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iCommandant

Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

Saturday, October 31, 2009

Update: Loss of Coast Guard 1705 and Marine Corps Helicopter

I sent the following e-mail update to all Coast Guard personnel:

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

We are still in the midst of a massive search effort to locate the seven missing Guardians from CG-1705 and the two Marines from the AH-1 Cobra helicopter. Coast Guard and Navy assets, along with a Customs and Border Protection helicopter, are searching a 644 nautical mile area and have recovered debris from both aircraft but we have not located any survivors at this time. I remain hopeful and we will continue to search until all of our options are exhausted.

After completing the next of kin notifications and consulting closely with our Marine Corps and Navy partners, we are releasing the names of the AIRSTA Sacramento based crew of the CG-1705:

- Lieutenant Commander Che J. Barnes; age 35
- Lieutenant Adam W. Bryant; age 28
- Chief Petty Officer John F. Seidman; age 43
- Petty Officer Second Class Carl P. Grigonis; age 35
- Petty Officer Second Class Monica L. Beacham; age 29
- Petty Officer Second Class Jason S. Moletzsky; age 26
- Petty Officer Third Class Danny R. Kreder II; age 22.

The names of the missing Marines are Major Samuel Leigh, age 35, and First Lieutenant Thomas Claiborne, age 26.

I am extremely proud of all the people involved in the search efforts - their dedication to finding their fellow shipmates is inspiring. We will continue to support AIRSTA Sacramento, the families of the missing crewmembers, and all the participating units with everything they need to continue the search.

This event, like the CG-6505 helicopter accident last year, highlights the risks we accept every day to ensure the Nation's safety and security. As Guardians, we acknowledge the risk but that doesn't ease the emotional burden we feel after a tragedy. I know many people have been working extremely hard over the last several days so please watch each other's back.

I will provide further updates as they become available. Keep these missing Guardians and Marines, along with their families, in your thoughts during this difficult time.

Admiral Thad Allen
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

Posted at 10/31/2009 05:12:00 PM 0 comments



Friday, October 30, 2009

Loss of Coast Guard 1705 and Marine Corps Helicopter

I sent the following e-mail to all Coast Guard personnel:

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

I am deeply saddened to report that one of our C-130 aircraft, CG-1705 out of AIRSTA Sacramento, crashed last night

about 15 miles east of San Clemente Island off the coast of San Diego. CG-1705, with seven Guardians onboard, was searching for an overdue 12-foot pleasure craft when there was a collision with a Marine Corps AH-1 Cobra helicopter at 1915 Pacific local time. There were two personnel on the Marine Corps helicopter which was conducting a separate training exercise.

The Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy have been working collaboratively overnight and throughout today in response to this tragedy. I want to ensure our workforce is kept fully apprised as well.

We have been and continue to actively search for survivors. Two Navy surface vessels were on scene almost immediately after the accident. Several Navy and Coast Guard aircraft, along with a Customs and Border Protection helicopter, are flying sorties in the area while multiple cutters including the BLACKFIN, BLACKTIP, EDISTO, PETREL, GEORGE COBB, and JARVIS are conducting surface searches. One of the Navy ships is remaining on-scene as well. No personnel have been found at this time but we will continue to work with our Marine Corps and Navy partners in this massive effort.

While we continue the search, we will fully support the men and women of AIRSTA Sacramento and their families. We are actively assisting the local field units to respond to this tragic event so they can focus on the ongoing search. This includes flowing resources and critical incident stress management teams where they are needed, supporting our fellow families and Service members, coordinating a joint military investigation, and working with our Department, the interagency, the Congress, and the media to keep people informed.

I know many of you want to know the names of the people who are missing. We are following the appropriate notification procedures and working closely with our sister Services and the impacted families to ensure the proper steps are followed. We will release that information as soon as possible.

I will provide further updates as they become available. I encourage all Coast Guard members to keep these missing Guardians and Marines in your thoughts during this difficult time and to continue looking after your shipmates.

Admiral Thad Allen
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

Posted at 10/30/2009 01:20:00 PM [8 comments](#) 



Thursday, October 29, 2009

Coast Guard Chief of Inspections Conference

Guest Post by CDR Boone, CG-5431

Last week, all of the Coast Guard's Chiefs of Inspection Departments (CIDs) from around the nation gathered in Lansdowne, Virginia to attend the Prevention Program's CID Conference. It had been four years since the last Conference and the first conference since the roll-out of the [Marine Safety Performance Plan \(MSPP\)](#). There was an "air of excitement" among the 85 participants at the conference, which also included Headquarters, Area and District Prevention personnel, along with inspectors from Transport Canada and industry representatives.

Contributing to the excitement in the Program is the recent growth in marine inspectors and investigator billets flowing to the field. There is a renewed sense of purpose among the CIDs as details unfold and plans are put in place to establish feeder ports, designate [journeymen marine inspectors](#) and train apprentice marine inspectors. The establishment of [National Centers of Expertise \(NCOEs\)](#) in providing venues for professional development and exchange between industry and Coast Guard personnel was highlighted as it furthers the aims of the MSPP.

The three-day conference focused on the ongoing improvements in the program, the sense of urgency to improve capacity and capability, and the need to work closely with our partners and industry to share the responsibility of safety and security in the Marine Transportation System. The conference concluded with an industry panel attended by key industry stakeholders, including American Waterways Operators (AWO), Passenger Vessel Association (PVA), Offshore Marine Service Association (OMSA) and Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA). The industry panel provided a venue for two-way exchange of ideas to further the Goals and Objectives of the MSPP; namely, improving service to Mariners, Industry, and the Public.

This re-invigorated annual Conference is a key piece to our MSPP. The information exchange and ideas received are excellent feedback for our annual review and update of the MSPP (currently underway and slated for completion in January '10).

The Director of Prevention Policy at Coast Guard Headquarters, RDML Kevin Cook, provided closing remarks for the Conference, reinforcing the CIDs' role in successful implementation of the MSPP and encouraging them to take a leadership role in the Prevention Departments at the Sectors and MSUs as we strengthen the Coast Guard's Marine Safety Mission performance. The Conference brought the leaders of our Marine Safety Inspection program together and helped build a sense of community that will pay dividends into the future.



[Chief of Inspections Conference](#)

Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

Posted at [10/29/2009 08:47:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

The Theme is Green -- Coast Guard Activates Another Renewable Energy Facility

If you have been following the [President](#) or the [White House Blog](#) then you know that a "Green" Federal government is a top priority of President Obama. So much so that the White House is encouraging every Federal employee to [submit their "Green" ideas](#) to improve Federal sustainability. Your ideas are still welcome and can be submitted online until the end of this month.

The Coast Guard is doing its part both internally and externally. Across the service, there are outstanding examples of ways that [the Coast Guard is "Going Green"](#). Additionally, we are demonstrating our commitment to being leaders in the maritime community for improving our stewardship of the environment, as shown by our active role in the [Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force](#) and our [cooperative efforts with the International Maritime Organization](#) and maritime industries.



TRACEN Petaluma Solar Array Field
Originally uploaded by [iCommandant](#)

Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma, Calif., provides just the latest example of our green initiatives. Oct. 24 the training center hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony with Congresswoman Woolsey and RADM Sullivan for its newly built four-acre solar array field. This solar initiative was completed through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). In a PPA, a contractor builds, owns and operates a solar photovoltaic (PV) system on Coast Guard property and sells the energy back to the Coast Guard unit at a contracted rate. Because of the scarcity of current AC&I funding for renewable energy projects, a PPA was identified as the best contract vehicle for this innovative energy project. This is the first power purchase agreement in the history of the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security. The PPA was awarded to SilRay, Inc. of Palo Alto, California, in February 2009 and construction was completed early October 2009. The project constructed a solar array comprised of 5,232 panels that produce 875 kW at peak performance. When combined with the training center's existing 125 kW of solar PV systems, built in 2003, this new project provides the base a total of 1 MW of solar PV production.

