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iCommandant

Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

Friday, January 30, 2009

Irish AIS Carriage Requirements

Shipmates,


In previous blog entries I have talked about how [Global Problems Require Global Solutions](#). To that end, individual nations need to enact their own legislation to contribute to the security of the global system. We are having the discussion right now through the development of a [Small Vessel Security Strategy](#) and the [Notice of Proposed Rule Making](#) for expanded Notice of Arrival and Departure and Automatic Identification System carriage requirements.

This is not a discussion limited to the United States. Last week I received the following from my friend and colleague, Chris Reynolds. Chris is my partner with the Irish Coast Guard. The attached document, [IrishAISRegs.pdf](#), is a copy of the announcement for the carriage requirements for AIS contained within Ireland's Merchant Shipping (Safety of Fishing Vessels) (15 – 24 metres) Regulations.

The ongoing effort to create better visibility within our ports and coastal approaches of small vessels continues, as does our effort to improve the safe operation of commercial fishing vessels.

Some of our partners have made considerable progress.

ADM A

Posted at [1/30/2009 06:24:00 PM](#) [11 comments](#) 



Foreign Military Sales -- 200 Vessels Delivered

Yesterday we celebrated the 200th vessel delivered through our Foreign Military Sales program run by the [Office of International Acquisition](#) in CG-9. The 200th vessel was delivered to Iraq and Brigadier General Ismael Hussain Alsodani, Iraqi Defense Attaché, joined us in the ceremony.

You can read about the value of this program to executing the Cooperative Maritime Strategy on the [U.S. Naval Institute blog](#).



[Foreign Military Sales -- 200 Vessels Delivered](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [1/30/2009 07:36:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 




Wednesday, January 28, 2009

Coast Guard Sentinel-Class and Acquisitions Moving Forward

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

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) today [publicly released its report](#) about its decision on the bid protest of the award of the Sentinel-class patrol boat. As I reported [earlier this month](#), the GAO issued a bid protest decision on January 12 that upheld the U.S. Coast Guard's award of the Sentinel-class Patrol Boat to Bollinger Shipyards, Inc. I don't think I can overstate the importance to the Coast Guard of the GAO upholding this award. While we had every expectation the award would be upheld, in reviewing the GAO decision, I'm proud that the Coast Guard's efforts to [reform acquisition](#) processes have been demonstrated.

The [153-foot Sentinel-class patrol boat](#) will replace the 110-foot Island-class patrol boats, which have reached the end of their 20-year service lives. This contract award is valued at \$88 million. If all options are exercised, the Coast Guard could order as many as 34 cutters on this contract, for a total approximate contract value of \$1.5 billion.

Posted at [1/28/2009 05:46:00 PM](#) [6 comments](#) 



Secretary Napolitano Joins the Blogosphere

I welcome Secretary Napolitano to the [blogosphere](#). When she was here last week we discussed our initial efforts to engage in the social media environment. I think this is one area where you will see the Department become increasingly active.

ADM A

Posted at [1/28/2009 01:56:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Modernization at Work - Cutter Boat MISHAP Averted

The Small Boat Product Line was introduced [here](#) earlier this year. Here is a guest blog by LCDR Matt Lake, Small Boat Product Line Engineering Section Chief, sharing how it is already showing its value to the operators.

On January 16, 2009, CGC SEQUOIA identified a critical safety issue while inspecting lifting gear provided with their recently delivered 24' Cutter Boat - Large (CB-L). During the inspection, SEQUOIA's crew found that the lifting ring, which holds the boat slings and supports the weight of the boat, was stamped with a load rating less than the operating weight of the boat! The crew immediately notified the Contracting Officer Technical Representative in the CG Office of Boat Forces (CG-731), who also notified the Small Boat Product Line (SBPL) and the boat manufacturer. A cursory investigation revealed that the supplier of the lifting gear inadvertently shipped the wrong lift rings to the boat manufacturer.

Within four hours of notification (on a Friday afternoon), the SBPL had released a Message Time Compliance Technical Order (TCTO), mandating inspection of all lifting rings in the fleet delivered with the new 24' CB-Ls. Four cutters reported discrepancies. The SBPL and CG-731 immediately worked together to get replacement lift rings (free of charge from the manufacturer) to these cutters to minimize impact to their operational availability. The astute observations of the CGC SEQUOIA crew, teamwork between CG-731 and the SBPL, and the Message TCTO process averted potentially grave injury to personnel, damage to equipment, and maximized fleet readiness.

As demonstrated in this case, teamwork and strong partnerships among the Office of Boat Forces, Fleet, and Product Line is an important aspect of the Coast Guard's modernization efforts that can be realized even by units that have not yet undergone full Logistics Modernization. Furthermore, the Message TCTO, one of many tools associated with Logistics Modernization, may be applied to all CG units with significant positive impact to safety and mission execution.

Posted at [1/27/2009 07:18:00 PM](#) [8 comments](#) 



Movement Report (MOVREP)

Shipmates,

I was "on the road" yesterday attending two significant events.

Frist, as VADM Pearson posted earlier, we cut the ribbon on the new Surface

Forces Logistics Center and the Asset Product Office.

In addition to the comments provided by VADM Pearson, I would like to

note that we were pleased and honored to have Authorization Subcommittee Chairman, Elijah Cummings, and Representative "Doc" Rostenkowski, a member of the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. The very large crowd that gathered to hear strong statements of support from both Congressmen. Chairman Cummings expressed his support for our interdiction efforts and his desire to quickly pass legislation authorizing our new leadership positions. Representative Rostenburger, a former prosecutor, is extremely interested in our intelligence program and drug interdiction mission. We are scheduling briefs for him at Headquarters in the near future.



[Incoming Merchant Marine Midshipmen who have been selected to become CG officers.](#)

Following the SFLC/APO ceremony in New York City, I spent the remainder of the day at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. I received a number of briefings and was able to visit classrooms and labs. I had a chance to meet the Merchant Marine Midshipmen who will be commissioned as Coast Guard Ensigns following graduation this year.

While the Coast Guard Academy and Merchant Marine Academy compete fiercely on the athletic field, we are strong partners in insuring the efficient, safe, and secure operation of the United States and global maritime transportation system. Our Coast Guard officer assigned to USMMA, LT Hoon Park, has done a super job facilitating our recruiting efforts. As part of our larger Marine Safety Performance Plan, building a competent and diverse workforce is critical to meeting stakeholder expectations and our own performance standards. I also made a quick visit to Station Kings Point and later that evening I addressed the Regiment and local sponsor families.

It was a very productive day.

ADM A

Posted at 1/27/2009 12:26:00 PM [0 comments](#)



Monday, January 26, 2009

Reflections on the Passing of a Coast Guard Icon: Bernard "Bernie" C. Webber - Guest Post by Master Chief Petty Officer Jeff Smith

It was with great sadness that I learned that Bernard "Bernie" C. Webber had passed away this past weekend. I was a little more than 2 months old when Boatswain Mate First Class Bernie Webber and the crew of the motor lifeboat CG36500 from Station Chatham, Massachusetts conducted what has been termed as one of the greatest small boat rescues in Coast Guard history, plucking 32 crewmembers from the stern section of the tanker PENDLETON on February 18, 1952. But his heroics have had a life-long impact on me and many other Coast Guardsmen.



[Bernie C. Webber](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Numerous books have been written recounting the historic rescue to include: Chatham "The Lifeboatmen," by Bernie Webber; "Two Tankers Down," by Robert Frump; and "The Pendleton Disaster Off Cape Cod - The Greatest Small Boat Rescue in Coast Guard History," (second edition) by Theresa M. Barbo with Captain W. Russell Webster, USCG (Ret.). All of these provide an excellent chronicling and first-hand account of the rescue. How Bernie as the coxswain piloted his little craft through seas reported in excess of 60 feet. How Engineman Second Class Andrew Fitzgerald's relentless perseverance kept the 36500's single gas engine running despite conditions which would make that seem impossible. And how Seaman Richard Livesey and Seaman Irving Maske battled the elements to bring aboard 32 survivors and cram them into every conceivable place they could find, including the engine room.

