



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON 20593

18 October 1996

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

GREAT LAKES 1995-1996 WINTER OPERATIONS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For exceptionally meritorious service from November 1995 to May 1996 during the Great Lakes Aids to Navigation decommissioning and icebreaking season. In early October 1995 temperatures across the Great Lakes unexpectedly dropped far below normal, causing ice to form before the winter decommissioning of aids to navigation could be completed. Working through weekends and holidays ACACIA, BRAMBLE, SUNDEW, BRISTOL BAY, BUCKTHORN, and Aids to Navigation Teams Detroit and Buffalo completed 108 hours of icebreaking and over 600 hours of ATON work. In addition, BUCKTHORN, SUNDEW and Aids to Navigation Team Buffalo began decommissioning aids early to minimize the loss of buoys and equipment. As a result of the early decommissioning, long hours and hard work by all personnel only 19 of the District's 1225 buoys were lost. Many of the buoys that were recovered were precariously close to shore, in shipping channels, or as much as 25 miles from their charted positions. After ice forced some units to return to port, ACACIA, BRAMBLE and BRISTOL BAY decommissioned all remaining aids, including Canadian Coast Guard aids. As the focus shifted from buoys to icebreaking, the buoy tender and icebreaker fleets worked around the clock maintaining shipping lanes and assisting commercial vessels stuck in the ice. SUNDEW logged a record number of hours devoted to icebreaking, while ACACIA assisting the community on Beaver Island by delivering needed fuel and freeing the island's ferry from the ice. BRAMBLE ferried 3,477 passengers in 59 ferry trips for Harsen's Island when ice shut down the island's ferry service. Along with assisting 102 vessels in Northern Lake Michigan, MOBILE BAY supported JUNIPER's icebreaking performance evaluation. BRAMBLE and BRISTOL BAY worked alongside the Canadian Coast Guard to flush ice through the St. Clair River System while MACKINAW, KATMAI BAY, BISCAYNE BAY and NEAH BAY moved over \$5 million worth of cargo through the Sault St. Marie locks during the locks' spring opening. The professionalism and dedication exhibited by the Coast Guard men and women of the Great Lakes 1995-1996 Winter Operations 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 that reads "Kent H. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

KENT H. WILLIAMS
Vice Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commander, Atlantic Area