The new array is estimated to save \$1.5M in energy costs over the life of the project and prevent the release of over 2,000,000 lbs of CO2 greenhouse gas per year into the atmosphere. This solar array also helps the Coast Guard meet the stringent requirements of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT 2005) without the capital outlay required for new projects. The construction of this solar array is a significant engineering project that not only increases production of "green" renewable energy but also positively impacts the environment for the next 25 years.

This is just one of many energy and water savings initiatives under the training center's "Petaluma Green" Program. "Petaluma Green" is a multi-faceted program undertaken by their Facilities Engineering Division that implements the use of renewable energy, energy conservation, water conservation and the protection of natural resources. Besides the 1MW of solar arrays, other renewable energy and conservation projects include:

- Solar heat system for the base swimming pool
- Solar powered streetlights, security gate and seismic monitoring station.
- Energy conservation measures including the use of tankless water heaters, cool roof technology, energy efficient lighting, energy star appliances, vending machine misers, solar light tubes, sky lighting, variable frequency drives, high efficiency boilers, and the installation of energy efficient window glazing.
- Water conservation projects include the installation of low flow fixtures such as shower heads, toilets and faucets. Recent waterless urinal installations alone will reduce water use by 1.5 million gallons of potable water this year.

Training Center Petaluma has also worked diligently to utilize xeriscape to dramatically reduce the need for water irrigation in our common areas. Natural resource protection initiatives include asphalt reuse, recycling, mulching of downed trees, storm water retention, aquifer recharge, and clean fill reuse. Also recently completed was a project which dramatically reduced storm water infiltration into the sanitary sewer system, greatly reducing the amount of water requiring treatment.

Posted at [10/28/2009 09:48:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 

In the line of duty ...

Shipmates,

We mourn with our DEA partners the loss of their three agents in Afghanistan along with those military members who perished. I spoke to DEA Administrator Michele Leonhart yesterday and passed on our condolences at the loss of Special Agents Chad Michael, Forrest Leamon, and Michael Weston. It is also very sad that the loss occurs during Red Ribbon Week which commemorates the loss of DEA Special Agent Kiki Camarena who was kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by a drug cartel in 1985. Red Ribbon Week is an annual drug prevention campaign that honors Agent Camarena's memory.

Please keep our fallen military comrades and law enforcement partners and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

ADM A

Posted at [10/28/2009 05:58:00 AM](#) [1 comment](#)



Tuesday, October 27, 2009

FLETC demonstration of the Advanced Use of Force Training System with Speech Recognition

Shipmates,

Last week during our visit to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, GA, we toured several of the training facilities. Two very interesting simulators were the Use of Force Simulator with Speech Recognition and the Small Boat Simulator. The Use of Force Simulator is similar to our "shoot" - "don't shoot" simulators with one intriguing difference. The image on the screen includes an avatar that responds to voice commands. The office can direct the individual to produce identification, raise their hands, turn around, and so forth. The behavior of the avatar is dependent on the officer's presence and voice commands. Very interesting.



[FLETC demonstration of the Advanced Use of Force Training System with Speech Recognition](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Our thanks to Connie Patrick the Director of FLETC (foreground and right in the picture) and a long time friend and partner of the Coast Guard. She was instrumental in our successful relocation of the MLE school to Charleston and continues to support improved facilities that benefit our students.

ADM A

Posted at [10/27/2009 09:11:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



Greek AMVER Awards Ceremony and Visit with NATO Allies

Guest Post by Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara, Deputy Commandant for Operations.

On October 22, I had the honor of representing ADM Allen at the [Automated Mutual-assistance Vessel Rescue system \(AMVER\)](#) Awards Dinner hosted by the International Propeller Club of the United States, Port of Piraeus, Greece. During this festive occasion, we celebrated AMVER's 51st year and recognized 114 Greek shipping companies whose 862 ships participated in this system in 2008. I was pleased to express the U.S. Coast Guard's gratitude that such a significant number of Greek companies and ships have committed to aiding fellow mariners. AMVER cases often require them to divert from shipping schedules and intended routes to provide at-sea assistance.



[DCO Visits with Greek Counterparts](#)

Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

AMVER, sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard, is a unique, computer-based, voluntary global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange assistance for persons in distress at sea. Through AMVER, rescue coordinators rapidly identify participating ships - about 19,000 from over 140 nations - and direct those closest and best-suited to respond to the call for help. The International Propeller Club of the United States, Port of Piraeus has provided a forum for exchanging views and promoting goodwill, social, cultural and merchant marine relations between citizens of Greece and the United States since its founding in 1935.

While in Athens, I also visited the Hellenic Coast Guard Headquarters to meet with the Commandant, Vice Admiral Theodoros Rentzeperis, and the Deputy Commandant, Vice Admiral Georgios Giannimaras. I heard about the imminent reorganization of their service and operational challenges in their AOR. Later this year, the Hellenic Coast Guard will begin using SAROPS, the state-of-the-art search and rescue planning system we have been using since 2006. They will be the third international partner (along with Malta and Mexico) to install SAROPS in their Rescue Coordination Center.

During a brief stop in Souda Bay, Crete, I met with the Commander of the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Center (NMIOTC), Commodore Konstantinos Mazarakis-Ainian. He provided an informative overview of this very impressive joint, multi-national center. NMIOTC delivers combined training to enable NATO forces to safely and successfully execute surface, sub-surface, aerial and special operations activities in support of Maritime Interdiction Operations. The curriculum and scenarios are particularly relevant to NATO's counter-piracy operations in the Horn of Africa region.

(Note: AMVER maintains a very [informative blog here](#))

Semper Paratus,
Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara
Deputy Commandant for Operations

Posted at 10/27/2009 09:42:00 AM [0 comments](#) 



Monday, October 26, 2009

Sea Service Chiefs Speak to new Navy Flag Officers/SES and spouses

Shipmates,

Today I joined ADM Gary Roughead and General Jim Conway in panel at the Navy's Future Leaders Executive Conference. This is the second year that we have collectively addressed the group and answered questions from the Navy's newest leaders.

I spoke to our partnership within the sea services and the transnational threats we face including piracy and climate change. I also talked about the need for Coast Guards and Coast Guard like agencies for smaller nations concerned about their fish stocks, oil and gas exploration and production, illegal migration, and drug trafficking.



[Sea Service Chiefs Speak to new Navy Flag Officers/SES and spouses](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at 10/26/2009 07:01:00 PM [0 comments](#) 



Saturday, October 24, 2009

Weekend Wrap Up

Shipmates,

We ended a busy week last Friday with a dinner at Fort Belvoir, VA that capped this fall's Chief's Call to Indoctrination (CCTI). The week began in New Orleans at the President's Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy Task Force public meeting in New Orleans.

While I was on the road on Monday, the Vice Commandant continued our participation in the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review. VADM Breckenridge was in the 14th District for the Change of Command of the U.S. Pacific Command where our very good friend ADM Tim Keating was relieved by ADM Robert (Rat) Willard, my Capstone Classmate.

Throughout the week we held our annual Executive Change Leadership Conference where our newly selected Flag Officers and Senior Executives are provided briefings, take part in discussion with senior CG, DHS and government leaders. We also included a number of our DHS partners in this conference. It is a unique opportunity to build competencies in our leaders, create partnerships in DHS, and build a departmental culture of "One-DHS."

