



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
WASHINGTON 20593  
13 August 2001

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

U. S. COAST GUARD TROPICAL STORM ALLISON RESPONSE FORCES  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

for services as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service from 8 June 2001 to 15 June 2001 while organizing and performing disaster relief and pollution and waterways response operations during and following Tropical Storm Allison. On the evening of 8 June 2001, Tropical Storm Allison dumped more than 36 inches of rain that severely flooded the greater Houston area, killing 22 people, damaging \$4.9 billion dollars in property, and closing the Houston Ship Channel. Before emergency responders realized the severity of the flooding, urgent demands for assistance began. Group Galveston immediately launched all available Search and Rescue assets and, assisted by Marine Safety Unit Galveston, established a unified incident command that responded to more than 800 emergent calls for evacuation. Air and surface assets from throughout the Eighth District, organized by the District's Incident Management Team and led by Air Station Houston and Marine Safety Office Houston-Galveston respectively, assisted or rescued more than 260 people in urban flash flooding conditions in a 36-hour period. In violent weather, surface response assets faced unknown water depths, chaotic currents, biological hazards and displaced wildlife, while helicopter crews braved unfamiliar and treacherous urban landscape hazards and operated beyond normal work-rest allowances due to the grave nature of the emergency. Under the leadership of Coast Guard unified incident command, a multi-agency effort addressed myriad serious marine pollution and port safety issues, including two large acid spills, 1,200 cubic yards of flooded oiled debris, hundreds of drifting drums and tanks, and the breakaway of two large freight ships and 40 barges. Despite silting, increased currents, and flood debris, Vessel Traffic Services Houston-Galveston strictly and safely controlled movement on the Houston Ship Channel. In the aftermath of the storm, Aids to Navigation Team Galveston effected one-day turnaround fixes to 70 damaged or destroyed navigation aids and USCGC HARRY CLAIBORNE provided detailed channel depth soundings, enabling restoration of normal traffic flow in the nationally significant ship channel within four days. During post-flood response, the unified incident command demonstrated outstanding interoperability, coordinating efforts of 80 responders including the Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, and a multitude of state, local, and private entities. The Coast Guard Response Forces' excellent command and control ensured safe response operations despite numerous hazards, prevented millions of dollars in collateral property damage to vessels and waterfront facilities, and ensured safe navigational controls during flood and post-flood conditions. The professionalism, pride, and devotion to duty displayed by members of the U. S. Coast Guard Tropical Storm Allison Response Forces are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard."

The Operational Distinguishing Device is authorized.

For the Commandant,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. W. Allen".

T. W. ALLEN

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