Through my Coast Guard career, the courageous rescue of the PENDLETON by the CG36500 crew, and Bernie Webber himself, intersected my life on more than one occasion. First in June 1976 when I walked onto the grounds of Station Chatham, on a piece of coast on the back side of Cape Code which has been referred to as the "graveyard of ships." I was a newly recruited Port Securityman Third Class, unsure of what was expected, but anxious to learn. In those days the rusting stern section of the PENDLETON could still be seen as you looked southeast from the watch room: a visible reminder of what Bernie and his crew had accomplished some 24 years earlier. Inside the Station, photos of the rescue served - and still do - as a reminder of the significance of what the CG36500 crew accomplished. And although it was not his intent, Bernie had set the standard by which many a Coast Guard coxswain, particularly those at Station Chatham, would measure themselves. I have a signed copy of his book with this simple inscription: "One coxswain to another." Along with my coxswain pin, it is one of my most cherished possessions.

I met Bernie for the first time on June 21, 1982 when the refurbished CG36500 was launched in Rock Harbor, Orleans, Massachusetts. Bernie made the trip north from Florida to participate in the ceremony. I was working for a local newspaper and was fortunate enough to get a front row seat onboard the 36500 as a photographer. Having qualified as a 44' Motor Life Boat coxswain at Chatham two years earlier made it even more special to be in the presence of this legend. I mentioned this to Bernie and he asked me how I liked the 44. I said it was a great boat and I really appreciated its "forgiveness," especially in heavy surf. He broke into a broad grin and said, "I'm glad. Based on

the lessons learned from the PENDLETON, I was involved in the development of the 44. I am happy to hear it's working out alright."

The next time I crossed paths with Bernie was not in person, but the experience was more honoring and humbling than mere words can adequately express. It was Spring 1990 and I had recently been advanced to Chief Petty Officer and just completed the Chiefs Call to Initiation process. When I arrived at Station Chatham to drill in April, the Chiefs onboard, both active and reserve, pulled me aside. Still a bit gun-shy from the Initiation experience, I really didn't know what to expect. Unknown to me, I was about to become a part of the Station Chatham tradition and privilege known as the Passing of the Pins. It was a ceremony which started many years before during which the newest member of Station Chatham to attain the rank of Chief Petty Officer would be given the honor of wearing Bernie's anchors, the actual Chief Petty Officer rank insignia worn by Bernie himself. I was honored to wear these until the next member advanced to Chief. The ceremony was very informal: a few words by the most senior Chief, a few words of congratulations, and hand shakes all around. I will never forget this simplest, yet personally moving experience and the great honor of wearing Bernie's anchors! Did I mention the word "pressure"?

As Admiral Allen says - we will "honor the past, not dwell in it." Based on my personal observations and conversations with Bernie (as recently as three weeks ago) he would be the first to agree with that statement. He always remained a man of today, not yesterday. His actions on that historic night in February 1952 have forever linked Bernie Webber to the long line of Coast Guard Guardians - past, present and future. He leaves a personal legacy of honor, respect and devotion duty, but perhaps even more significant - a legacy of unqualified humility.

Well done, Boats.

Photos available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/uscgpress/sets/72157613022941344/>

Posted at 1/26/2009 06:16:00 PM 7 comments



Coast Guard Surface Forces Logistics Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Guest Post from VADM Cliff Pearson, Chief of Staff.

Shipmates,

Today, I proudly participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Surface Forces Logistics Center (SFLC) and Asset Project Office (APO) held at the historic Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, MD. Today's event represents critical milestones for both the United States Coast Guard's Modernization efforts and the Logistics Transformation Program. We are one step closer to providing centralized, bi-level support to power Coast Guard mission execution.



[Coast Guard Surface Forces Logistics Center Ribbon Cutting Ceremony](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

As announced on January 5th, I assigned Captain Dennis Blackall as the first Commander of the SFLC and Captain Mark Butt as Commanding Officer of the new APO. These outstanding leaders will be instrumental in standing-up these organizations.

The SFLC will provide the Coast Guard's surface fleet, including cutters, ice breakers, and boats, with centralized management of depot level maintenance, engineering, supply, logistics, and information services through 24-hour customer service; and one-stop technical support and assistance for all matters that go beyond the expertise of the unit. SFLC will be responsible for sustaining Coast Guard surface assets for the entire operational life cycle of the asset, from completion of the acquisition phase by the APO, through decommissioning and disposal for all USCG surface forces, including over 200 cutters and over 1,800 small boats. It will manage asset-based mission readiness through centralized product lines executed regionally through detachments geographically remote from the Command location.

The APO is responsible for all aspects of asset logistics, engineering, and operational support until the newly acquired capability has been fully immersed into Coast Guard Operations. The primary roles of the APO are to deliver a complete system capability; determine and manage asset lifecycle costs; provide necessary training to establish product lines; and develop integrated logistics support for assets.

The SFLC, APO, the previously established Aviation Logistics Center (ALC), with the remaining planned logistics and service centers (Shore Infrastructure Logistics Center, C4IT Service 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 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."

Posted at 1/26/2009 01:58:00 PM 6 comments



Friday, January 23, 2009

Secretary Napolitano Visits Coast Guard Headquarters

Shipmates,

It was a true honor yesterday to have Secretary Janet Napolitano, our new Homeland Security and Service Secretary, make her first visit to the Coast Guard just one day after being sworn in by President Obama.

I first met with then Governor Napolitano in our home state of Arizona on Dec. 30. I have since had an opportunity to interact regularly with her and her personal staff. The Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard are in good hands under her watch.



[New DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano visits Coast Guard Headquarters](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

At our meeting yesterday we discussed in detail some more recent Coast Guard events, including the response to the crash of U.S. Air 1549 on the Hudson, and specifically the outstanding response by private industry and local first responders; we discussed the recent success in interdicting self-propelled semi-submersible vessels (4 interdicted by the CBP, U.S. Navy, Coast Guard team in the last three weeks) and the potential to use the new Drug Trafficking Vessel Interdiction Act of 2008 as a prosecution option; and, finally, on the Coast Guard's role, both actively now in support of the Coalition Task Force, and behind the scenes in terms of diplomacy and policy development through the interagency and international community, in countering the piracy challenge off the coast of Somalia.

The Secretary took the opportunity to conduct some Q&A with the DHS Beat reporters, representing approximately a dozen major news outlets. It is clear from watching her and listening to her that we share a common philosophy including a bias for action, transparency, and unity of effort within the Department

Finally, we should recognize that despite the intense external scrutiny given to the transition of the Department of Homeland Security the process has been remarkably collaborative and collegial. Having experienced several transitions in my career the current transition stands apart as best to date.

ADM A

Posted at [1/23/2009 11:20:00 AM](#) [1 comment](#)



Thursday, January 22, 2009

Celebrating CDR Elmer Stone - Guest Post by VADM Vivien Crea

Today, as the Ancient Albatross, a title I wear most proudly as the longest serving Coast Guard aviator on active duty, I would like to recognize the birthday of a true Coast Guard pioneer, Commander Elmer Stone. CDR Stone was born in 1887 and commissioned in the Revenue Cutter Service in 1913. He graduated from Navy flight training in 1916 and was designated Coast Guard aviator number 1 in 1920. CDR Stones list of accomplishments in the early days of aviation are truly remarkable: pilot of the NC-4 on the first ever successful trans-Atlantic flight, he was also centrally involved in the development of the shipboard catapult and arresting gear, and set a world speed record for amphibian aircraft. Truly the well-rounded, Renaissance Coastie exhibiting leadership, innovation, devotion to duty and sheer heroism, CDR Stone also served as executive officer of Coast Guard Cutter MODOC and commanding officer of Coast Guard Destroyer MONAGHAN, both tours occurring after he began his aviation career.