On Tuesday I met with Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar along with Under Secretary David Hayes who made the trip to the north slope of Alaska with us in August. We have a tremendous partnership with DOI that includes our extensive collaboration with the Minerals Management Service (MMS) regarding offshore oil and gas exploration and production, as well as renewable energy projects such as offshore wind farms. We also work every day with our partners from the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

On Wednesday we spent the day in Boston.

We started at the MILCOM information technology conference at the World Trade Center where I addressed the conference theme of "convergence."

Next we met with the National Security Fellows Program at the Kennedy School at Harvard. CAPT Stu Merrill is our

Fellow this year and he and his classmates are delving into areas that are challenging our service every day.

We left Harvard and went to the other end of Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge to MIT where we met with this year's Sloan Fellows.

After a lunch with a smaller group of MIT Sloan Fellows we visited the School of Communications at Boston University where we met with the Dean, Tom Feidler, and a group of students. Tom was the Editor of the Miami Herald when I was the Seventh District Commander and my public affairs office was then "LT" Ron Labrec. We discussed how our operations can gain national media attention instantly and the need to continually improve our procedures and outreach.

On Thursday we participated in a video teleconference with the Chief Petty Officer's Academy and ended the day at the British Embassy for the annual Trafalgar Night which celebrates Lord Nelson's victory over the French and Spanish, despite his death. The evening was magnificent as our British shipmates carried out a number of traditional toasts and we were entertained by the Royal Marine Band. First Sea Lord Stanhope was in attendance and he and I will meet in London next month when I will lead the US delegation to the General Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

On Friday we attended the graduation of 19 new Coast Guard Investigative Service agents at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center at Glynco, Georgia and toured the facility. At a lunch prior to graduation we were able to visit with Sheila McNeill (past National Navy League President) and our local Guardians from Station Brunswick and the Maritime Force Protection Unit at Kings Bay, GA.

To close out the week, Pam and I were pleased to attend the traditional dinner on Friday night where 14 Prospective Chief Petty Officers were brought into the ranks as Chiefs, including our Special Command Aide FSC Tony Noel. Congratulations to all the Chief Petty Officers.

ADM A

Posted at 10/24/2009 05:22:00 PM [0 comments](#)



Friday, October 23, 2009

First Coast Guard Predator UAS Pilot

LT Thomas "Tank" Shuler became the first operational Coast Guard UAS pilot as he landed his Predator-B aircraft in Sierra Vista, AZ. He completed his final qualification check flight on Wednesday, 21 October at the CBP Predator-B training facility. LT Shuler will return to Aviation training Center, Mobile to develop the Coast Guard's UAS training and standardization program; he will also deploy routinely as part of the Coast Guard's [partnership with CBP](#) to Sierra Vista, with future deployments to operating locations in Jacksonville and Corpus Christi to gain operational experience. The Coast Guard currently plans to have four Predator-B qualified pilots.



FIRST USCG PREDATOR-B PILOT
Originally uploaded by [icommmandant](#)

Posted at 10/23/2009 10:04:00 AM [6 comments](#)



Tuesday, October 20, 2009

Ocean Policy Task Force Public Meeting in New Orleans

Shipmates,

We finished a long but productive day on Monday in New Orleans hearing public comments regarding the work of the President's Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy. The venue was appropriate, the Audobon Aquarium of the Americas, a very unique aquarium located on Riverwalk in New Orleans.

Principals on the panel representing the Task Force included Dr. Jane Lubchenco (NOAA), Bob Sussman (EPA), and Laura Davis (DOI). We were connected to remoted sites in St Petersburg, FL.

Dauphin Island, AL, Ocean Springs, MS and Corpus Christi, TX. Over three hours of comments were heard from a diverse cross section of stakeholders representing Gulf interests. One remaining public meeting is scheduled next week in Cleveland.

I returned to Washington for meetings on Tuesday, but RADM Mary Landry, Commander of the Eighth CG District, hosted briefings, overflights, and waterborne tours to acquaint panel members with the area.

This afternoon I met with Secretary of the Interior Salazar and Deputy Secretary David Hayes to discuss our mutual activities on the outer continental shelf, emerging Arctic challenges, and our local partnerships with the National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service. Dr. Lubchenko joined us via teleconference from New Orleans. We value these partnerships that allow us to coordinate our activities and act as a federal presence in the region.



Ocean Policy Task Force Public Meeting in New Orleans
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at [10/20/2009 06:39:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#)



Saturday, October 17, 2009

Governors Island Oct 2009: Fort Jay

Shipmates,

After attending the terrific Coast Guard Foundation Dinner on Thursday and an incredible World Maritime Day on Friday, Pam and I returned to Governors Island on Saturday morning and walked the island. We were stationed on GI twice (1975-1977 (GALLATIN) and 1986-1988 (Third District/MLC)). There are a number of pictures posted on Flickr.



Governors Island Oct 2009: Fort Jay
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

The Coast Guard occupied Governors Island for nearly 30 years ... from 1967 when we relocated our training center from Groton and our moorings and base at St George, Staten Island to the mid 1990's when we relocated most of the function to Norfolk and Portsmouth, VA.

My children attended P.S. 26 on Governors Island and we enjoyed our assignments there (living in Fort Jay in our last tour). The second assignment was a very critical one for me personally. I was assigned as the Third District Planning Officer in January 1986. In the next six months the northern section of the island (the original island) was approved as an Historic Landmark District.

That summer the island hosted Liberty Weekend activities where the Statue of Liberty was relit and GI was the venue for talks between President Reagan and French President Francois Mitterand. The island hosted a huge concert that was headlined by Neil Diamond. I was assigned as the liaison officer to the White House and worked with the Coast Guard Military Aide to President Reagan (LCDR Vivien Crea!).

Later that summer I was assigned to the Gilbert I Study which recommended the disestablishment of the Third District and the creation of the Maintenance and Logistics Commands (our first step toward modernization). Later I served as the first budget officer in MLC/LANT.

Many memories for the Allens and many other Guardians as well. A very nostalgic morning. The seasonal opening of the island ended last week and the island had over 260,000 visitors this year.

The southern end of the island which was made from landfill from the construction of the New York subways is being demolished and will be redeveloped. The northern end remains an historic landmark district.

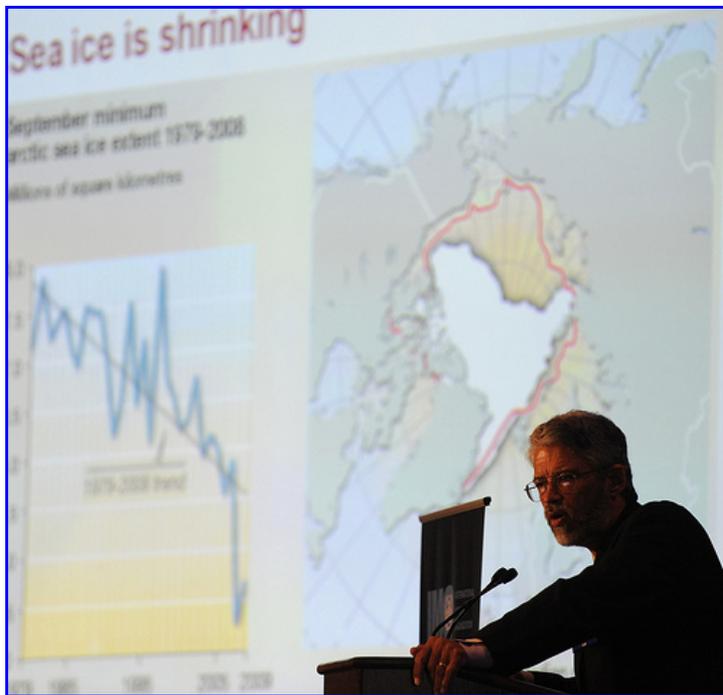
ADM A

Posted at [10/17/2009 06:33:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#)



Friday, October 16, 2009

Great World Maritime Day -- Keynote Tweets



It has been a great World Maritime Day Parallel Event here in New York City! I will blog more on it later, but thought I'd share with you these concise bullets -- provided via twitter from @Amver's Ben Strong -- of our keynote speech by Director John Holdren, from the President's Office of Science and Technology Policy. You can see all the tweets from this event using the hash tag #wmdpe.

