

**STATE OF THE COAST GUARD ADDRESS**

**Washington, D.C. – February 13, 2007**

**OVERALL THEME: NEW THREATS, NEW  
CHALLENGES, NEW STRATEGY**

Thanks to the Cutters and Ms. Barbara Semiaten  
Acknowledge high ranking attendees

Welcome Chairman Cummings,  
Coast Guard Subcommittee Staff...

Director Mark Sullivan

Welcome Chief Paulison and Asst. Secretaries for the  
Department of Homeland Security

Happy to see so many partners today from DOD, DOJ, the  
FBI and other federal agencies we work with

Welcome Admiral Gracey, Admiral Loy  
Jim Link from the Coast Guard Foundation/Acknowledge  
passing of Peter Finnerty

And special thanks to the Washington Area Coast Guard  
Area Association for putting on this event!  
Thanks to my family – sister Wanda, Mom and Dad, and  
my wife Pam.

Thank you all for coming today and a special welcome to our shipmates representing our active duty, reserve, Auxiliary, civilian, and retired communities. Industry partners, and Congressional Staff ...

I can report to you today –

The State of the Coast Guard is strong but we have challenges before us.

We have never been more relevant and we have never been more visible to the Nation we serve.

Our challenge is to position the Service for the future. That is the challenge I will address today.

I can report that we continue to be inspired by the operational excellence demonstrated by the people of our Service.

That excellence is the collective effort of extraordinary women and men who live our core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty everyday.

As we meet here today, Coast Guard Cutter MIDGETT is crossing the Atlantic after departing Seattle last fall. She will complete an around the world cruise including service in the Persian Gulf in the middle of March.

In the lobby is a picture of CAMPBELL taking water over the stern as the crew attempted to pass a towline to a fishing vessel taking on water last week off New England. Our crews face these difficult operational challenges daily.

There is also a video depicting a Port Angeles, Washington H65C helicopter that was re-engined through the Deepwater program. It is conducting a dangerous high altitude hoist of an injured climber in the Olympic Range. The hoist would not have been possible prior to the re-engining.

As you can see, America's Coast Guard is on watch.

But despite the tremendous work of our Coast Guard units all across the globe, much remains before us.

As we move forward, we remember with great sadness the loss of our shipmates on HEALY last summer and the need to always focus on readiness to execute our missions.

We also continue to think of our personnel assigned to the Gulf Coasts, as they rebuild their lives and Coast Guard stations at the same time.

The World is changing and America's Coast Guard is changing.

Today, I will outline how it is the Coast Guard is evolving to confront the challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Looking to the future, there are three things the Coast Guard needs to do:

- (1) We need to understand our dramatically changed operating environment;
- (2) We must change to sustain and improve mission execution; and
- (3) We must be more responsive to the needs of the nation.

Before I discuss these, let me take a minute to recognize some of the great work our Coast Guard heroes do for the safety and security of all Americans. Some are here with us today.

*Safety (SAR)* – In 2006, we helped close to 45,000 people in distress, saving more than 5,000 lives. Joining us today, are **Petty Officer Christopher Grantham**, a Rescue Swimmer from Air Station Miami and **Petty Officer Manny Gonzales**, a rescue boat coxswain from Station Key West. They worked together with other Coast Guard units to save the lives of three fishermen aboard a boat sinking off the Florida Keys last month. The HH-65C helicopter flying on this case was one of the first in our fleet to get new, more powerful engines through our Deepwater program. Thank you shipmates.

*Security (LE)*— Last year, the Coast Guard stopped nearly 300 thousand pounds of drugs from making their way onto our shores and into our communities. We interdicted nearly 8,000 illegal migrants at sea, and boarded more than 6,000 fishing vessels. Two years ago, we set an annual record for cocaine seized, and we've sustained that pace.

*Security (Homeland Security)* – In a few minutes I’ll be talking to you about how we are going to improve our operational capabilities. Before I do that, I want to highlight the incredible work our men and women are doing securing our ports throughout the country. We provide security for

- military outloads in our ports,
- National Special Security Events from coast to coast,
- and high risk boardings around the world.

We are called upon, not only because of our unique authorities, training and expertise, but because of our hard earned reputation for getting the job done. **Petty Officer Darcey Sugarbaker** is here from MSST 91101 in Seattle. She is a K-9 handler who responds with our multi-agency partners to threats against our ports and critical infrastructure. Last year, she supported local authorities in clearing a suspicious device at a community center in suburban Seattle. For her expertise and professionalism she was a nominee and runner up for the National Women in Federal Law Enforcement award. Congratulations Petty Officer Sugarbaker.