While I want to dispel any notion that Elmer and I actually served together, please, I am not quite that ancient, I do know that CDR Stone more than any single person is responsible for the birth and early development of Coast Guard aviation, and in fact had a profound impact on naval aviation as a whole. As Ancient Albatross # 21, and in my collateral duties as Vice Commandant, I request Coast Guard members of all specialties and particularly those in aviation, take a moment to reflect on CDR Stones remarkable heritage, and be inspired by the enormous impact that one forward-thinking, hard-working individual can have on the entire service and consequently on the nation.

VADM Vivien S. Crea
Vice Commandant
Ancient Albatross #21

Posted at [1/22/2009 08:53:00 PM](#) [0 comment](#)



Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Coast Guard Web Filtering Update

Shipmates,

As I have discussed with you in the past, we operate in a complex and dynamic environment. To maximize our effectiveness and service to the public, we have to simultaneously be as open and transparent as we can, while maximizing the integrity and security of our data networks and sensitive information. This puts us, and particularly our IT experts, in a very complicated position as described by our CIO below.

As an organization, we will continue to exercise creativity and flexibility while finding ways to serve both transparency and security. For example, though twitter is now blocked from use on the Coast Guard Data Network, we recognize the value of that and similar applications in keeping the public informed during critical incidents. Our public affairs program, working with CG-6, will find ways to maintain that capability for specific purposes that support operations without increasing the vulnerability of our network. The use of YouTube is a great example of this. Our release of the video of the "Miracle on the Hudson" through that channel has resulted in an amazing 760,000 views, making it the most viewed video of the day.

Guest Post from RDML David Glenn (CG-6), Chief Information Officer:

Since my [last post](#) regarding social media websites, I have received comments and reviewed the Coast Guard policy on blocking internet websites and would like to provide an update.

As the Coast Guard Chief Information Officer (CIO), I have the responsibility of balancing a computer user's freedom and flexibility with information assurance policies that restrict this access and flexibility in order to manage the risk associated with these activities to ensure data confidentiality and network availability with the Coast Guard networks (CGDN, SIPRNET, etc.). Access and security must be managed and maintained at acceptable levels.

In addition, I have the responsibility to ensure the Coast Guard Information Technology (IT) policies are in accordance with all Federal laws, regulations and policies, including those of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Defense (DoD). While the Coast Guard is a part of DHS, our computer networks connect to DoD networks too, therefore, the Coast Guard IT polices must align with both departments.

We have Coast Guard policies in place that prohibit access to non-operational internet websites because unhindered access exposes the Coast Guard computers and networks to unnecessary avenues of attack. Cyber security is dynamic and continually evolving because people with malicious intent continually seek new ways to exploit vulnerabilities in computers and networks. Therefore, the Coast Guard is continually monitoring and taking necessary actions to protect our computers and networks. In some instances, these actions may be immediate and without any notification to enable the Coast Guard to contain, minimize, or prevent impact to our computers and networks. Malicious media (viruses, malware, phishing, etc.) are constantly being launched from many of the most common and popular recreational websites. Blocking specific recreational websites is a proactive measure to address these threats and provides the Coast Guard a way to enforce our policy on prohibitive activities outlined in [COMDTINST 5375.1 \(Series\), Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment](#), and ALCOAST 091/07. Even with the current policy restrictions, we quarantine and reformat many computers each month due to infections or malware. We will continually address access and security in equal measures and strive to maintain an acceptable balance.

It should be noted that we did review and verify the DHS and the DoD policies on this matter. Our Coast Guard policies are aligned with their prohibited activities. In fact, DHS recently updated the prohibited activities to specifically include restricting social networking websites.

In the near future, the Coast Guard will be deploying the CG Portal. The CG Portal will replace CG Central and the uscg.mil information systems. It will enhance your ability to share information, collaborate and communicate. With CG Portal, you will have many of the internet features available at commercial websites, such as blogs, wikis, discussion forums, feed readers, chat, instant messaging, etc., but in a secure environment that will protect the critical information needed to complete the Coast Guard missions. An ALCOAST announcing the CG Portal deployment will be sent in the coming months.

Posted at [1/21/2009 12:00:00 PM](#) [7 comments](#) 



Tuesday, January 20, 2009

The Inauguration of President Barack Obama

Shipmates,

Pam and I were honored to stand with the President and First Lady as our terrific Coast Guard Band, Honor Guard, Coast Guard Academy, Training Center Cape May, and Coast Guard men and women from across the Nation marched before the reviewing stand at the White House. My special thanks to all who worked with Armed Forces Inaugural Committee to make this event a resounding success. It was in many ways it was a long, cold day for our personnel offset by the emotional heat generated by the uniqueness of the day and the importance that this transition has for all Americans and the World.

The President and Mrs. Obama were gracious and grateful for the security the Coast Guard provides our country. Pam was thrilled as an Illinois native to be with President and First Lady.

I had a chance to speak with Governor Napolitano on the reviewing stand and she is excited and proud to assume her duties as our next Secretary. As Arizona natives the conversation obviously evolved to the Super Bowl and our Cardinals (my Dolphins having been eliminated).

We look forward to working with the new team.

We are headed out to the Commander in Chief Inaugural Ball.

ADM A

Posted at [1/20/2009 07:32:00 PM](#) [4 comments](#)



1969 Inaugural Parade Reunion

Shipmates,

At this morning's brief for the Service Chiefs, Admiral Roughead, General Schwartz and I discovered we had all been part of the 1969 Inaugural Parade for President Nixon, so we took a 40-year reunion photo.

Adm A



1969 Reunion
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [1/20/2009 10:21:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#)



Monday, January 19, 2009

It Is Our Duty

Shipmates,

This afternoon I had the great pleasure to join my fellow service chiefs and Chairman ADM Mike Mullen in honoring those who have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Time after time from each hero we heard the same thing, "I was just doing my job." It was an inspiring event. Now, we have to do our job.

As we departed the luncheon for a meeting at the Department of Homeland Security we drove through Washington, DC. The unprecedented confluence of Martin Luther King Day and the Inauguration of President Elect Barack Obama is having an electrifying effect on our Nation and the Capitol.

There is no denying that change is in the air.

As we passed the Jefferson Memorial and crossed the Mall on 17th Street there were people everywhere. Looking to the left, the World War II Memorial was packed despite the frigid temperatures and crowds could be seen all the way to the Lincoln Memorial. To the right, there was a line at the Washington Monument and we could see a "jumbo-tron" in front of the Capitol over a mile away being tuned up for tomorrow.

In the time it took to cross the Mall I crossed forty-plus years of memories. Not far away a very young Third Class Cadet Thad Allen marched in President Nixon's first inaugural parade in 1969. It was a different time. There were anti-war demonstrations and a "counter" inaugural parade and we were prohibited from being on the Mall in uniform. It was a strange setting.

This was the place where Martin Luther King transformed a national consciousness and the world with his "I have a dream" speech in 1964. Now it was a place of conflict within the consciousness of the country displayed visually for the world.

I understood what Doctor King said when I reported to my first unit in 1971 where I was assigned a Filipino steward. Stewards were not afforded the opportunity to serve in any capacity beyond menial servitude such as cleaning staterooms, doing laundry and cooking meals.