Dr. Holdren- without energy there is no economy.

Dr. Holdren- USA number 2 in fossil CO2 emissions.

Dr. Holdren- climate change: what's already happening? Temps increase, Ice melting, increase in natural disasters.

Dr. Holdren- weakening of East Asia monsoon having negative effect on China & caused by climate change.

Dr. Holdren- Tipping points: if Arctic sea ice melts & doesn't reform, climate of N Hemisphere would change.

Dr. Holdren- options? Mitigate, adaptation, or suffer!

Dr. Holdren- this is climate change policy FOR the economy rather than versus the economy.

Posted at 10/16/2009 07:40:00 PM 0 comments



Thursday, October 15, 2009

Maritime Shipping and Climate Change -- Blog Action Day

Admittedly, I had no idea what "Blog Action Day" is until I came across [this post on gCaptain](#). Fortunately, we caught it in time to take part.

Blog Action Day is an annual event held every October 15 that "unites the world's blogger" by encouraging them to post about the same issue on the same day. The [website](#) says that this years event will be one of the largest-ever social change events on the web, currently with 8,886 registered blogs and 12,509,322 readers from 148 Countries. So what is this years issue you ask? Climate Change.

Quite a convenient topic considering our [World Maritime Day](#) events taking place tomorrow, which in case you haven't heard, [the topic is climate change!](#) Come down and join us tomorrow at [Chelsea Piers in New York City!](#)

Posted at 10/15/2009 04:50:00 PM 1 comments



Meeting with Dr. Bjorn Kjerfve, President: World Maritime University, Malmo, Sweden

Shipmates,

I recently met with Dr. Bjorn Kjerfve, the President of the World Maritime University. WMU (www.wmu.se) is located in Malmo, Sweden (across from Copenhagen, Denmark). It is a unique institution that was founded in 1983 under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization. WMU educates students from around the world. The Coast Guard assigns an officer to WMU to provide liaison and serve as lecturer. LCDR Agneta Dahl is currently our officer assigned to WMU.



[Meeting with Dr. Bjorn Kjerfve, President: World Maritime University, Malmo, Sweden](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Dr. Kjerfve and I discussed our ongoing and future partnership. Our current activities in the Arctic, dealing with Piracy, vessel and facility security, ballast water management, and the President's Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy are all areas of interest to WMU.

Dr. Kjerfve recently assumed his duties after distinguished service at Texas A&M. Originally born in Sweden, Dr. Kjerfve has worked extensively in the United States. He will be participating in World Maritime Day activities in New York City this week.

ADM A

Posted at [10/15/2009 01:37:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



Wednesday, October 14, 2009

First Ever Coast Guard-National Guard Bureau staff talks

Shipmates,

Today we made history at Coast Guard Headquarters when the first ever Coast Guard-National Guard staff talks were held. I extend my personal thanks to my friend and shipmate (wingman?) General Craig McKinley for agreeing to meet and discuss issues of mutual interest.



[First Ever Coast Guard-National Guard Bureau staff talks](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

We have much in common with our National Guard partners. We both operate under dual authorities that carry both national defense responsibilities and domestic law enforcement authority. We both are critical forces in responding to natural disasters. Our forces are generally dispersed and not near large bases and the support services available there.

Today we discussed how we can better plan, exercise, coordinate, and execute our missions. We have tremendous local relationships that allow us to share resources and competencies. We have agreed to continue these meetings and seeks more ways that we can collectively serve the Nation.

My thanks, again, to General McKinley and his super team for a very constructive start to a new framework for Coast Guard and National Guard collaboration.

ADM A

Posted at [10/14/2009 08:08:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



The World Needs Coast Guards

Shipmates

Last week I had the pleasure of speaking at the [International Seapower Symposium](#) hosted by my shipmate, CNO Gary Roughead. This was a great forum that brought together more than 100 Heads of Navy and Coast Guard! from around the world.

We had a great Q&A, covering topics like [piracy](#), [counter-drug operations](#) and [fisheries enforcement](#). Fact of the matter is that when you get below the top 10 to 20 developed nations in the World, what nation's need is a Coast

Guard-like service to secure their littorals, protect their natural resources and provide for the safety and security of their maritime community and interests; and through our international partnerships and exchanges, we collectively enhance our global maritime safety, security, sustainability and resiliency.

Yesterday DoD hosted a [blogger's roundtable with Commander Scott Bauby](#), Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Cutter Legare, to discuss their recent [deployment to the Africa Partnership Station](#). This is a good operational/tactical perspective of the strategic value of the Cooperative Maritime Strategy.

ADM A

Posted at 10/14/2009 10:13:00 AM [@comments](#) 



Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Thinking and Acting with Strategic Intent -- The Evergreen II Project Report

Guest Blog by CAPT Sandra Stosz - Director, Enterprise Strategy, Management, and Doctrine Oversight (CG-095)

The Coast Guard just completed the final touches on the latest cycle of Evergreen, Evergreen II (2006-2009). The project report may be found [online here](#).

For those of you who were involved with the Evergreen II workshops and interviews I hope you will find the project report an outstanding compilation of the long hours you spent providing wonderfully valuable input. The report also provides recommendations on how to roll Evergreen strategy into overall Coast Guard strategic plans, resource decisions, and policy development.

Some of you may be wondering exactly [what is Evergreen](#) (note: not to be confused with the [Coast Guard Foundation's Evergreen Funds](#), another valuable but completely separate program.) Well, we appreciate your interest and hope that after reading this post and reviewing the report, you will understand its importance and consider how you might contribute to implementing these recommendations and participating in the process in the future.



Evergreen Logo

Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

"Evergreen" signifies continuous renewal of our strategies and our strategic intent. Any navigator will tell you that knowing where you were is critical to knowing where you are going, but will likewise tell you that dead-reckoning on that position alone will often lead you into shoal waters. The Coast Guard is embracing a forward-thinking culture, gleaming lessons learned from our past, but realizing that tomorrow is unlikely to look like yesterday. Evergreen helps us avoid the hazards caused by failures of imagination by allowing us to look over the horizon beyond what Admiral Allen calls the "tyranny of the present." Evergreen allows us to think strategically about the future and chart our course toward the future Coast Guard that will best serve America.

Evergreen is much more than a series of documents, list of strategies, or even formalized processes. It is both a framework and a frame of mind for approaching investment decisions in policy and resources, and even for making tactical decisions in the field. Strategic thinking is vital for policy makers and planners at all levels in the organization, but it is not only for tropic-donned staffers conning a SWill in Washington, DC. Indeed, to become a part of our culture strategic thought must resonate along the entire length of the spear from the flag officer to the coxswain.

Take as an example a station OIC who hosts a pollution response trailer on the station's property. Realizing that simply providing parking for the trailer does little to promote readiness, the OIC requests the nearby Marine Safety Detachment to provide oil boom deployment training for the station's boat crews. The OIC also invites the fire department to participate with their boats and crews since they are likely to be employed as well in a pollution emergency. Finally, the OIC invites the local press to showcase the Coast Guard's involvement in the community and cooperation between first response partners. Perhaps the OIC realized that doing so concurrently advanced four of the Evergreen core strategies (21st Century Partnerships, Mission Portfolio Management, The Right Skills, and Communications Excellence). More likely he or she intuitively realized that regardless of what events the station may have to respond to in the future, training the crew alongside their Prevention shipmates, building strong community ties, leveraging resources, and forging a healthy relationship with local media will position them to succeed. The Evergreen strategies provide us a context to unify and strengthen this strategic thought process across the Coast Guard.

