



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON 20593

18 May 2005

The Commandant of the Coast Guard takes pleasure in presenting the **COAST GUARD MERITORIOUS TEAM COMMENDATION** to:

TOPOFF-3 EXERCISE PLANNING TEAM

For services as set forth in the following

CITATION:

“For exceptionally meritorious service from June 2004 through April 2005 as a member of the TOPOFF-3 Exercise Planning Team. Demonstrating exceptional foresight, organizational skill, and dedication to duty, members of the TOPOFF-3 Planning Team meticulously planned, ensured Coast Guard personnel preparedness, and executed the demanding TOPOFF-3 exercise. TOPOFF-3 which was held between April 4-8, 2005, was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (SLGCP) and served to highlight Coast Guard operational, incident management, and exercise planning excellence. TOPOFF-3 was especially unique as it provided the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and 200 other federal, state, local, tribal, private sector, and international agencies and organizations with the first real opportunity to validate the recently released National Response Plan. In all, there were an estimated 10,000 individual participants playing in the exercise in 4 venues simultaneously. Energetic and well organized, team members undertook and overcame the daunting task of coordinating and aligning the planning efforts of all participating Coast Guard units, including Group/Marine Safety Office Long Island Sound, District One, Integrated Support Command Boston, Coast Guard Academy, Air Station Cape Cod, National Strike Force Coordination Center, Atlantic Area, and Commandant. A staff planning committee was established that met regularly to identify and resolve cross organizational barriers and build informal networks of problem solvers. Despite the complexity of the scenario, which included a biological agent release in New Jersey, a chemical agent and high-yield explosive incident in Connecticut and the United Kingdom, and post-incident effects of the biological incident in the United States and Canada, the planning team used existing planning documents and developed realistic expected player actions which successfully guided exercise control. Assessing the scope and importance of the exercise, the TOPOFF-3 Planning Team created a detailed billet map. Based on this billet map, the team identified shortfalls and acquired the necessary resources to ensure the Coast Guard’s success at an exercise that had White House level attention. Team members highlighted Coast Guard operational excellence to the media and over 200 VIP’s through briefings and tours while the exercise was underway. Following TOPOFF-3, team members expertly facilitated an exercise hotwash and captured valuable lessons learned in an after action report. The dedication, pride and professionalism displayed by the members of the TOPOFF-3 Exercise Planning Team reflect credit upon each team member and the United States Coast Guard.”

For the Commandant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. J. Boynton".

P. J. BOYNTON

Captain, U. S. Coast Guard
Commander, Group/Marine Safety Office Long Island Sound