Prior to World War II, stewards were African American. After the war the bias was re-created with enlisted Filipinos. At the Coast Guard Academy we trained Stewards by serving cadets. Thankfully, we broke the chain of servitude and allowed Filipinos to compete for other ratings in the 1970's. Since then I have had the privilege of officiating at ceremonies celebrating the promotion and retirement of many of these former stewards. I call them friends and shipmates.

I thought of that when I crossed the Mall.

Tomorrow we will witness the true genius of our American Constitution and the promise of the American Revolution. I will be there, I will represent you. Barack Obama will be sworn in as our Commander in Chief. My charge and the charge to all men and women who serve in our Coast Guard: stand erect, salute, defend the Constitution, and execute the mission.

Tomorrow I will stand on the steps of the Capitol with our Commander in Chief. He will direct, we will follow. It is my duty, is your duty. Carry it out .. with Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty.

ADM A

Posted at 1/19/2009 07:35:00 PM 2 comments 



Friday, January 16, 2009

Ferries to the Rescue for USAir Flt 1549

Guest Blog by [RDML James Watson](#) (CG-54), Director of Prevention Policy

My hat is off to the civilian captains who helped save 155 lives Thursday. The pilot's masterful job of landing a powerless Airbus A320 in the Hudson River is being called a miracle. But, the rest of this miracle story involves the readiness and responsiveness of the New York and New Jersey ferry and excursion vessel captains.

On CGDN click [here](#)

Flight 1549 passengers streamed onto the sinking jet's wings as soon as they could get the door opened - desperate to be rescued from the frigid water. The first ferry arrived in less than 5 minutes and began the remarkably orderly rescue operation of all 155 passengers and aircrew. At least three Good Samaritan passenger vessels were on scene before the Coast Guard and other rescue agencies arrived.

This rescue involved more than luck. The professionalism and dedication of the captains and their crews was essential. Also, the ferry and excursion boat company owners who supported the Coast Guard's annual interagency mass rescue planning and exercises were remarkable. Finally, the New York Vessel Traffic System controllers, using Coast Guard remote cameras and radio communications, were able to maintain the calm control which is so important in emergency situations.

It's notable that news reporters beyond New York have commented on this rescue capacity in other port cities. I encourage all of our nation's ferry and excursion captains to be ready. New York has once again set a fine example for every professional mariner to follow.

James Watson, Rear Admiral, USCG
Marine Safety, Security, Stewardship
Director, Prevention Policy (CG-54)


Posted at 1/16/2009 08:05:00 PM 1 comments 



Photo Blog -- Rescue Response to Miracle on the Hudson

Great interagency and Good Samaritan effort to rescue 100% of the passengers and crew from yesterday's plane crash in the Hudson River. Coast Guard small boat and helicopter crews working for Sector New York accounted for 35 rescues.

Worth noting the brand new 45-foot RB-M actively participated in this case and can be seen in this photo set.



Coast Guard Response to Miracle on the Hudson
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [1/16/2009 12:51:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#)



Coast Guard Modernization: Modernizing How we Work

Guest Post from VADM Cliff Pearson, Chief of Staff.

In my recent posts ([17 December](#) and [20 December](#)), I discussed how Coast Guard Modernization will develop new organizational structures (Logistics and Service Centers) and work processes (bi-level service delivery and product lines) to provide life-cycle support for all of our assets, including personnel, ships, planes, shore facilities, and information technology. The DCMS organization will have common, consistent, and well-documented work processes CG-wide.

Understanding that people are our most important asset, I challenged the Modernization teams to develop new human resources management strategies to complement our new organizations and processes and minimize potential impacts on our workforce. It is imperative we modernize our human resource practices along with our organization and business processes to achieve the best results. One such human resource management practice being studied and developed is the Geographically Dispersed Work Force (GDWF) concept.

To find out more information concerning our Mission Support use of the [Geographically Dispersed Work Force](#) management practice, I invite you to the Coast Guard's [Modernization page](#).

Posted at [1/16/2009 10:00:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#)



Thursday, January 15, 2009

Aircraft Ditching

Shipmates,
Experimenting with social media.

Just left the Command Center and conference call with Sector New York. If you are following on television you can see that we have a number of small boats on scene as well as CGC RIDLEY. Passengers are being transported to Chelsea Piers where we are trying to account for all on board. I just briefed Secretary Chertoff and he is fully aware of the extent and status of the operation. We continue to monitor operations. Our personnel are responding in a professional manner and we can all be proud.

ADM A

Posted at [1/15/2009 04:40:00 PM](#) [2 comments](#)



Coast Guard's James Cavo gCaptain's "Top Contributor 2008"

I congratulate Mr. James (JD) Cavo, our Chief, Mariner Training and Assessment Division at the [National Maritime Center](#), for his outstanding commitment to customer service as represented by his recognition as the "Top Contributor 2008" by the gCaptain community. [gCaptain.com](#) is a site that brings the tools of web 2.0 to the commercial mariner and logs approximately 24,000 unique visits per week.

One of the features of the site is the discussion forums where mariners can come and ask a variety of questions, including those related to licensing. Mr. Cavo recognized that this was a popular gathering place for his customers and

professionally, actively and effectively participated in the discussion in order to enhance customer service in his area of responsibility. Read the letter: [JDCavo.pdf](#)

Mr. Cavo is just one person out there doing great things in the social media environment for the Coast Guard and those we serve. In the e-mail I received recognizing Mr. Cavo, gCaptain's CEO, John Konrad stated, "We are really excited by the level of commitment the CG has devoted to assisting the mariner via social media. Next year we'll be sure to open voting for "Top Organization" as I'm sure the CG would achieve top ranking."

Keep up the great work.

Posted at 1/15/2009 02:21:00 PM 0 comments 



Secretary Chertoff's Departure Message

Shipmates

Below is Secretary Chertoff's departure message for all hands. On Tuesday this week the Secretary visited Coast Guard Headquarters (Click here for video: [YouTube, CGVI](#)) and we had a chance to say farewell. We are working with Secretary Chertoff and Secretary designate Napolitano to schedule a symbolic ceremony on the transfer of responsibility as the Coast Guard Service Secretary.

Secretary Chertoff and I shared many memorable moments including the 4-8 watch on the HEALY off Point Barrow, working through the surf in a motor lifeboat near Peacock Spit at Cape Disappointment, the BERTHOLF commissioning, and working together following Hurricane Katrina. We wish him well.

We look forward to introducing Governor Napolitano to her Coast Guard and having her visit our units.

The transition continues very smoothly and we look forward to the Inauguration next week.

ADM A

MEMORANDUM FOR: Department of Homeland Security Employees

FROM: Michael Chertoff
SUBJECT: Leaving the Department

As we enter a new year and as this Administration draws to a close, I want to offer my profound thanks to each and every one of you for your dedicated service to this Department and to our Nation.

Over the past four years, I have been honored to serve alongside you and share the rewards and challenges that we've faced together; carrying out one of the most important functions a government can provide - protecting its citizens.


I will look back fondly on my time as Secretary and recall the many people I've met along the way - standing watch at the border, helping those displaced by disasters, screening passengers and cargo at airports, or patrolling our ports and waterways. And, of course, I'll never forget the people who, like me, answered a call to serve during one of our Nation's most trying times in history.

If you think back to the autumn of 2001 and remember what we all felt - as citizens, mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters - and then acknowledge where we are today, I think you'll agree that we've made dramatic and, in some cases, astounding progress. It is a testament to your efforts and to those working with us that our Nation has not been attacked since this Department was established.

But as you know, our mission is not complete. There are still threats we must contend with every day and vulnerabilities that we must address. As the new Administration transitions into office, I know you will continue to carry out your mission with the same vigor, dedication, and commitment that I've seen these past four years.

I am truly honored to call each of you my colleagues and will leave my post knowing that you are protecting our fellow citizens with the resolute determination to never let another 9/11 happen again.

Thank you. Good luck and God bless.

