



All Hands Messages

Commandant's New Year's Message

To the Men and Women of the United States Coast Guard:

We have witnessed the passing of another year. Proper log entries have been made and the watch continues. For those deployed or standing the watch this holiday season I pass on the thanks of your shipmates and our Nation for your service and sacrifice. We hope that soon you can embrace the arrival of the New Year, restore your personal readiness, and spend time with loved ones. For those fortunate enough to celebrate the holidays with family and friends, I hope you return to your duties having taken time to reflect and refresh.

In the last year your personal effort and dedication have been critical in post-hurricane disaster relief, dramatic search and rescue and law enforcement cases, complex environmental responses, record setting drug seizures, effective maritime safety and security, unprecedented support to U.S. Combatant Commanders around the world, and the establishment of a presence on the north slope of Alaska. You are America's Maritime Guardians.

Looking forward, the New Year brings a transition in our Nation's government. The peaceful, orderly and respectful transfer of power from one administration to another is the enduring legacy of our effort to create "a more perfect form of government." Working with our Homeland Security partners we are providing briefings, background materials, and data that describe the Coast Guard's unique role as a maritime, multi-mission, law enforcement and military Service. We are working collaboratively to ensure a seamless transition with the President-Elect's Agency Review Team (ART) and the designated Secretary of Homeland Security. At the same time we are committed to insuring the continuity of mission execution. I continue to meet regularly with Secretary Chertoff and recently had my first meeting with Secretary Designate Napolitano.

Transition and change in leadership are routine for military personnel. The traditional change of command script recites the purpose as "conveying to the officers, enlisted personnel, civilian employees and auxiliaries that although the authority of command is relinquished by one person and is assumed by another, that command authority is maintained without interruption." The uninterrupted transfer of total authority mirrors the transition of our civilian senior leadership. The difference between these transitions is the transfer of political power of our civilian leadership and the apolitical continuity by the military in providing for the defense of the Nation. It is a long established concept that began with George Washington's voluntary resignation of his commission in 1783 before

becoming our first President. In that long standing tradition we will continue to execute our military roles and missions under the direction and orders of our Commander-in-Chief as we “support and defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic.”

Let us commit ourselves to mission execution and mission support in a modernized Coast Guard, to living our core values, and being Guardians of the American Public and one another. Thank you for the tremendous work you do every day.

Happy New Year!
Admiral Thad W. Allen
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

