



07 September 2004

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

FIRST COAST GUARD DISTRICT ICE OPERATIONS
2003 - 2004

for service set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service from December 2003 to March 2004 in the execution of domestic icebreaking operations during a winter of unprecedented ice accumulation. Demonstrating superior coordination, resource management, and operational expertise, First District personnel overcame frigid weather, surmounted ice accumulations up to three feet thick, juggled competing operational demands, and responded to a significantly ice-impacted ATON infrastructure in a coordinated effort to keep the vital ports of the entire New England region open to commerce. Through their efforts, critical food and fuel oil deliveries proceeded unabated despite extremely low temperatures that saw natural gas and home heating oil prices skyrocket, electrical generating and home heating systems stretched to their capacities, and the demand for electricity peak to a twenty year high in New England. By logging over 2300 hours in domestic icebreaking operations and providing 552 vessel assists, First District personnel made possible the high priority deliveries of food and 35 million barrels of petroleum and gas products to the homes and businesses of the region. As ice, wind, and tidal fluctuations created extremely hazardous conditions in Buzzards Bay, Nantucket, and New York Harbors, the respective Coast Guard Captains of the Port (COTP) imposed operational restrictions that increased vessel safety and prevented potential environmental disasters. With commendable agility, the safety of New York City was enhanced during the holiday season as unit's skillfully balanced icebreaking and homeland security missions. Incorporating aerial reconnaissance into the mission mix, over 411 hours of ice observation over-flights helped allocate icebreaking assets and were incorporated into COTP waterways access planning. When operations permitted, a record 969 aids to navigation discrepancies were corrected as units successfully maintained the integrity of First District waterways. As conditions improved, First District cutters provided flood relief on the Kennebec River ensuring significant ice buildups dissipated and flowed out to sea without impacting communities situated along the river's banks. The professionalism, pride, and devotion to duty displayed by First District personnel and units are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard."

The Operational Distinguishing Device is authorized.

For the Commandant,

V. S. CREA
Vice Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Commander, Atlantic Area