Posted at 1/15/2009 10:07:00 AM 0 comments 



Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Updated and Bumped: BZ to Congress

The interagency counter-drug effort [finished 2008 and started 2009](#) with the remarkable interdictions of three self-propelled semi-submersibles in just 8 days. In each case, the smugglers scuttled their vessels and contraband, but thanks to the new legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President, that may not matter.

CNN.com story: [Smugglers sink 'drug subs,' but not feds' case](#)

I am scheduled to do a live interview at 5:30 this evening on [CNN.com](#)

[Video Statement \(CGDN Users Click Here\)](#)


Originally posted Sept. 30, 2008: BZ to Congress for passing Senate bill [3598](#) and identical House bill 7099.

Back in July I described the increasing threat of the SPSS in the [DHS Leadership Journal](#). Then, two weeks ago we had the interdiction of two separate vessels, carrying approximately [15-tons of cocaine](#). Just yesterday, CDR Naron participated in the [DoD Bloggers Roundtable](#) to discuss this topic.

This new legislation enhances our enforcement options in dealing with the increasingly significant threat posed by self-propelled semi-submersibles (SPSS). Rather than having to collect evidence in order to prosecute, a particularly dangerous and daunting requirement when dealing with SPSS vessels, now it is illegal to operate one of these crafts if it is not registered or documented with a nation. The potential penalty is 15 years in prison and \$1 million.

This is a great step forward and the entire counter-drug community is committed to keeping the pressure on the smugglers.

Related Posts: [Presidential Meeting on Reduced Drug Use in the United States](#)

Posted at [1/14/2009 04:20:00 PM](#) [2 comments](#) 



UPDATED: My New Year's Resolution: Replace the Word Coastie with Guardian

This [story](#) is a great example by Station Lorain's OIC, Chief Seth Tomas, of taking the [Guardian Ethos](#) to heart and employing it as both a communication and leadership tool:

"The guardian ethos is the essence of today's Coast Guard. Our core values remain focused on saving lives and protecting both people and the environment," said Chief Seth Tomas, officer-in-charge of Station Lorain. "My crew responded because their commitment to being 'guardians' would not allow them to sit idle while this swan froze to death in the ice."

Well Said!

My New Year's Resolution: Replace the Word Coastie with Guardian
Captain Cari B. Thomas
Commanding Officer, Training Center Cape May
(excerpts from an article for CGA Alumni Association Bulletin)

Ask ten people on the street or at boot camp what the Coast Guard does, and you'll likely get ten different answers. Many want to save lives because they saw the rescues during Katrina. Others want to pursue interests in law enforcement. Often they want to clean up and preserve the environment. Most acknowledge the desire to serve their communities and their country.

At the direction of the Commandant of the Coast Guard and in partnership with the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard in 2007, Training Center Cape May was charged with refining the curriculum for enlisted recruits in order to better internalize the Coast Guard culture, character and core values...unifying our service character.

One outcome was the development of an organizational identity, now known as "[The Guardian Ethos](#)". It defines our service culture and characterizes each member of the Coast Guard as a Guardian. But, in the end, this ethos will prove an enduring way to think, manage, follow and lead. These are not just words, nor are they the latest management fad. This ethos is intended to shape how people conduct themselves in performing the mission and taking care of each other.

The Guardian Ethos as a Communication Tool

With external audiences, the ethos can be a powerful way to make a point, particularly in the conduct of Coast Guard operations. The Atlantic Area Commander used it in response to an editorial in the [Washington Post](#):

When the Coast Guard asks its young men and women to operate in an often unsafe maritime environment, they will be equipped with the tools needed to keep them safe, including boots and, at times, weapons. When they board a vessel, they will do so professionally and in keeping with our ethos -- to protect, defend and save those in distress. They risk their lives every day to save our fellow citizens, even ungrateful ones.

The Guardian Ethos as a Leadership Tool; "Guardians for Guardians"

Admiral Allen challenged senior leaders to consider the Guardian Ethos not only for the maritime public that we serve, but to protect, defend and save our own. As one Chief says, its a "Guardians for Guardians" philosophy. Its a tool that has been effective at Captain's Mast to reinforce failure to abide by the ethos.

There are [28 leadership competencies](#); these are the skills, knowledge and expertise that the Coast Guard expects from its leaders. Each of the competencies require different levels of ability at different paygrades, and they are broken into four major categories: Leading Self, Leading Others, Leading Performance and Change, Leading the Coast Guard. If you frame each category with a Guardian Ethos lens, you begin to understand what it means.

The Guardian Ethos as a Management Tool

As part of the 2008-2011 Commander's Intent for Cape May, the need for Coast Guard and recruit modernization was framed within the context of the Guardian Ethos.

I serve the citizens of the United States.

- Through the various modernization efforts, we commit to supporting the ongoing business processes alignments. So that limited resources are applied to the highest priorities, the strategic underpinnings identify methods to properly source funds and manpower to strategy.

I will protect them.

- The World is changing. The Coast Guard has a need to remain relevant around the world and the variety of international maritime partners, organizations and trade agencies that we deal with. Part of the Commandant initiative regarding modernization includes providing the right forces for the right mission. Mission requirements begin with the most junior personnel who perform much of the difficult duties at the deckplate.

I will defend them.

- As a Coast Guard, we have global imperatives that demand our attention, including asymmetric threats. Providing members proper conditioning, understanding a sense of urgency and basic attention to detail are of the utmost importance. Interagency relationships, relevant authorities with law enforcement, Department of Defense, intelligence agencies and maritime safety partners all influence individual outcomes.

I will save them.

- As a service, we were incapable of focusing on readiness issues due to the "Tyranny of the present." This strategy is one effort to focus on needs of both today and tomorrow's Coast Guard. The enlisted workforce is a critical national asset to DHS and to the country; we understand the need to operate with the clearest objectives.

I am their Shield; for them I am Semper Paratus.

- Mission execution remains our highest priority. Preparing Guardians that have basic training, are properly conditioned with an understanding of our core values is Training Center Cape May's part of completing that mission.

The Guardian Ethos...In the Cabin, the Wardroom, the Mess and on the Mess Deck

In an op-ed piece in May 2008, Admiral Allen said about the ethos, "This is really the essence of the Coast Guard today, though it dates back to the days when the Coast Guard was the Steamboat Inspection Service, the Revenue Cutter Service, the Life Saving and Lighthouse Services...And our core values remain focused on saving lives and protecting both people and the environment. We will always be America's Maritime Guardian."

Our biggest challenge remains educating our existing workforce and providing consistent infusing of the ethos. It was born at Cape May following the need to "refine their curriculum to support the development of a more physically fit apprentice who had internalized the CG's culture, character and core values as depicted in Publication 1."

However, this is not an enlisted ethos. Academy cadets and Officer Candidates recite the Guardian Ethos. But, for full cultural ownership, saturation of the ethos is required. Evaluations, both officer and enlisted should be updated to reflect both abiding by and teaching the ethos. Place the Guardian Ethos on the servicewide examination. Changes of command and changes of watch should all include the ethos. Leadership curriculums and the various leadership competencies require changes. Perhaps we commission a Guardian Class of ships.

In general, absent the presence of the ethos in the cabins of the CO/OINCs, wardrooms, Chief's Mess and mess decks across the Coast Guard, it will never completely infuse itself into the hearts and minds of all our service members and those who succeed us. Make a New Year's resolution to replace the word Coastie with the word Guardian in your vocabulary. Remember, we are Guardians. All of us.