I often get questions asking how and when Evergreen will be implemented. The truth is that implementation of Evergreen strategy is an all-hands evolution. In fact, Evergreen core strategies can already be found in many current Coast Guard initiatives: Interagency Arctic Awareness Trip (Polar Mission Capacity, 21st Century Partnerships), Marine Safety Centers of Expertise (The Right Skills), Sector Development (Mission Portfolio Management). Evergreen is also being used to drive budget development and support Coast Guard senior executive decision making.

Guardians are by nature and tradition a culture of "doers." To adapt in an ever changing world, however, it is important for us to employ strategic thought at all levels so that when the SAR alarm goes off the mission is already half accomplished. I encourage you to consider attending future workshops as we renew the strategies in the next cycle, Evergreen III (2010-2013). Consider how your world of work fits into the Evergreen strategies and please take a quick

moment to learn more about Evergreen and provide feedback and suggestions on the [CG-0951 website](#) (click "Feedback" on the left navigation menu). Keep the Evergreen strategies in mind and let them be your guide as you develop policies, allocate resources, begin new initiatives, train your people, and execute your daily routine.

Posted at [10/13/2009 12:20:00 PM](#) [@comments](#) 



Sunday, October 11, 2009

Facilitating Seafarers' Access

Shipmates and Partners Around the World,

For the past several years the Coast Guard as an organization and I as the Commandant have been working to insure the seafarers who are critical to the operation of the maritime transportation system have access to and from their ships through waterfront facilities. With the implementation of the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) our seafarers have encountered problems from time to time in accessing shore through regulated facilities. I have asked RDML Kevin Cook to provide a guest post on where we stand in our effort (and commitment) to shore access for mariners.

ADM A

Guest Post by [RDML Kevin Cook](#), Director of Prevention Policy (CG-54)

With over 8,600 foreign vessels making over 82,000 visits to the U.S. each year, we still receive reports that properly documented mariners are being denied access through MTSA regulated facilities. In light of this ongoing problem Just recently, I [issued guidance to further facilitate seafarer access nationwide](#) and assist the maritime community in meeting its obligation to allow for reasonable access for seafarers at MTSA regulated facilities. While security concerns remain paramount, properly vetted and documented mariners from around the world should be allowed to depart their vessel for safety and welfare reasons. Legitimate access can be provided without any degradation of security.

The guidance to the field was the first of a "trident" approach to improve mariner access. This guidance includes a provision to ensure that each facility security plan includes a well defined process for seafarers' shore access for such activities as shore leave and crew change. It ensures that facility security plans under review, as part of the five-year renewal process, that prohibit access or fail to adequately address access are not approved. For plans already approved, this guidance places emphasis on ensuring access coordination during the facility inspection processes.

The second prong of the trident is being accomplished with the assistance of the Office of Maritime and International Law (CG-0941). Their legal review on the issue of seafarer access determined that the Coast Guard has the authority to mandate MTSA regulated facilities provide reasonable access to seafarers. This may be the subject of a future regulatory change.

The third prong involves ongoing engagement with stakeholders. I have requested that information regarding access denial, exorbitant access fees, and other overly restrictive policies be provided to Coast Guard Headquarters for Executive-Level engagement with company officials where these anomalies exist. Also to help facilitate and communicate the latest seafarer access policies, issues and best practices, the Coast Guard Headquarters Office of Port and Facility Activities (CG-544) has established a "[seafarer access community](#)" on the Coast Guard's HOMEPORT website, and outreach via other social media.

Posted at [10/11/2009 09:44:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 



Saturday, October 10, 2009

Regimental Commander, Cadet First Class Jacqueline Fitch and the Commandant "troop the line" prior to "Pass in Review" by the Corp



Shipmates,

Homecoming Weekend at the Coast Guard Academy began on Friday and included the traditional recognition of the 50th Year Reunion Class. The great class of 1959 had 48 members and we had the chance to honor them with Anniversary Medallions and a Review of the Corps of Cadets.

Prior to the order, I was in review with the Regimental Commander, Cadet First Class Jackie Fitch (Catonsville, MD) and I "trooped the line" with an honor troop with the Class of 1959 and see the Corps of Cadets so ably led by Cadet First Class Fitch.

Today is the homecoming football game ... Go Bears.

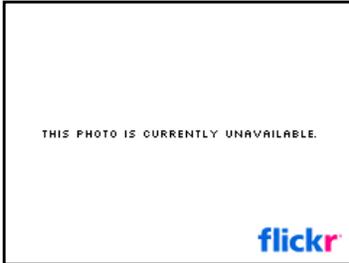
ADM A
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[Regimental Commander, Cadet First Class Jacqueline Fitch and the Commandant "troop the line" prior to "Pass in Review" by the Corps of Cadets](#)

Posted at 10/10/2009 09:47:00 AM [0 comments](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)



Mural in the Coast Guard Academy Alumni Center commissioned by Betty Siler, widow of former Commandant Owen Siler, and painted by Tony Falcone of Cheshire, CT



[Mural in the Coast Guard Academy Alumni Center commissioned by Betty Siler, widow of former Commandant Owen Siler, and painted by Tony Falcone of Cheshire, CT](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Shipmates,

Pam and I were on hand last night for the unveiling of a stunning mural that was painted for the Coast Guard Academy Alumni Center at the request of Betty Siler, wife of former Commandant Owen Siler. ADM Siler passed away last year and the mural honors him, the Service, and the Academy. Under ADM Siler's command, the Coast Guard began to admit women to the Coast Guard Academy. The mural was painted by the talented Tony Falcone who has completed several other equally striking murals for the Academy, including one of the CG 36500 rescue of PENDLETON survivors and Coast Guard action at Normandy in WWII.

Betty Siler was on hand to make remarks and we were joined by former Commandants Jim Gracey and Jim Loy and their spouses. Pam and I were honored to there. Many thanks to the CGA Alumni Association for their steadfast support of these projects.

ADM A

Posted at 10/10/2009 09:39:00 AM [0 comments](#)



Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Excellence in Partnership: ALCs Education and Workforce Recruitment Initiatives

Shipmates,

I noted last week that I received a briefing at the Aviation Logistics Center last Thursday on their recruiting programs and outreach to minority serving insitutions. The brief was impressive and I asked Yvonne Williams to provide a guest post.

ADM A

Guest Post by Ms. Yvonne Williams, Chief of Workforce Management Staff, Aviation Logistics Center (ALC) Elizabeth City.

I was honored last week to participate in a briefing for senior leaders of the Coast Guard. The subject was adapting ALC's existing recruitment programs to North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T). In attendance were ADM Thad Allen, Coast Guard Commandant, VADM David Pekoske, Vice Commandant, VADM John Currier, Chief of Staff, RADM Sally Brice-O'Hara, Deputy Commandant for Operations, and CDR William Makell, Commandant Diversity Advisor. A PDF version of the slides is available here: [/ALC%20Educational%20Partnerships.pdf](#)

ALC's Human Capital Strategy uses a lifecycle approach to address workforce issues and align personnel plans with business strategy, emphasizing the use of several civilian recruiting initiatives to build diverse applicant pools. ALC intends to adapt two existing practices -- the locally developed Apprentice Program and the sponsorship of Coast Guard Academy (CGA) Summer Interns and Capstone Projects -- to create a hybrid approach to a partnership with NC A&T. NC A&T is of particular interest to ALC because it is one of the Nation's finest engineering schools, it is relatively close, and we have a need to develop our civil service career path in engineering.