*Security (Operation Iraqi Freedom)* – Not only are we working to keep America safe here at home. We have 6 patrol boats and more than 300 men and women deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. **Chief Warrant Officer George Paidousis** just returned from the Green Zone, where he served as the Special Assistant to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Attaché and Country Director for Iraq in Baghdad. There, he was part of a team responsible for developing security plans for the Baghdad airport. He also worked with Iraqi forces to establish the Iraqi River Patrol on the Tigres River.

As one of more than 8,000 Coast Guard Reservists, he embodies the true spirit of our Service. Our Reserve forces have been a critical factor in our ability to sustain operations in the current threat environment. Please join me in thanking all of our Reservists for their dedication to duty.

***Stewardship (Aton/Environmental Pollution Response)*** –

Responsible stewardship of our oceans and waterways is a core Coast Guard mission. It's a mission Americans benefit from every day, often without realizing the work that it demands. This year, we inspected 97,000 aids to navigation – that's more than twice the number of people in the entire Service. We also responded to over 4000 reports of hazardous materials and oil discharges, keeping the oceans clean and safe as we protect our fragile ecosystems for the next generation.

One particular case stands out this year. We recently concluded a multi-year, multi-agency investigation of illegal discharge of oil. **Lieutenant Commander Bud Darr** is here representing the team of CG men and women who, working with DOJ and federal agency partners, obtained the largest ever criminal settlement for deliberately polluting our waters – \$37 million dollars.

*Stewardship (Auxiliary Support)*

We also have **Auxiliarist Bernie Tullington** with us today. Bernie served this Nation his entire life, graduating from West Point, serving two combat tours in Vietnam, and retiring from the Army as a Lieutenant Colonel. Today he stands the watch in our National Response Center which receives reports of hazardous material and oil spills throughout the nation. Thank you for your service and to all of our volunteer Auxiliarists for the hard work they do around the Coast Guard – their compensation is nothing more than just the opportunity to serve.

*Off-duty (CG Character)*

Coast Guard men and women don't stop serving their country when they step off base to go on liberty. I am proud to have **Petty Officer Preston Lambert** with us from New Orleans today. This morning, I had the pleasure of presenting him with the Silver Lifesaving Medal, one of the highest honors for courage demonstrated off duty.

While he was on leave with his new bride on a Florida beach, he spotted a drowning man being pulled out to sea in a riptide. The man was not alone – his wife and a friend were out there too, and were quickly drifting apart. Without hesitation, PO Lambert dove into the water, putting their lives before his own to rescue all three people. Thank you, PO Lambert. Your actions remind all of us why we serve.

**Stacey Spadafora** is a Program Analyst in our Budget Shop. She is the Reviewer for the Deepwater Acquisition – no simple task. She is also a Sergeant First Class in the U.S. Army Reserve – a Military Intelligence Specialist. She recently returned from serving a second deployment in Afghanistan as the Senior Human Intelligence Collector for the 341<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion....

And there are times when I think the budget battle is rough....

Stacey doesn't normally wear a uniform, but like our entire civilian workforce, her work is critical to the successful execution of all of our missions. Let's give her a big hand.

Thanks to each of you for your service, sacrifice and devotion to duty.

As I said, and as you have proven by your performance, our Coast Guard is strong today.

But as we honor these individuals, we also need to recognize that we face significant challenges that will require us to think and act differently.

Threats and hazards evolve and we **must** evolve with them.

**The World is changing and America's Coast Guard is changing.**

Consider this ...

Since 9/11 we have

- deployed Port Security Units to domestic ports,
- maintained continuous waterside security in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba,
- sustained the deployment of six patrol boats in the Persian Gulf,
- and maintained stability in Haiti during the departure of President Aristide.

We now routinely conduct multi-agency operations with our Homeland Security partners.

We have developed standard operating procedures to flow forces to U.S. Northern Command or receive supporting forces,

Our coordination of responses to off shore threats through the Maritime Operational Threat Response protocols is the gold standard for interagency coordination and cooperation.

Our response to Hurricane Katrina has taught us that we must also be capable of coordinated operations under the National Incident Management System with diverse responders such as FEMA urban search and rescue teams, the National Disaster Medical System, and non-governmental organizations.