Posted at [1/14/2009 08:38:00 AM](#) [6 comments](#) 

Labels: [Leadership](#)



Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Passenger Vessel Association Meeting 10 Jan 2009

Shipmates,


I recently met in San Francisco with the [Passenger Vessel Association](#). PVA represents the "non-foreign cruise ship" passenger vessel industry. I previously met with PVA in 2007 at their meeting in Charleston, SC. This is a very important partnership for the Coast Guard. Many PVA members are small businesses that represent the maritime culture of their operating areas including dinner cruises, water taxis, charter cruises, and ferries. In many ways they are the private sector "face of the port" in much the same way that our coastal stations are the face of the Coast Guard.

I met with the executive leadership of PVA and then addressed their general membership, taking questions in both fora. The topics addressed included the transition to the Transportation Worker Identification Card (TWIC), biometrics, licensing, proposed changes to water discharge permits (overboard discharges), potential changes in weight standards for passengers in assessing capacity and stability of vessels carrying passengers for hire, automated identification systems (AIS), wind farms, and ballast water management (invasive species).

If I were to summarize the most significant theme from our discussions it would their desire for the federal government to be able to assess the collective impact of regulations on small passenger vessel operations. In fact, they raised a good point. We tend to look at a particular rule (regulation) in a stovepipe related to the cause for action or statutory mandate. I have asked our marine safety folks to take a look at this.

We appreciated the hospitality and the honest, open feedback as we continue to implement improvements in our Marine Safety program.

ADM A

Posted at 1/13/2009 04:57:00 PM [6 comments](#) 



New Presidential Arctic Region Policy

On January 9, 2009, the President signed the Nation's new Arctic Region Policy, [National Security Presidential Directive 66/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 25](#). This document, which replaces the Arctic section of PDD-26, establishes comprehensive national policies that recognize the changing environmental, economic, and geopolitical conditions in the Arctic and re-affirms the United States' broad and fundamental interests in the region. The Directive takes into account altered national policies on national defense and homeland security, the effects of global climate change and increased human activity in the region, as well as a growing awareness that the Arctic is both fragile and rich in natural resources.

NSPD 66/HSPD 25 specifically establishes that it is the policy of the U.S. to:

- Meet national security and homeland security needs relevant to the Arctic region
- Protect the Arctic environment and conserve its biological resources
- Ensure that natural resource management and economic development in the region are environmentally sustainable
- Strengthen institutions for cooperation among the eight Arctic nations
- Involve the Arctic's indigenous communities in decisions that affect them
- Enhance scientific monitoring and research into local, regional, and global environment issues.

The development of these policies was a collaborative effort involving myriad stakeholders and, in many ways, marks the first step in the United States taking an active role in the region. Much work remains to be done and we look forward to working closely with our partners at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels, the Arctic nations, appropriate international forums, and the private sector to develop the requirements, action plans, and best mix of resources needed to implement these policies. The following highlights just a few of the specific Coast Guard implications in the new policy. These are by no means all inclusive. As you read these understand that we can accomplish nothing on our own. Every aspect of this directive overlaps the responsibilities and interest of several parties and agencies. Continued collaboration, cooperation and communication will be the keys to success. Also, as we have been, we will involve the Arctic's indigenous communities in decisions that affect them.



National and Homeland Security Interests

The Arctic region is primarily a maritime domain and the Coast Guard will continue to apply the following policies and authorities, including law enforcement:

- Freedom of Navigation
- U.S. Policy on Protecting the Ocean and the Environment
- [Maritime Security Policy](#)
- [National Strategy for Maritime Security](#)

The U.S. will exercise sovereignty within our maritime boundaries and over the continental shelf while preserving Freedom of the Seas. Implementation of this policy requires the development of greater capabilities and capacity to operate in the region to protect our borders, increase Arctic domain awareness and project our presence in the region. This will require close cooperation with our partners the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security.

International Governance

The Coast Guard's main role in this capacity is to represent the U.S. in the [International Maritime Organization](#) and other appropriate forums to develop international agreements to ensure effective governance mechanisms, including Arctic-specific regulations to ensure safe, secure, environmentally friendly maritime activities. These efforts will be closely coordinated with the Department of Transportation and Department of State and will also serve to advance multi-national cooperation in the region. We will look at how to expand our highly effective partnerships established through the [North Pacific](#) and North Atlantic Coast Guard Forums to meet the objectives of this directive.

Continental Shelf and Boundary Issues / Promoting International Scientific Cooperation

The Coast Guard will continue to support the necessary research efforts by the [National Science Foundation](#) and others through the use of Coast Guard resources for scientific support to establish the outer limit of the continental shelf to the fullest extent permitted under international law.

Maritime Transportation in the Arctic region


U.S. priorities for maritime transportation in the Arctic are to facilitate safe, secure and reliable navigation; protect maritime commerce; protect the environment.

This requires the Coast Guard to work with its interagency partners, the Arctic nations, and regulatory bodies to establish infrastructure to support shipping activity; search and rescue response; aids to navigation; vessel traffic management; [iceberg warnings and sea ice information](#); shipping standards; and protection of the marine environment.

Environmental Protection and Conservation of Natural Resources

The Coast Guard will work collaboratively to develop environmental response strategies, plans and capabilities working with the Departments of Energy and the Interior. We will also enforce any international or domestic fisheries laws developed for this unique region in coordination with NOAA and NMFS from the Department of Commerce.

I commend all of the participants who helped to develop this comprehensive Arctic Region Policy over the last two years. For the men and women of the Coast Guard, and the partners we work next to every day, this is just the beginning of the work to be done to ensure that we expand our superior mission execution to the increasingly significant Arctic region, consistent with the President's intent.

Posted at 1/13/2009 03:43:00 PM @comments 



Coast Guard's Sentinel-Class Patrol Boat Contract Upheld by GAO.

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

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) yesterday issued a bid protest decision that upheld the U.S. Coast Guards [award of the Sentinel-class Patrol Boat](#) to Bollinger Shipyards, Inc.

GAO provides a forum for bidders and offerors seeking federal government contracts who believe that "a contract has been, or is about to be, awarded improperly or illegally or that they have been unfairly denied a contract or an opportunity to compete for a contract".

We are of course very pleased with GAO's decision. The Coast Guard had been confident, especially given the [acquisition reforms](#) our agency has put in place and with the rigor and discipline followed throughout the process for this patrol boat contract award, that GAO would ultimately uphold the Coast Guard's decision. I appreciate the role that GAO plays in maintaining the transparency and equity of the federal procurement process and now that GAO has issued its decision, we can proceed with this critically important Coast Guard acquisition program.

With the release of this decision, the Coast Guard and Bollinger will resume working together on this project. The 153-foot Sentinel-class patrol boat will replace the 110-foot Island-class patrol boats, which have reached the end of their 20-year service lives.

Please note: The GAO decision was issued under the Protective Order GAO issued in connection with the case, so the decision cannot be made public. The Coast Guard anticipates that a redacted version of the decision will be published by GAO.

[Watch the original Award announcement](#)

Posted at [1/13/2009 09:57:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



CGC BOUTWELL departs on an around the world cruise

Shipmates,

I had the opportunity to visit BOUTWELL prior to departing for their around the world cruise. I held an All Hands on the flight deck and received a cruise briefing. I told the crew I envied them. The BOUTWELL will spend most of the trip with a Naval Expeditionary Strike Group working with the Navy's 5th, 6th, and 7th Fleets. Topics raised at the All Hands included modernization, HEC maintenance support, the Presidential transition, and piracy. I continue to receive terrific feedback from the geographical combatant commanders regarding the excellent work our cutters do when deployed in their theaters of operation. The same comments are received regarding our law enforcement detachments and training teams. You will see more regarding our relationship with the Navy and the Marine Corps in the forthcoming Naval Operating Concepts (NOC). I will update you when it is published.



[Speaking to the crew of CGC BOUTWELL at ISC Alameda.](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Good luck to CAPT Kevin Cavanaugh and the Crew of BOUTWELL.