ALC has annually hosted two to four cadets as part of the CGA Engineering Department's Summer Intern Program. This five to seven week program has included projects such as: coating systems products and procedures, aircraft/engine dehumidification, corrosion mapping, and underway sheltering of aircraft. ALC has also sponsored Capstone Projects, which are typically performed by First Class Cadets. Recent projects include: Integrated Controlled Humidity Protection System (2007), HH65 Polar Operations Camera Pod (2008-2009); and Universal OE/IR Turret Removal Installation Ground Support Equipment (2009-2010). ALC has prepared over 12 Capstone Projects ideas to offer for the NC A&T Partnership and Recruiting Initiative.

ALC Apprentice Programs are aimed at enhancing Coast Guard awareness, strengthening ties with the community, addressing aging workforce issues, and broadening opportunities for our talented workforce. The ALC Apprentice Program began as a "High School" only initiative in June 2002. While apprentices are actually contractors, the program has a "Career Pathway" for entry into career fields that include: aircraft mechanic, aircraft electrician, information technology, graphics, supply clerical, photography, and office automation. To date the ALC has converted 25 student apprentices to permanent civil service status or contractor status.

In August 2009, ALC established an Adult Apprentice Program. Occupational skill sets for this program were established by ALC senior civilian managers and target junior/seniors in Bachelor Degree programs, such as Mechanical Engineering, Information Technology, and Accounting. The adult apprentice program is designed to be in sync with, and ideally feed, the Civilian Career Entry Opportunity (CEO) Program.

The NC A&T partnership proposal has an 18-month cycle that will start in the fall of a student's junior year with a visit to ALC. ALC will host two NC A&T rising seniors each summer, who can develop groundwork for an effective Capstone project their senior year. If successful, this type of program has potential across all of the new logistics and service centers, and can also enhance existing military recruiting programs as well.

It was a pleasure to represent all the employees at ALC, alongside CAPT Ed Gibbons and LCDR Tony Cella. Programs such as the one discussed in the attached presentation, are indicative of ALC's commitment toward building the workforce that can best serve Coast Guard Aviation and "Keep 'em Flying." v/r, Mrs Yvonne Williams

Posted at 10/07/2009 11:20:00 AM [Comments](#) 



Tuesday, October 6, 2009

UPDATED: MERPAC Meeting and Credentialling Update

Tomorrow, [RDML Kevin Cook](#), Director of Prevention Policy, and CAPT Staffort, CO of the National Maritime Center, will be providing an [update on mariner credentialling to the House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Infrastructure](#). The [Coast Guard Compass will be tweeting the testimony live @cgcompass](#).

Today I received some much appreciated feedback from a pleased NMC customer, he gave me permission to share it here:

Dear Sir,

I am writing to publicly praise the USCG for their outstanding work at the NOLA REC and NMC. We have all read and heard so many "horror" stories about mariners having delays and other problems with the USCG in getting their licenses renewed or upgraded, I'd like to share my recent experience.

With my license expiring in Jan 2010, I thought I'd better get my renewal package in now. On Sept 14th, I mailed my renewal package to NOLA (my REC), from Jacksonville, FL, and today, Oct 5th, I received my new MMC in the mail. 21 days! WOW!!!!

It was a painless, "cut and dry" process - just follow the check list, review your package and submit it. Everything is available on the NMC website in a user friendly format.

I have no complaints and would just like to thank the USCG for an outstanding job. I am very proud of our Commandant and his team. My only regret is that I don't know the names of the professionals at the NOLA REC and NMC to personally thank them.

Sincerely,

Bruce D. Sarsfield
Master
USNS HUNTER

This week the Coast Guard's [National Maritime Center \(NMC\)](#) hosted the quarterly [Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee \(MERPAC\)](#) meeting. MERPAC serves as a deliberative body to advise the Coast Guard on matters relating to the training, qualification, licensing, certification and fitness of seamen serving in the U.S. merchant marine. The committee members' expertise, knowledge, and experience in the U.S. merchant marine affairs are invaluable to the [Coast Guard's Office of Operating and Environmental Standards](#).

Joe Keefe, at The Maritime Executive, has a [great recap of the meeting](#), and more specifically a nice update on the performance of the NMC. We discussed [back in February](#) efforts at the NMC to clear a credentialing backlog 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. You can see the most current performance report from the NMC [here](#), showing that the backlog has been cleared and processing times are on the decline.

The improvement and performance of the NMC and our commitment to continuous dialogue with our customers and maritime stakeholders are examples of the mission execution benefits of a change centric Coast Guard committed to transparency.

Posted at [10/06/2009 10:15:00 PM](#) @[comments](#) 



Maritime Enforcement Rating Update

[MCPOCG Bowen has an update](#) on the [ME Rating](#) applicants, with the final tally coming in at over 1200 applicants! We appreciate the efforts made by all of the mentors and supervisors out in the field who helped to ensure that potential applicants had access to all the pertinent information and received the necessary support to complete these packages.

Posted at [10/06/2009 02:49:00 PM](#) @[comments](#) 



Monday, October 5, 2009

Aviation Acquisition Update -- MH-60T and HC-144 standing the watch

Last week I participated in a ribbon cutting ceremony at Air Station Elizabeth City to mark the achievement of Initial Operational Capability (IOC) for the [MH-60T](#). I was joined by VADM Currier, RADM Blore (D13 Commander and newly crowned Ancient Albatross), CAPT Doug Menders (CG Aviation Acquisition Program Manager) and CWO Montgomery Everson (Aviation Logistics Center).



[Cutting the ribbon on the first operational MH-60T now standing the watch at Air Station Elizabeth City](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

IOC for the MH-60T is defined as three MH-60T configured aircraft relied on for Bravo Zero response (three is the minimum number of a/c needed for this type of response, which is the ability to launch within 30 minutes of receiving a call) at an air station. The aircraft must also be operated by an adequately trained and equipped Coast Guard unit. Five MH-60Ts have been delivered in all; E-City has three, and two other 60Ts are at ATC Mobile for aircrew training.

One MH-60T out of E-City has already been involved in a rescue case: In August 2009, an MH-60T aircrew was diverted from a routine training flight to assist a diver suffering from symptoms of decompression sickness off the coast of Wilmington, N.C. The diver was flown to Duke University Hospital Center for treatment.

Some of the upgrades from the "J" to the "T" include:

- 1) old cockpit components/instrumentation replaced with five multi-function display screens (basically, a glass cockpit) that the crew can display weather, radar and hoist cam images onto.
- 2) Airborne Use of Force package with a 7.62mm machine gun to fire warning shots and a .50 caliber long range rifle for precise targeting, such as disabling the outboard engines on a non-compliant "go-fast" vessel. Also includes

ballistic armor for crew protection and upgraded comms subsystems for better interoperability with other DHS components.

HC-144A:

Also last week, the [HC-144A](#) assumed the watch in place of the HU-25 24/7 at Air Station Mobile (4 aircraft).

8 aircraft total have been delivered. 3 complementary roll-on, roll-off mission system pallets have also been delivered. Plans call for a total of 36.

HC-144A has much longer endurance than HU-25; depending on configuration, it can stay airborne as long as nine hours, vice four for the HU-25. Rear cargo ramp and roll-on, roll-off mission system pallet make it configurable for a variety, of cargo and transport missions.