And even as we have moved into this new operating environment, we have continued execute our traditional missions. We manage risk on daily basis more so than any time in our history.

Folks, this is a radically changed mission environment. My father is in the room and this is not my father's Coast Guard.

We haven't just expanded our missions since 9/11. The entire Coast Guard has grown.

Since 9/11 we have added 4,000 people to the Service and our annual budget has nearly doubled to \$8 billion dollars.

The Coast Guard needs to evolve to keep pace.

Our challenge going forward is to adapt our

- forces,
- command and control structure,
- and mission support organization

so that we are

- flexible,
- nimble,
- and capable of operating with multiple partners

in response to

- specific incidents,
- surge operations,
- and increased threat levels

while sustaining our performance in our traditional missions.

**This** is our Coast Guard, the Coast Guard of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The practices of the last century are not adequate for this century.

Our command and control structures, our support systems, and our business practices have in some cases failed to keep pace with our rapid growth and the expansion of our responsibilities.

We can sustain our operations like this for a while, and we will always muster all hands for events like Katrina. But we cannot do it indefinitely.

If you compare our business processes with those you encounter everyday - searching for information on google, shopping on line, or using an ATM, some just don't compete.

**I don't believe we can continue to operate this way.**

My task is to explain the way ahead – what we need to do to bring the Coast Guard into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

First, we need to understand how the world is changing.

We are a nation with 95,000 miles of coastline. We depend upon our oceans for the safety and security of our population and economy. Globalization has transformed maritime trade into the linchpin that connects a worldwide network of interdependent economies through the supply chain. Beyond our ports, advances in technology and changing environmental conditions continually revolutionize the world's use of and access to the outer continental shelf, the Arctic, and the high seas. We work in the Global Commons

From the early days of the Revenue Marine to the protection of U.S. maritime interests following 9/11, we have confronted asymmetrical, transnational threats. We protect the marine environment and guard its natural resources. We defend our nation at home and abroad. And we save those who cannot save themselves.

## **The World is changing, and so is our Coast Guard.**

We need to become more agile, flexible and responsive.

Specifically - we need to do 3 things:

- (1) We need to make our force structure more responsive to mission execution.
  
- (2) We need to make our support systems more responsive to our operators.

and

- (3) We need to make the Coast Guard more responsive to the needs of our Nation.

**1. What do I mean by making our force structure more responsive to mission execution?** We need a clear coherent way to employ our forces to create a layered defense for the Nation. We need to consider our operational forces as a strategic trident.

- Shore-based, multi-mission forces assigned to Sectors;
- Long Range patrol and interdiction Deepwater forces and our Polar Icebreakers; and
- Deployable specialized forces organized into a single unified operational structure, the Deployable Operations Group (DOG).

It is also time to remove the distinction between our Atlantic and Pacific Coast Guards. Drug trafficking organizations and other transnational threats don't recognize our organizational boundaries. Our structure at times works against us in operations with Joint Interagency Task Forces and Combatant Commanders whose Operating Areas are not the same as our Area boundaries. It's time we have one commander in the field responsible for Mission Execution – one single point of accountability completely focused on planning and executing operations. We will do this by combining our Atlantic and Pacific Area command functions into a single Coast Guard Operations Command.

This will improve global resource allocation, force generation, and improve risk management that is now done largely at the tactical level.

## **2. What do I mean by making our support systems more responsive to the needs of our operators?**

Since becoming Commandant, I've had the opportunity to visit every Coast Guard District and talk with many of you personally. I have held All Hands with nearly 10,000 personnel.

You have told me that you are concerned with the adequacy of our logistics, administrative, and financial systems. You told me we have too many separate processes and data systems. You are frustrated by the lack of uniform systems and doctrine. We have conducted in depth studies regarding our maintenance, logistics, and financial systems and those studies validate what you have told me. More importantly, many of these systems do not adequately support mission execution now, let alone our future challenges.

We have been running some parts of the Coast Guard like a small business, when we are a Fortune 500 Company. It is time to have just

- One checkbook for the Service,
- and one single support organization for each of our surface, air, and C4ISR domains.

It's time we have just one senior leader responsible for Mission Support --- someone who can unify and standardize our maintenance, logistics, human resource, and other support systems across all units and all missions.