ADM A

[Video Statement](#)

Posted at [1/13/2009 07:20:00 AM](#) [1 comments](#) 



Friday, January 9, 2009

A Military General's Leadership Lessons

Shipmates,

I still stay in touch with LTG Russ Honore after our experience together during the responses to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He passed on this article and I thought I would share it.

ADM A

[A Military General's Leadership Lessons: Lieutenant General Russel L. Honore offers subtle and surprising insights into the art of leading in organizations](#)

Posted at [1/09/2009 07:56:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 





Coast Guard Small Boat Product Line -- Better, more efficient mission support

A guest blog by CDR John Bragaw, Small Boat Product Line Manager.

The Small Boat Product Line (SBPL) was tasked by the Logistics Transformation Program Integration Office with implementing and maintaining a modernized logistics system based on the [aviation business model](#) in 2005. As of November 2008, five Sectors have been implemented. Over the next few years, the remaining Sectors, DOG Units, Cutter Boats, and other Field Units will be incorporated into this new logistics model.

On 01 Oct 08, in an effort to accelerate this modernization effort, the SBPL was broadened significantly and charged with aligning and merging all boat support resources, personnel, and processes from NESUs, MLCs and the ELC under one organization, to support all 1,800 Coast Guard boats. Currently, the SBPL supports all shore and cutter-based boats located at Modernized and Non-Modernized Units throughout the entire Coast Guard, with a staff of 102 military, civilians, and contractors assigned to 13 units.

Since implementation, the SBPL responded to more than 25 CASREPs per week, and managed more than 90 depot-level maintenance availabilities. The SBPL also identified more than \$3.5M of potential savings through bulk contracting, modifying maintenance intervals, and establishing improved partnerships with original equipment manufacturers. Further information regarding the SBPL may be found on our [website](#). Slides from my briefing to the Commandant this week are available [here](#).

Posted at 1/09/2009 06:55:00 AM [1 comment](#)

Labels: [Coast Guard](#) [Modernization](#) [Small Boat](#)



Wednesday, January 7, 2009

Improving Reserve Readiness Through Coast Guard Modernization

(You can watch a video version of this [here](#))

One of the many benefits of our Coast Guard Modernization effort is the work we are doing to improve the readiness of our Reserve Forces. Since our integration of our reserve forces into the active duty component in the mid '90s, we have constantly looked for an opportunity to make the adjustments needed at the field level to improve the readiness of our reserve forces. Modernization now provides us the right means to do that. The loss of the (fot) staffs at the ISCs also requires us to act. The Reserve Forces Readiness System, or RFRS is the part of Modernization that will accomplish this action. If you saw our recent addition of the [Reservist Magazine](#), you probably read a little bit about RFRS and how we are modernizing our Reserve Forces organization right along with our other efforts within the Coast Guard. If not, please check it out.

When we eliminated separate Reserve Units and integrated our reserve personnel with our active duty component, we did not provide our operational commanders, now responsible for both their active duty and reserve members, with the necessary resources to adequately manage their reserve forces. While we recognized this short-coming, we simply expected existing resources and our newly established ISC support personnel to fill this gap along with the many other support functions they provided to the operational commanders. It was not the way to ensure the maximum readiness of our reserve forces, and we soon learned this the hard way after 9/11.

Just about every operational District Commander mobilized reservists immediately following Sept 11th and at one juncture we had nearly 50% of our entire reserve force on active duty. Yet, our operational commanders had no dedicated resources to properly accomplish this. They also had to manage the flow of their reserve forces for the next several years as they constantly moved from the SELRES on and off of active duty. Fully recognizing this gap within our operational construct, the Reserve Program has constantly looked for the means and opportunity by which to correct this organizational shortcoming.

Disestablishment of the ISCs and MLCs allows us to now deliver the resources needed to manage our reserve forces to the operational commanders who really need them. This is the very essence of RFRS, and is great news for every operational Sector and District Commander. This is all about pushing resources out to the "pointy end of the spear" to enhance mission execution. Once RFRS is completed over the next couple years, nearly 100 billets will move to the Sectors and Districts for direct reserve support and readiness.

To provide the necessary resources to accomplish RFRS, we are sourcing the required positions in the field with our Full Time Support billets, known as "FTS" billets. Many of our 536 FTS billets, which are separately funded by our AFC-90 Reserve Appropriation, have been moved around the organization over the years with many of these billets no longer providing any support to the reserve program. As part of RFRS, we are re-aligning these billets back to the purpose they were established for. Most of these positions are in the support and training fields. While the loss of these billets creates a gap, re-alignment of these billets is the right thing to do to support our reserve forces and most importantly, a required action if we intend to pass an audit of our AFC-90 account to clearly show the appropriated funds for our reserve forces is being expended properly. Most of these FTS Billets will be filled with Reserve Program Administrators (RPAs) or with personnel trained to manage our reservists. That's exactly what our operational commanders need to accomplish the many administrative, training and management functions necessary for their reservists.

Thus, RFRS provides not only the personnel resources needed by the operational commander to manage their

reserve forces, it also anticipates these personnel will have the appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience to properly accomplish this important mission. You can think of RFRS this way; it is putting the right people with the right skills in the right place within the organization.

Once RFRS is fully completed in 2012, our organization will finally have the right organizational structure to ensure the maximum readiness of our reserve forces. That's what RFRS is all about; getting the right resources out to the field to support and manage our reserve forces to enhance mission execution.

And the benefit to all of our reserve forces will be improved readiness and a greater capacity to meet the many demands that we have asked of, and continue to ask of, our reserves. Having the right resources to support all of our reservists is really the key, and RFRS will do that for us. So, for all the Reservists out there, this is truly a significant organizational change that will surely benefit you for as long as you serve in the Coast Guard.

We hope this information will help you better understand this small, but very important portion of our Modernization efforts.

Thank you and Semper Paratus!

RDML D.R. May
Director of Reserve & Training

MCPO J. Smith
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve Forces

Posted at 1/07/2009 10:52:00 AM [Comments](#) 



Monday, January 5, 2009

Modernization Update: Cutter Fleet Material Condition

Shipmates,

Below is a Guest Post from RDML Tom Ostebo (CG-4).

As we address challenges associated with our surface fleet we must understand that whether a vessel is nearing the end of its service life or just beginning service we much manage the fleet through a single, central point of accountability that insures configuration management, standard maintenance procedures, supply chain management, and visibility of costs. As we move toward product line management we must also consider how we employ our assets and make better decisions that allow us to maximize the service lives of our vessels. As an example, I have asked our engineers and operators to consider rotating a vessel's homeport so that it does not spend its entire service life in a particularly harsh environment; thus extending the life of the vessel.

We need to clear and honest regarding the task ahead. This is hard work and it will require the efforts and patience of every member of our service to get this right. The alternative is to live and operate in the past. This is a stewardship issue that we all own.

ADM A

Guest Post from RDML Thomas Ostebo (CG-4), Assistant Commandant for Engineering and Logistics.

In recent weeks we have discussed the [material condition of the 378' WHECs](#), in particular DALLAS and GALLATIN. I'd like to offer this post on my assessment of the rest of the cutter fleet.

Icebreakers.

A relatively new cutter, CGC HEALY is in an excellent state of readiness. However, the remainder of the polar icebreaking fleet (POLAR STAR and POLAR SEA) are now at the end of their planned 30-year service life and we are taking measures to ensure their continued service. The near term plans include the reactivation of POLAR STAR, which has been in an inactive status since 2006. The reactivation effort will take nearly \$70M to restore system readiness and recapitalize equipment. We've received approximately \$31M of that from Congress in FY-09. We are also completing repairs and installing new equipment on POLAR SEA, which will extend her service life. In addition, we are examining the business cases for additional service life extensions or new acquisition projects.

