visits to the White House. President Richard Nixon was in office for the Vice President's first visit, President Lyndon Johnson was in office for the Sec. Gate's first visit. The Vice President unnecessarily mentioned to us, that no matter how many times, you enter the Oval Office you are AWED!! I say, "Unnecessarily", because we were all sufficiently AWED getting the invite. We all continued to talk and joke until the "DOOR" opened and with the light from the Oval Office streaming into the Roosevelt room, everyone became instantly silent and attentive. WOW!!

We single filed in where we were each warmly greeted by President Obama with a good hand shake, a thanks for your service and a welcome to the Oval Office. The President asked us to sit on the two couches facing each other, he and the Vice President sat in chairs at one end of the two couches, General Jones and Secretary Gates sat in chairs at the opposite ends of the two couches.

The President explained that he wanted to discuss issues impacting our forces and wanted to hear from each of us. He mentioned that he had already heard from the service chiefs and now wants the unvarnished versions from his SELs. The President assured the group that this would not be the only meeting with the SELs so we should not think that this was our one and only shot at speaking to the President.

I was the third to speak, following the CMSgtAF and SMA. I have tried to capture from memory the conversations. As you can imagine it is pretty overwhelming just to sit in the Oval Office and IMPOSSIBLE to concentrate enough to take notes. Here goes, "Mr. President thank you for the invitation. I am not the Coast Guard's SEL, I have the honor of standing in for MCPOCG Bowen who is at the far NW corner of the United States visiting Coast Guard Station Neah Bay. It was impossible for MCPOCG Bowen to get back in time for this meeting. Typically when I am asked to play the fill in roll, it has not been for something this prestigious. Again, thank you for the opportunity."

"Mr. President, you and the CG share the same birthday August 4th. Each year we celebrate our service's birthday at every unit throughout the Coast Guard. You are always welcome to stop by ANY unit for a piece of cake." I then mentioned that I understood that he was an avid runner and Basketball player and with his permission I would like to give him an early birthday gift from the Coast Guard. I presented him one of our proto-type grey high performance fabric retro-reflective PT gear t-shirts bearing the CG emblem on the front and "Coast Guard" on the back. He lit up and said, "This is great, I will wear it proudly, you and I will later get a picture together with the T-shirt".

Moving to the Coast Guard issues, I acknowledged and concurred with each of my previous colleagues concerns. I then shared that generally speaking, our Coast Guard sailors are happy and their morale is high but, they are tired and spread thin. They are tired because they are consumed with maintaining and repairing 40 and 50 year old ships, while still meeting our expanding mission demands.

I suggested he could help us by supporting our Coast Guard recap initiatives submitted through the Secretary of

Homeland Security. I also mentioned that as border security issues are discussed in the future, to be mindful of the water borders and the huge maritime piece that goes along with the land side. I pointed out that the Coast Guard is his primary maritime border security provider and we need to be sure that our Coast Guard personnel strength continues to grow commensurate with our expanding mission sets so that we can meet mission requirements when our country needs us.

The SgtMajMC spoke next followed by MCPON.

The common threads of interest that the President pulled on were Work-Life type issues, asking specific questions about what types of support services that we each have to offer our forces and their families. The President said that Mrs. Obama was interested in supporting these initiatives too and plans to meet with the SELs spouses.

The Vice President, asked about post deployment aftercare programs and about a "tough guy" syndrome. Basically, he was wondering if there was a negative stigma attached to folks returning from deployments and being reluctant to ask for help. Each SEL discussed their specific service's approach. We all agreed that we have come a long way since the "Suck it up sailor/soldier" mantra of our early careers. I brought up our Ombudsman program as a resource that identifies potential issues. Often times the member may be silent to their supervisor regarding issues but, their spouses will share with the Ombudsman issues that are negatively impacting the homefront. The President mentioned, "more often than not, when the spouse at home is happy the member is happy", we ALL agreed. The President reemphasized that he and Mrs. Obama were very interested in family health and happiness issues and were strong supporters of Work-Life type initiatives.


The President asked about the SEL's congressional testimonies. Each SEL talked about previous testimonies and mentioned kind of the perennial issues. The President said he would like a copy of the issues and to forward them to Mr. Lippert.

Secretary Gates talked extensively about PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury. Each SEL discussed their issues and mediation strategies. I said that Coast Guard has been participating in the DoD discussions and we were appreciative of being included.

The President thanked us all for our input, assured us once again, that this would not be the last meeting with the SELs, and then asked for someone to get the photographer.

We all stood and waited for the photo OP. While mingling there was an opportunity for more small talk. The President seems to like the give and take causal interaction. So I asked the President, "Mr. President, since you have been in office, have you noticed a vast improvement in your offensive game on the Basketball court?" Without hesitation he said NO WAY, they ALL know that if I "get them" on the court, they will hear about it all day, so everyone plays him hard. CMSgtAF mentioned that they play Basketball at the Pentagon and that the President was welcome to play. The President was skeptical because last time he was asked to play with the military, they sent a bunch of 20 year old ringers. I mentioned to him that he was welcome to play with the Coast Guard's 40 something's Tue and Thurs mornings at Ft. McNair. Then there was a bunch of talking about his cabinet team taking on the SELs. They look big but, I think we can take them ;-)

The photographer arrived and pictures of the President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense and the 5 SELs were snapped. As we were breaking up from the group picture, the President and I posed together with the CG shirt that I had presented him. It was AWESOME my best day yet at CGHQs! I cannot wait to see the pictures.

Posted at [2/03/2009 09:59:00 PM](#) [6 comments](#) 

 Share    

Grounbreaking For New Coast Guard Facilities in New Orleans

Shipmates,

Last Friday I was in New Orleans to participate in the groundbreaking ceremony for two facilities, the new Sector New Orleans complex new Integrated Support Command. These projects are funded through Emergency Supplemental Appropriations provided following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Sector New Orleans:



This complex will house the Sector and consolidate local operational commands currently dispersed throughout the area, including the Bucktown site on Lake Ponchartrain, Marine Safety and Logistics functions currently located downtown, and the Vessel Traffic Service located on Canal Street.

The 53,000 square-foot facility will be built by IKBI, a Native Indian, tribally owned small business, on a 6.64 acre parcel of land in the NW corner of Naval Support Activity West Bank. The property was transferred to the U.S. Coast Guard by an agreement reached with the US Navy, BRAC, Federal City and New Orleans Federal Alliance. The project is currently valued at \$26 million.

Integrated Support Command New Orleans:



Prior to Hurricane Katrina, ISC New Orleans operated out of a facility adjacent to the Inner Habor Navigation Canal (Industrial Canal) on the west bank. That facility was flooded and severely damaged by Katrina. Planning had been underway to relocate the facility before Katrina to accommodate changes to the lock system and bridges on the canal. Following Katrina the ISC set up operations in temporary buildings at the NASA Michoud site in East New Orleans. The new ISC will be constructed on 26 Acres adjacent to the temporary facilities.

Construction will include an 81,000 square-foot Admin and Berthing building, a 49,000 square-foot Industrial/Shipping and receiving building and 7,200 square feet of covered storage. Waterfront facilities consist of a pier, a wharf, and a floodwall gate through which vessels and buoys will be transported to the Industrial building. The contract was awarded to a joint venture of Broadmoor and Boh Brothers and is currently valued at \$76 million.

The groundbreaking ceremony for both sites was conducted ceremonially at the site of the Sector New Orleans construction. This long awaited event marks the beginning of the rebuilding of the Coast Guard in New Orleans.

ADM A

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