Posted at [10/05/2009 10:44:00 AM](#) @[comments](#)



Friday, October 2, 2009

Tune into the Business of Government Hour Interview

Update: You can listen to the four-part interview [here \(mp3\)](#)

I recently had the opportunity to conduct an in-depth interview with the [Business of Government Hour](#). That conversation will air Saturday at 9 a.m. on Washington, D.C.'s CBS Radio 1580AM and rebroadcast on Mon at 11 and Wed at Noon on Federal News Radio 1500FM WFED, and again on Friday at 2 p.m. on CBS Radio 1580AM.

It will be simulcast at all of the above times on the web at [www.bigtalker1580.com](#) and [www.federalnewsradio.com](#). You will also be able to download the interview and transcripts at [businessofgovernment.org](#).

About the Show

The Business of Government Hour provides an intimate and friendly platform for government executives to discuss their careers, their agencies, agency accomplishments, as well as their vision of government in the 21st century. It is an ideal forum to outline an agency's strategic vision, highlight key initiatives, management challenges, and successes -- to inform and educate listeners.

Posted at [10/02/2009 09:22:00 PM](#) @[comments](#)



WAESCHE Ready for Early November Delivery

Guest post by [RDML John Korn](#), Director of Acquisition Programs & Program Executive Officer (CG-93)

I just returned from Acceptance Trials onboard NSC #2 in Pascagoula, Mississippi and I'd like to share my observations of WAESCHE as well as the trials process. (Note, photos available [here](#).)

First, my general observations: The National Security Cutter (NSC) is a sleeker, more nimble, capable, well-designed ship. The ride is outstanding - sometimes it was hard to feel any motion whatsoever. Unless one has clear visual cues, it is difficult to tell how fast the ship is going. From a vibration and noise perspective, 30 knots feels the same as 10 knots. The main propulsion plant is impressive and flexible, with five different modes using two diesels and a gas turbine engine. There are at least two modes that can be used for any given speed up to 26 knots.



Waesche Sea Trials

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

I rode the Short Range Prosecutor during small boat testing. The stern launch and recovery system proved safe, quick and easy for each of six launch and recovery evolutions. The NSC has several other "firsts" including a rescue door and visual tracking capability for both the 57 mm gun and the Close-in Weapons System (CIWS).

The purpose of Acceptance Trials is to provide the opportunity for the shipbuilder to demonstrate the proper design and operations of all systems and demonstrate the ship's readiness for delivery. Acceptance is a major milestone in the long process of bringing a new ship to life. Acceptance trials is an intense, structured process comprising two days of in-port inspections followed by two days underway and concludes with a final day disassembling specific equipment for more detailed examinations.

To fully inspect all aspects of a ship the size and complexity of a National Security Cutter, WAESHE sailed with 288 persons including contractors, Coast Guard personnel and the Navy Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV). In order to fit that many people aboard a ship designed for a 108 member crew, temporary racks were installed in all available locations. Evolutions were conducted around the clock with folks grabbing a few hours of sleep whenever and wherever they could - underway camping if you like. In spite of the large number of people aboard, the ship's

hotel services including water production and food service were able to keep up with the increased demand. Surprisingly, I never got the impression that the ship was crowded.

While the Coast Guard's Project Resident Office Gulf Coast conducted Builder's Trials in August, in order to provide a second set of eyes and provide an independent third party assessment of WAESCHE, CG-9 partnered with INSURV to conduct the final set of trials, as they did for BERTHOLF in May 2008. In addition to INSURV, a Trials Observation Team consisting of experienced Coast Guard officers representing all Coast Guard Technical Authorities (CG-1, CG-4, and CG-6) as well as Pacific Area Command, the Project Sponsor (CG-7) and the Prospective Commanding Officer were aboard to evaluate WAESCHE's readiness for acceptance.

Following initial dockside inspections, WAESCHE was cleared to sail and got underway on schedule at 0600 on day three. All shipboard evolutions were demonstrated including full power, high speed turns, crash stop, full speed astern, demonstration of the water washdown system, boat launch and recovery and C4ISR capabilities.

Overall, the trials were highly successful. The engineering plant performed flawlessly, turning in a top speed exceeding 29 knots. Likewise, the maneuverability of the NSC class was again demonstrated when the rudder was put hard over while at full speed. I don't recommend this particular maneuver to our Cutter Commanding Officers, but it is important to fully stress all systems prior to accepting the cutter from the shipbuilder.

In nearly all aspects, WAESCHE is far ahead of where BERTHOLF was at the same point in time. Paradoxically, the number of trial cards may not tell the story. This is due to a number of factors. First, since more systems were ready to be tested, the tests were done in greater detail. Instead of one trial card saying a given system was inoperable, there were several cards related to the finer details of system operation. Additionally, subject matter experts from the Coast Guard and the Navy are more knowledgeable and were able to test systems in more detail. Because we are able to test systems in greater detail, WAESCHE will be even further ahead at delivery.

The Navy's INSURV professional inspectors were visibly impressed with the ship in general and the propulsion and control system, the communications package, the size, capability and layout of the Operations Center, radar integration, and weapons systems in particular. The lead inspector also commented on the overall finish of the ship, stating that several compartments were what he considered "pristine", unprecedented in over 100 other inspections he conducted this year.

Following Acceptance trials, Captain Lance Bardo, prospective Commanding Officer said: "This ship is a quantum leap over the class of ship that it replaces. The handling characteristics, the sophistication of the engineering plant, the command and control suite performance, and the boat and aircraft launch and recovery systems are superb and will enable the next generation of cuttermen to do every sea going mission better. Over the last six weeks, the amount of work that Northrop Grumman has done to bring this ship to delivery-ready status has exceeded my expectations. We are ready and anxious to take delivery, put WAESCHE through her paces, and get her into the operational fleet."

"I couldn't be more pleased with the conduct and results of trials on WAESCHE," said Gulf Coast Project Resident Office Commanding Officer Captain Jim Knight. "Due to the maturity of the system design and the experience gained from BERTHOLF, we were able to complete a more robust testing program with excellent results. The beneficiaries of this process will be our most important customer which is the WAESCHE crew."

After an intense week, it's my pleasure to announce that WAESCHE performed with flying colors and is well on the way to acceptance and being placed In Commission Special in early November. It was particularly gratifying to actually ride aboard our newest cutter and see the tangible results of all the hard work, and applied learning invested in WAESCHE. Although the final INSURV report has not been released, preliminary indications are excellent and WAESCHE proudly flew two brooms from the yard arm en route Pascagoula.

RDML Korn
CG-93

Posted at 10/02/2009 04:04:00 PM [@comments](#) 



VADM Vivien Crea's Retirement and Gold Ancient Albatross Change of Watch

Shipmates,

We had a busy day on Thursday. We traveled to Elizabeth City, NC for several events including the retirement of Vice Admiral Vivien Crea (relieved as Vice Commandant on 7 August), the relief of the Gold Ancient Albatross, the ribbon cutting for the first MH 60 T operational unit, and a brief by the Aviation Logistics Center leadership on their outreach efforts to recruit a diverse workforce. These events coincided with the Annual "Roost" of the Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl (the Coast Guard Aviation Association). We will be blogging about each of the events over the next day or so.

The following report was carried in the [Daily Advance in Elizabeth City](#).

Blore replaces Crea as Ancient Albatross
USCG commandant attends ceremony



VADM Vivien Crea's Retirement
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

By DIANA MAZZELLA
Staff Writer

Thursday, October 01, 2009

On any other day, it might be strange to see a Coast Guard vice admiral donning a crown of flowers or another admiral being handed a Pterodactyl egg. But at Ancient Albatross Change of Watch ceremonies, just about anything goes.

Coast Guard Commandant Thad Allen, who was in attendance for Thursday's Change of Watch ceremony, said as much when he commented about the diversity of Coast Guard uniforms being worn for the event at Air Station Elizabeth City.

"Thanks for joining us at one of the more unique events in the Coast Guard where any uniform can be worn," Allen said.

