



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON 20593

21 November 1994

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

**COAST GUARD MARINE SAFETY OFFICE
GALVESTON, TEXAS**

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For meritorious service from 9 October 1993 to 17 November 1993 while responding to the catastrophic explosion and sinking of the Tank Vessel OMI CHARGER in Galveston's inner anchorage. Immediately assuming the role of Federal On Scene Coordinator, Marine Safety Office personnel closed the Houston Ship Channel, coordinated the firefighting effort by industry vessels and mobilized pollution response organizations and equipment. At their direction, environmentally sensitive wetlands were boomed to prevent oil contamination. Marine Safety Office investigators reported to the scene, assessed the damage to the crippled vessel, and investigated the cause of the casualty. Their comprehensive investigation materially assisted the National Transportation Safety Board in completing their follow-on investigation. Upon completion of the emergency phase of the operation, Marine Safety Office personnel demonstrated an exceptional level of technical skill and competence in the supervising and assisting with the salvage of the remaining hulk. Through painstaking calculation and review of proposed actions, not a drop of the 8500 barrels of fuel oil was spilled and the integrity of the hulk was maintained until it could be safely towed from the scene. The outstanding efforts of the Marine Safety Office ensured that the nationally critical Houston Ship Channel was restored to full operation within hours of the casualty, no oil was spilled and salvage operations were completed promptly and without further personnel or material casualties. The professionalism, devotion to duty and determination displayed by the men and women of Marine Safety Office Galveston 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 "R. C. North", written over a horizontal line.

R. C. NORTH

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District