We will transition to a new Mission Support Organization to establish this single point of accountability. This organization will combine the skills, resources, and talents currently residing within in our Atlantic and Pacific Maintenance and Logistics Commands and Centers of Excellence. It will also require us to retool our service delivery systems in the field. This mission support organization will support our transition to a unified logistics system based upon a bi-level maintenance model consisting of depot and unit-level maintenance throughout our Service.

We will establish Logistics Centers, similar to our aviation center, for surface forces, C4ISR, and shore facilities.

It is important to note that, the mission support organization will also unify the Chief Acquisition Officer, the Deepwater Program Executive Officer, and the Service's Technical Authority, our Chief Engineer, into a single organization focused on life cycle management of our cutters, aircraft, and sensors.

As I have testified before Congress, As the Commandant, I am responsible for Deepwater, and we will get it right!

Many of you are familiar with the 10 Commandant's Intent Action Orders I issued last year upon assuming command – CIAOs as we've been calling them. Each CIAO focuses on one aspect of the transformation we need to make internally to better organize and align our support systems with our operations.

For example, a single financial accounting system will help us manage scarce resources while increasing transparency to the public and being fiscally accountable. We need an integrated business system that:

- aligns with DHS systems and programs,
- reduces the number of financial accounting systems in use,
- consolidates logistics tracking systems, and
- integrates human resources with financial data

Our new core accounting system will also simplify the way we buy, track, maintain, and dispose of our ships, aircraft, boats and equipment over its entire life-span.

This transformation is already underway.

I've just told you how we need to be more responsive to mission execution and more supportive of our operators.

I want to focus now on making the Coast Guard more responsive to the needs of our Nation. I am talking about thinking, planning and acting with strategic intent. . I am talking about setting priorities for the Coast Guard that address the emerging threats and hazards of an expanding global economy and changing world. As I share these priorities, you will notice a common theme. We are not going it alone. Our strategic priorities require unity of effort and partnerships at every level of government, and with the private sector.

The priorities I am talking about are the backbone of the Coast Guard Strategy for Maritime Safety, Security and Stewardship. We just completed it, and you will be the first to receive a copy. Don't forget to grab one on the way out. For those who aren't with us, we'll also be posting a copy online.

This Strategy is not a one year plan – nor is it a 20 year vision. The Coast Guard Strategy will guide strategic change within our service through my tenure as commandant.

It is derived from the National Strategy for Maritime Security and other national plans and supports the goals and priorities of the Department of Homeland Security. It describes changes in the maritime domain and charts our course to build new capabilities to better prepare for the future.

The Strategy is also an integral part of my ongoing efforts with Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen and Marine Corps Commandant General Jim Conway to integrate our services in a common global maritime strategic framework. Together, our efforts will provide a comprehensive framework for us to work together to meet U.S. national security requirements, both at home and abroad.

This new Strategy has three primary goals:

- (1) To strengthen our maritime regimes
- (2) To increase domain awareness,
- (3) To enhance our operational capabilities

*Strengthening maritime regimes* is the process of creating coordinated and interlocking domestic and international laws, regulations, treaties and practices that increase transparency of activity, reduce risk, and balance competing uses within the maritime domain. We also need to focus international engagement to improve maritime governance. We can all benefit from strong maritime relationships around the world, because today's global maritime system ties U.S. interests to all nations throughout the global commons. These concepts link closely to Admiral Mullen's Global Maritime Partnership initiative.

For example, we are working with the International Maritime Organization to implement long range tracking, and to expand AIS carriage requirements to smaller, less regulated vessels. We're also beginning to discuss what we need to do to address regimes regarding recreational vessels, uninspected tug and barges, and small passenger vessels.

*Achieving awareness in the maritime domain*, including intelligence and information sharing at all levels of government is a key to our maritime security. Better awareness of what is out there leads to better unity of effort in maritime planning and operations. We need to have a common operating picture.

Conversely, unity of effort in planning and operations feeds our knowledge and understanding of the threats. We also need to integrate our operational capabilities and efforts with our private sector partners to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from incidents.

We've already made great progress in increasing our awareness through Global Maritime Intelligence Integration, Joint Harbor Operations Centers, Field Intelligence Support Teams and other joint-agency partnerships with state and local officials as well as the private industry. The Department's recent efforts to standardize more reliable maritime worker credentials through TWIC is a great example of how we can increase awareness.