Some of the hundreds of active and retired Coast Guard personnel wore the regular Coast Guard blues, while aviators wore green flight suits.

Vice Adm. Vivien S. Crea, however, had on the costume attracting the most attention.

As the outgoing holder of the Ancient Albatross award, Crea wore a knee-length leather flight jacket, white scarf, goggles, leather helmet and accompanying earrings of helicopters and airplanes.

Crea retired shortly before the ceremony after 36 years in the Coast Guard. One of the first female Coast Guard pilots and the first female Ancient Albatross, she served as vice commandant until a few months before her retirement.

The Ancient Albatross award is presented to the longest-serving active duty Coast Guard aviator. The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyls, a Coast Guard aviation fraternity, in town this weekend for its annual meeting, funds and coordinates the Change of Watch ceremony.

Allen stressed the importance of remembering Coast Guard aviation's beginnings and celebrating the Coast Guard's aviation past that includes traditions like the Ancient Albatross ceremony and humanitarian service through daily missions. The traditions and history have led to new milestones such as the Coast Guard's assistance to the U.S. Navy by providing marksman and observers in naval helicopters.

"So it's really, really important to understand the significance of this beyond the weirdness of it," Allen said.

And there was a lot of weirdness.

As Crea handed off her Albatross garb to Rear Admiral Gary T. Blore, she put on the symbols of her new post-Coast Guard life as a flower child. Dressed in tie-dyed T-shirt, blue flight suit, beaded necklaces, sunglasses and flower crown she prepared to take on her future while celebrating her time as an aviator.

Though she has served in the second-highest job in the Coast Guard, it wasn't her time in command as a bureaucrat or flight officer that she enjoyed most. She loved any flight she took whether it was over ice sheets near Greenland spotting whales, striking birds on takeoff or the hair-raising experience of teaching a co-pilot to land.

"The reigning Ancient Albatross has surpassed all of his or her contemporaries in longevity, surviving a career in aviation begun with ulcerated instructors and terror-stricken crews," the program read.

Blore, commander of the Coast Guard's 13th District in Seattle, Wash., is now the 22nd Ancient Albatross since the award was first handed out in 1965.

Enlisted aircrew members began to receive a separate Ancient Albatross award in 1990. It is now held by Senior Chief Petty Officer Pete MacDougall.

Aside from the gear, Blore was given a Pterodactyl egg by the aviation association to represent the young and future aviators that he must nurture. The Foundation for Coast Guard History presented him with a print of an early Coast Guard airplane to remind him to share the agency's history with those who step inside his office.

Blore lauded Crea for her efforts of promoting professional development while serving as the Ancient Albatross. He encouraged new and experienced pilots to relish their role in this exciting time in Coast Guard aviation in which the C-130, CASA, and helicopters join the Coast Guard's discussion of deploying unmanned aerial vehicles.

Following the ceremony, the air station held a second brief ceremony in a nearby hangar to mark the first operational MH-60T Jayhawk in Coast Guard service.

An updated version of the HH-60J, the helicopter has updated communications, glass cockpit, and law enforcement and sensing equipment, according to a Coast Guard release. The helicopter, stationed in Elizabeth City has been sent out on missions since May 2009. It includes ground mapping technology, advanced weather radar that differentiates between heavy and light rain, and a moving map that allows pilots to be more aware of surrounding hazards.

Doris Creps, public affairs officer for the Coast Guard Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City, said the upgrade to the Jayhawks began a few years ago with a prototype. By the project's end, all 42 of the Coast Guard's Jayhawks at eight air stations will have the improvements.

Creps said the new package includes five touch screens that replaced panels of dials.

Posted at [10/02/2009 06:11:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 



Thursday, October 1, 2009

Coast Guard Search and Rescue Testimony

We appreciated the opportunity to testify to the House T&I Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation on our [Search and Rescue mission performance](#). As RADM Brice-O'Hara, Deputy Commandant for Operations, stated in her written testimony, quoted from [Pub One](#):

At the heart of the Coast Guard ethos is the belief that every man and woman in our service is a guardian. To guard is to watch over or protect from harm...The Coast Guard is renowned throughout the world for saving lives...Our reputation is based on personal courage and selflessness that goes back to [our] earliest days...Nothing fills us with greater pride than the stories of harrowing rescues in which professional Coast Guard men and women returned would-be victims safely to their families against all odds. It is no accident that these are stories of success. Preparation for the moment - born of excellent training, support, and equipment blended with courage, discipline, and selflessness - is our hallmark.

But she also stated:

Even with the best technology, however, search and rescue remains a mixture of art and science. A SAR case is impacted by human factors ranging from initial reports by anxious or panicked mariners to judgment calls by Coast Guard personnel working under the most pressing of circumstances. The sea remains a dangerous and unforgiving place. Given the nature of the environment, unfortunately, lives are going to be lost. I mentioned with pride that in 2008 we saved 4,912 lives; I mention with sadness that 825 lives were lost, 534 of which were lost prior to Coast Guard notification.

So the challenge is this: How do we continue to provide our people with the best training and technology to help mariners survive?

You can watch a [video of the hearing here](#) and read the [subcommittee's full summary of the subject](#) matter, as well as DCO's [written](#) and oral statements -- [/SAROralStatement.doc](#)

The hearing was being tweeted live @uscoastguard, below are the tweets:

Congressman Cummings is opening the hearing with some background on the USCG SAR efforts

Congressman Cummings is talking about USCG watchstanding procedures

USCG is implementing Rescue 21 and getting newer, more capable assets to the fleet

"Our motto Semper Paratus "Always ready" is constant reminder that we must retain a "bias for action," - RADM Brice-O'Hara

"In 2008, the USCG prosecuted 24,000+ SAR cases, saved 4,910 lives & assisted 31,628 people in distress" - RADM Brice-O'Hara

USCG has made several significant technological advancements within the past 5 years to improve SAR operation - RADM Brice-O'Hara

SAROPS – one of the most advanced search and rescue planning tools in the world <http://ow.ly/rRyR> - RADM Brice-O'Hara

Rescue 21-the recapitalization & upgrade of the national distress radio communication system <http://ow.ly/rRzT> - RADM Brice-O'Hara

"Search and rescue is a mixture of art & science" - RADM Brice-O'Hara

Our servicemembers and employees are better equipped, organized and trained for worldclass SAR performance - RADM Brice-O'Hara

The sea is a dangerous & unforgiving place. Unfortunately, lives are going to be lost - RADM Brice-O'Hara

We will never be satisfied until our people are provided the best training & technology to help mariners survive -RADM Brice-O'Hara

Beyond watchstanders in the Command Center, several other people in the chain of command that are contacted - RADM Brice-O'Hara

All members in the SAR chain of response are qualified SAR personnel - RADM Brice-O'Hara

We have added scenarios into the SAR training programs to provide hands-on experience - RADM Brice-O'Hara

"Do you use real past cases during training" - Congressman Cummings

We do include historical and more recent SAR cases to train and educate members - RADM Brice-O'Hara

We are not staffed to have a full complement of fully training Command Duty Officers - RADM Brice-O'Hara

Even if/when we get the people, we will have the issue of juniority to deal with - RADM Brice-O'Hara

It takes time to train & adequately prepare these members to understand & manage the vast missions of the USCG - RADM Brice-O'Hara

VMS (Vessel Monitoring System) is a great SAR resource but it is not a SAR program <http://ow.ly/rToN> - RADM Brice-O'Hara

EPIRB is a very important tool to saving lives at sea <http://ow.ly/rTuZ> - RADM Brice-O'Hara

When a SAR call comes in, we have technology to record, slow down, clean up and playback the call - RADM Brice-O'Hara

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