Medium Endurance Cutters and 110' Patrol Boats.

The 270' and 210' MECs and 110' WPBs are also at or nearing the end of their service life. To improve their reliability, these cutters are undergoing a [Mission Effectiveness Project \(MEP\)](#). The MEP will renew wasted metal, recapitalize maintenance-intensive systems, and address habitability concerns. This highly successful program, which is delivering upgraded assets on schedule and on budget, is being performed at the CG Yard.

Buoy Tenders.

The sixteen 225' WLB ocean-going buoy tenders are relatively new, having been commissioned between 1996 and 2004. However, we are actively planning for their Mid-Life Availability Project. This work is necessary as we are already seeing data that indicates an increase in unscheduled maintenance costs, lost cutter days and negative impacts on mission execution. This project is being considered for the FY-11 budget and will include work to renew systems that are not meeting current mission needs, bring the cutters back into alignment with recent environmental

regulations and legislative changes, and recapitalize mission critical systems.

Like the 225s, the fourteen 175' WLM inland buoy tenders are relatively new, however are still in need of upgrades. A 175' WLM Mid-Life Availability Project is also being considered for the FY-11 budget.

Icebreaking Tugs.

The eight 140' WTGB's were commissioned between 1979 and 1988, and they too are approaching the end of their planned 30-year service life. There are currently no plans to recapitalize these cutters through a new acquisition project, however, we recognize that considerable work must be done to keep these cutters operational in the foreseeable future. A Ship Structure and Machinery Evaluation Board (SSMEB) conducted on these cutters in 2001 found that the ships' structure is in excellent condition, but that some systems do not meet mission requirements. Examples of necessary work that has been identified includes: propulsion system overhaul, Ship Service Diesel Generator replacement, propulsion control system replacement, bubbler system overhaul, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system overhaul and boat boom replacement. We have submitted a FY-10 budget request to address the system shortfalls mentioned above.

Inland Construction and River Tenders.

Our fleet of thirteen WLIC's and eighteen WLR's represent a mix of assets of various configurations built in the early 1960s to ensure our inland waterways are marked with appropriate aids to navigation. Our attempts since 2002 to recapitalize these cutters through the Integrated ATON Platform Modernization Project (IAPMP), and more recently through the Heartland Waterways Vessel Project, have been unsuccessful in the budget process. However, we did receive a \$4M plus up in our FY-09 budget to address the maintenance challenges we are experiencing with these cutters. As a result, we have been upgrading systems as best as possible within the AFC-45 budget. Some of the systems in need of modernization include: main propulsion, air compressors, electric power distribution, and HVAC


Small Harbor Tugs.

The eleven cutters of the 65' WYTL were built between 1961 and 1967. They are employed only on the east coast to help keep U.S. waterways free of ice and to clear harbor areas too shallow for the larger icebreaking tugs. The most recent SSMEB conducted on this cutter class found in 2002 that the service life for these assets could extend to 2008 and that it should be re-assessed at that time - which we are now doing. These cutters are generally in very good condition, and like the WLICs and WLRs mentioned above, we are working to maintain these cutters as best as possible within the existing budget and support infrastructure.

There is much work to do in supporting our entire fleet. The key to success is Coast Guard [Modernization](#) and [Logistics Transformation](#). Only through these efforts can the Coast Guard accurately measure cost and succeed in the budget process. 2009 is a critical year for our Service's future. I thank all the men and women of the Coast Guard for their hard work and patience as we move forward.

 This blog completes a series of posts detailing our cause for action for modernization. The others are all available by clicking on the below.

- [Why modernize? An Historical Perspective](#)
- [MLC Realignment](#)
- [WHEC to WMSL: Our Trackline to an Agile Mission Support Organization](#)
- [Human Resources and an efficient Coast Guard.](#)
- [Current State of Coast Guard Financial Management](#)

Posted at 1/05/2009 01:35:00 PM [1 comment](#) 



Saturday, January 3, 2009

New Year's Message

Shipmates,

Below is the All Hands we issued marking the New Year. As I have told our senior leaders the next 12-18 months will be a period of change, transition, and adaptation. In sequence we will transition to a new administration, move toward full implementation of Coast Guard Modernization and, finally, execute the succession of leadership in the Coast Guard. While each activity is distinct they will in fact intertwine as we move forward. For that reason it will be necessary for us to remain flexible and adaptable as we move forward.

In addition to our meetings with DHS Agency Review Team (ART) we have reached out to the Department of Transportation ART as well. We will need to retain a strong relationship with our DOT partners. The same is true of every agency and department we interact with. There are many more than you might imagine. In addition to our traditional relationships with DOD, the State Department and Justice, we have extensive interaction with the Departments of Commerce and Interior as well as independent agencies such as the EPA and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. At the same time we need to maintain continuity with a number of international fora including the International Maritime Organization and our regional Coast Guard fora.

One entity that you may not be aware of is The Interdiction Committee (TIC) which is a body chartered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). I currently serve as the chair of that body. TIC coordinates drug interdiction activities of the federal government who's diverse membership includes (among others) the intelligence community, the Drug Enforcement Administration, our DHS law enforcement partners, the Defense Department, NORTHCOM, and SOUTHCOM. Our goal is to sustain interdiction effectiveness through the transition of administrations.

As you can see we have a number of coordination and synchronization challenges that will require us to pay close attention to the various transitions while we continue to focus on mission execution and mission support. In doing so we will leverage two of our organization strengths - interagency coordination and collaboration and stakeholder involvement.

We will continue to keep you updated.

ADM A

To the Men and Women of the United States Coast Guard:

We have witnessed the passing of another year. Proper log entries have been made and the watch continues. For those deployed or standing the watch this holiday season I pass on the thanks of your shipmates and our Nation for your service and sacrifice. We hope that soon you can embrace the arrival of the New Year, restore your personal readiness, and spend time with loved ones. For those fortunate enough to celebrate the holidays with family and friends, I hope you return to your duties having taken time to reflect and refresh.

In the last year your personal effort and dedication have been critical in post-hurricane disaster relief, dramatic search and rescue and law enforcement cases, complex environmental responses, record setting drug seizures, effective maritime safety and security, unprecedented support to U.S. Combatant Commanders around the world, and the establishment of a presence on the north slope of Alaska. You are America's Maritime Guardians.

Looking forward, the New Year brings a transition in our Nation's government. The peaceful, orderly and respectful transfer of power from one administration to another is the enduring legacy of our effort to create "a more perfect form of government." Working with our Homeland Security partners we are providing briefings, background materials, and data that describe the Coast Guard's unique role as a maritime, multi-mission, law enforcement and military Service. We are working collaboratively to ensure a seamless transition with the President-Elect's Agency Review Team (ART) and the designated Secretary of Homeland Security. At the same time we are committed to insuring the continuity of mission execution. I continue to meet regularly with Secretary Chertoff and recently had my first meeting with Secretary Designate Napolitano.

Transition and change in leadership are routine for military personnel. The traditional change of command script recites the purpose as "conveying to the officers, enlisted personnel, civilian employees and auxiliaries that although the authority of command is relinquished by one person and is assumed by another, that command authority is maintained without interruption." The uninterrupted transfer of total authority mirrors the transition of our civilian senior leadership. The difference between these transitions is the transfer of political power of our civilian leadership and the apolitical continuity by the military in providing for the defense of the Nation. It is a long established concept that began with George Washington's voluntary resignation of his commission in 1783 before becoming our first President. In that long standing tradition we will continue to execute our military roles and missions under the direction and orders of our Commander-in-Chief as we "support and defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic."

Let us commit ourselves to mission execution and mission support in a modernized Coast Guard, to living our core values, and being Guardians of the American Public and one another. Thank you for the tremendous work you do every day.

Happy New Year!
Admiral Thad W. Allen
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

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