Going forward we intend to build out the National Automated Identification System, complete work on Rescue 21 and build out a Common Operating Picture with a corresponding Common Intelligence Picture.

We will do this in partnership with our DHS counterparts as we seek to build an integrated air, land, and sea operating picture for the Nation.

*Enhancing our operational capabilities* includes building Coast Guard capabilities for national defense. The nation needs highly capable, interoperable U.S. Navy and Coast Guard capabilities along its own coasts, on the high seas, and deployed abroad in support of U.S. national security interests. Our operational capabilities also include developing a national capacity for Marine Transportation System recovery following an incident in our ports. The nation needs a coordinated, integrated approach to planning for and responding to major disruptions in our marine transportation system, the lifeblood of America's economy.

To build out our capabilities for National Defense, we are working closely with our Navy and Marine Corps partners on a National Maritime Strategy. Our forces will operate together and need to effectively communicate. We are already integrating training at our Center in Petaluma, California, for the Navy Littoral Combat Ship crews and our crews for the National Security Cutters.

In the area of Recovery, this Fall we held our first National Maritime Recovery Symposium with our Industry partners....

We will continue to develop and exercise regional plans for Recovery following disasters.

Finally, I would like to talk about the value of Unity of Effort in transforming the Coast Guard.

Partnerships can make things happen not otherwise possible. Much of what I have talked about today involves more than just the Coast Guard. We rely on our partnerships at every level, across government, with private industry, and with the support and understanding of the American people. We have never enjoyed a better relationship with the Navy and Marine Corps in intelligence and harbor security operations. We look to expand our relationship with the Navy as it develops a national maritime strategy and works to build out its capability and capacity in Naval Expeditionary warfare.

We also look to expand our relationships with each of the military Combatant Commanders as they develop and implement plans in support of our national security interests. When it comes to domestic matters, DOJ is a critical partner in the safety, security and stewardship of our maritime interests. We need to achieve unity of effort with the FBI in those areas where a joint, maritime response to potential threats is the winning formula. We look forward to doing all of this as we give life to the Coast Guard Strategy.

We are making significant improvements in our inter-agency coordination. Through MOTR, or Maritime Operational Threat Response, an operating concept developed to support the National Strategy for Maritime Security, the Coast Guard is regularly the mission coordinator in cases of national significance. We are already seeing great progress within the Department of Homeland Security under the leadership of Secretary Chertoff. My close working relationship with Commissioner Basham, Director Sullivan, Assistant Secretary Myers and each of the other component heads and Assistant Secretaries has been vital to my ability to do what I need to do to serve the American people. The Coast Guard is a better organization for being in the department and the department is a better organization because of the Coast Guard.

I could give examples in almost every mission area – search and rescue, drug interdiction, fisheries enforcement, environmental pollution – you name it. We are on MOTR calls with principals from our partners from DHS, DOJ, and the State Department, every week. Our MOTR process defines unity of effort.

To illustrate this unity of effort, I'd like to highlight a recent case the **M/V Tong Cheng** – The Tong Cheng began as a Search and rescue case involving a Chinese merchant vessel taking on water off Hawaii, but evolved into one involving security and stewardship. It's a great example of how we are leveraging partnerships and employing our Strategy across our safety, security and stewardship roles.

- We saved 26 lives, prevented a ship from sinking.
- We coordinated with state, local and federal agencies to prevent a threat to a U.S. port.
- We prevented environmental damage to nearby sensitive maritime areas and as the ship as the ship was stabilized and brought to port for repair.
- We did this not only through national, but also international coordination,.

The Tong Cheng is just one example of how our priorities, outlined in the new Strategy, are closely aligned and tied together. The Coast Guard's maritime safety, security and stewardship responsibilities work together in a synergy that enhances our ability to save lives, secure our borders, respond to natural disasters, and protect our environment.

Change is necessary.

Everything that I have spoken about today is related to change and our capacity to understand and deal with it.

As we navigate the Coast Guard in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we must understand that change is not something that occurs every 5 or 6 years when we are prompted by external events. It is something that is happening every day in our operating environment. We must build a Coast Guard that continually senses change and continually adapts.

While the transformation I have talked about may sound radical, it is not so different than what our predecessors did to get us to where we are today.

On August 4<sup>th</sup>, 1790, Alexander Hamilton established the Revenue Marine with a fleet of 10 cutters. For 6 years, the Revenue Marine stood as the Nation's sole armed force afloat, protecting the country from pirates, enforcing revenue laws, and keeping Americans safe.

