



## All Hands Messages

### *Commandant's All Hands Message – Coast Guard Day*

#### Commandant's All Hands Message - Coast Guard Day

To the Men and Women of the Coast Guard:

August 4th marks the 217th birthday of the United States Coast Guard. As America's lifesavers and guardians of the seas, Coast Guard men and women have committed themselves to serving our Nation and its people with honor, respect and devotion to duty for more than two centuries. This year we celebrate a remarkable milestone in our history. The Coast Guard has saved more than one million lives since 1790. What could be a greater calling than to save lives? No other federal agency does what we do, and no other service has such a broad array of missions and responsibilities that touch the lives of so many people, all across America, and to the farthest reaches of the globe.

Since the earliest days of our Nation when we braved the surf in wooden boats, the Coast Guard has been there. Through eleven wars, in the aftermath of the most horrific terrorist attacks to hit U.S. soil, and in response to devastating natural disasters, we have been there for the American people when they needed us most. It was 70 years ago, in fact, that the Coast Guard rescued a total of 43,853 people and 11,313 heads of livestock during the 1937 Mississippi flood, eclipsing the number of lives saved in our most recent Hurricane Katrina operations.

This year also marks the International Polar Year and the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Northwest Passage. For the Coast Guard and the Nation, the Arctic represents a new frontier with new challenges and opportunities. It will be your courage, your commitment, and our core values, that will guide us as we plot a safe course through the uncharted waters that lay ahead far into the 21st century.

Today, as we celebrate our birthday, take a moment to think about why you serve, and how your contributions make these extraordinary accomplishments possible. Whether you are on patrol in the Florida Straits, responding to a fishing vessel grounding in Alaska, or preparing for deployment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, you are the reason for our exceptional reputation. You provide this country with the safety, security, and stewardship of our oceans demanded in an uncertain time and an often dangerous world. Wherever you are stationed, whatever jobs you do, and whatever missions you execute or support, you are vital to our success and the people we serve. Every member of the Coast Guard is a lifesaver.

To our entire active, reserve, auxiliary, civilian and retired workforce and your families, thank you for all that you do. I wish you a happy and safe 217th birthday!

Admiral Thad Allen  
Semper Paratus!

All Hazards...All Threats...Always Ready