A century and half later, Commodore Bertholf adapted us to the world of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, merging the Revenue Cutter Service and the Lifesaving Service, into the Modern Day Coast Guard. With remarkable agility, he then turned around the Service and prepared Coast Guard forces for deployment overseas to fight in World War I.

Hamilton and Bertholf understood we need to evolve with the changing times.

A little over one year ago I was hunched over a lap top in a hotel in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Trying to capture the thoughts I have passed today, I thought about these leaders and the challenges they faced in their own times as I considered the challenges we face today.

I was inspired by their vision and conviction as I put my own ideas for the future of the Coast Guard down on paper in advance of my interview to be the Commandant.

Inspired by our performance in Hurricane Katrina but sobered by the challenges that we must face going forward, I made the personal commitment to be a Commandant of change, transition, and transformation. I did not ask for this job to maintain the status quo.

It is my intention to answer the challenge of this century. You have my total commitment.

But, I will not succeed; the Coast Guard cannot succeed without the help, support, and dedication of each one of you who serves.

You are critical to the future of America's Coast Guard.

Here is what I need from the Coast Guard men and women here with us today, and for all the men and women serving around the world.

I need your commitment. I need you to commit to the idea that we need to change and that we can change, together.

You need to understand where the Service is going and how I intend to make the case for change before Congress and the American people.

That information is clearly spelled out in two important documents. The first is the Coast Guard Strategy for Maritime Safety, Security and Stewardship that was unveiled here today. The second is the Budget in Brief, an overview of our Fiscal Year 2008 budget request. They are both available on line. Everyone needs to read these documents closely.

I also need the patience and tenacity you bring to your work every day. We are embarking on a process that will take several years to implement. We must act deliberately with strategic intent, but we must act now. We can no longer wait for external events, political pressure, or the tyranny of the present planning activities. Instead, we will reorganize our operational forces and realign our mission support systems to better serve the American people while being driven by the strategies that lead us into the future.

I have met with the senior leadership of the Coast Guard this week for the third time since assuming my duties. We are all in agreement that change is necessary – and necessary now! At each meeting we have discussed and developed the basic assumptions and concepts to move us forward. I will be providing you more information over the next several weeks so you can become familiar with the terms.

We must now create the detailed plans for transition. As more detailed plans are developed I will share them with you. I will continue to communicate directly with you. The process will be transparent.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the presence of what I would call vested stakeholders. That group would include our partners in the administration, congress, and industry.

I work with “all of you” “all of the time “

I spend a lot of time defending what we have done in the past, why we need money this year, and what we will do in the future.

This is a perfect opportunity to put the question to you.  
What kind of Coast Guard do you think the country needs?  
What kind of Coast Guard are you prepared to support?  
What does port security and maritime security really mean  
and what are we prepared to do to reduce risk, increase our  
presence, and source to strategy.

The past decades have taught us in the Coast Guard to  
Respond without question to saves lives and protect  
property  
To use the resources we have  
To depend on strength of those who have gone before  
We will continue to do that, but we need to have a broader  
conversation with America about what we mean when we  
say port security and maritime security. I urge you to  
review our strategy and let us know what you think.

We look forward to the conversation.

To everyone present today ...

I have committed to the Secretary and the President to build a Coast Guard that will be Semper Paratus not just today but tomorrow as well. It will be a journey of learning and change. It will be challenging at times but it is necessary.

To the men and women of the Coast Guard –  
When I accepted the responsibility of being your  
Commandant, I knew I could count on three things:

First, I would have the support of the Secretary and this  
Administration ... I have that, and I will continue to work to  
earn the support of Congress.

I also knew my task would not be to operate the Coast  
Guard but to transform it. I can operate and you can too.  
We have proven that. We must do more.

Finally, I knew I could count on your commitment. This is  
the most critical piece. I can't just order the Coast Guard to  
change, I'm asking you to join me in one of the most  
important and challenges we have faced in the post World  
War II Coast Guard.

The success of this endeavor will be measured not by my commitment, but yours. My challenge is not to force change on the Coast Guard, but to make the Coast Guard understand that change is necessary.

Just as we have always understood that we are lifesavers, we now must understand we are also saving America's way of life.

The World is changing and America's Coast Guard is changing.

**I invite you to join me in the journey.**