



U.S. Coast Guard History Program

State of the Coast Guard Address [2009] Q&A Follow-up

Overview: The following Q & As resulted from our solicitation for questions before and during this year's State of the Coast Guard Address. Some of the questions submitted may not appear in their entirety because multiple submissions may have covered the same topic and were combined for clarity.

This document is organized into the following sections: Those questions that were asked and answered at the State of the Coast Guard Address; those questions that were submitted at the State of the Coast Guard Address, but we were unable to answer during the allotted time; and those questions that were submitted online via iCommandant but were unable to ask at the State of the Coast Guard Address.

For those questions that were asked at the State of the Coast Guard Address, the original answer provided by the Commandant is included. In some cases, we have provided additional information on the requested topics, as well as links to other sources of relevant information. In those cases, we have clearly delineated between the original answer and supplemental (in italics) information.

Questions Answered at the State of the Coast Guard Address:

Q1. On the topic of marine safety performance, the commercial maritime community has complained the last couple of years of a shift in Coast Guard focus from traditional roles, specifically marine safety. A generalization of the complaints is that the Coast Guard is not adequately staffed with experienced inspectors. Additionally, many of the inspectors are junior and inexperienced, especially when compared with the shipmasters, chief engineers and port personnel that they are regulating. What is the Coast Guard doing to address these challenges?

A1. Thanks for the question. We've actually been addressing this issue for about 18 or 24 months. And I would just say this: Almost the same answer I gave on the acquisition organization. I think we need to look at where we're at today rather than two years ago. We're not where we need to be, but we certainly have thrown a lot of resources and put a lot of energy into this issue. Over 300 positions have been added to the marine safety program. We're looking at a blended workforce of OCS and academy accessions that ultimately move up to become a professional marine inspector. We are also looking for

creating civilian positions for continuity and consistency between the ports. And we also look, of course, to our enlisted and warrant lieutenant program in that middle ground there to give us some bench strength as well.

We're creating centers of expertise, focusing on the various industry segments whether it's liquefied natural gas, the brown water tow boat industry, oil and offshore gas exploration, cruise ships, so forth, including our merchant mariner credentialing system in West Virginia.

We're putting resources on this. Somebody once told me: You don't make policy without spending money. We're spending money.

I put out unambiguous guidance to the field on how I expect our people to interact with the maritime transportation sector. I've gotten really positive feedback from folks like BIMCO who actually did a survey and told us that it was going the right direction. So I would call it a work in progress. But we need to have you give us the feedback. And I would tell anybody, if you've got a problem, go directly to your Sector Commander and Captain of the Port and make the problem known early to them so they can take care of it.

Q2. Topic is environmental protection. Is there any possibility that EPA and the Coast Guard will sign a memorandum under which the Coast Guard will enforce the EPA's Vessel General Permit?

A2. Well, as you know, we're in a little bit of a transition period here right now. We're up against a hard deadline. We had a lot of court action that was involved in this. We now have a general discharge permit. I had a very close relationship with the last EPA Administrator. I met quarterly, breakfast, lunch, wherever, to go through these problems. I have no problem at all signing an agreement with EPA and partnering as we move forward on this.

Q3. Topic is LORAN. The President's budget overview proposes eliminating LORAN, which will leave the nation without a primary back-up for GPS. What problems do you foresee if E-LORAN is not funded and deployed?

A3. I'm going to make a distinction between operating LORAN and a back-up for GPS. While one could be the other, it doesn't necessarily have to be. The policy decision was taken to terminate LORAN-C. Negotiations, discussion and outreach to stakeholders will continue on the requirement for back-up to GPS. Should that back-up become E-LORAN, that's something that can be addressed in the future.

We've vacillated for years on LORAN-C. We have stations in Alaska. They're operating with 1960s vacuum tube technology that has yet to be converted. It is time for an up-or-down vote on LORAN-C. It has served this country well. There's not a maritime navigation requirement for it, but regarding positioning and timing, those requirements need to be generated in the interagency, and the Department of Homeland Security will have the lead on that effort.

I would say also, as a former LORAN-Commanding Officer in Southeast Asia, I have two vacuum tubes sitting in my office at Coast Guard headquarters. They were similar to the ones at my station in Lampang, Thailand, which I closed in 1975 after the fall of Saigon. And those same tubes are being used in Alaska today.

Q4. The topic is Arctic policy. Do you envision a return of ice breaker funding from the National Science Foundation to the Coast Guard in the 2010 federal budget? In the current economic and budget climate, do you see ice breaker funding increasing or decreasing? Do you foresee the return of Polars to Operation Deep Freeze duties or continuation of the National Science Foundation outsourcing it to foreign contractors?

A4. We were provided guidance with the 2009 appropriation that there should be a fund-based transfer between the National Science Foundation and Coast Guard to sustain ongoing base funding of our ice breakers. We're currently working that issue inside the administration in advance of the roll-out of the budget in April and more to follow. Well, if I could put the horse before the cart, first we need to stabilize our current fleet and resolve the funding issues between the Coast Guard and the National Science Foundation. Then we need to have a requirements development process that takes us to where we need to be for ice breaking requirements in the Arctic. There's a new national security presidential directive that's currently under review by the new administration. Need to go to an alternatives analysis whether the current ice breakers can be rehabbed or what to do about potentially new ones.

I'm more concerned about losing current capability and putting this country in a position where they're at risk and unable to establish presence in the Arctic. The current ice breaker fleet is my main focus.

The first thing we have to do is resolve the base funding. If we follow the guidance that was provided by the Congress and remove that to the Coast Guard, I, for one, am in favor of resolving this for good and coming up with a mechanism where we provide the services and National Science Foundation doesn't feel they have to mortgage their base funding or deal with another country or another entity to provide those ice breaking services. The Coast Guard should be doing this.

[The National Science Foundation (NSF) contracted the Swedish icebreaker ODEN to break out McMurdo Sound for five years starting with Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) 2008, so ODEN is expected to conduct the mission through ODF 2012. Should ODEN require assistance, Coast Guard expects that NSF would request POLAR SEA deployment to McMurdo. The Coast Guard is not aware of ODF icebreaker support requirements beyond ODF 2012; however, NSF is better positioned to definitively respond with ODF plans as that agency oversees all aspects of Operation Deep Freeze.]

Q5. The topic is the war on Iraq. In light of President Obama's recent announcement of significant troop reductions in Iraq in August 2010, how will that

affect the Coast Guard's shoreside presence in Bahrain and the future of the six 110-foot patrol boats currently operating in the Persian Gulf?

A5. The current discussion is regarding ground combat forces in Iraq. There's no -- there's been no clear discussion on what the naval forces should be out there. The current challenge right now, as you know, is providing security to the oil platforms which constitute the majority of the GDP for Iraq. That discussion has not occurred yet.

Q6. The topic is recapitalization. Two parts to this question, sir. The first one, how will the Coast Guard learn from the mistakes of BERTHOLF while building the rest of the national security cutters and other offshore assets?

A6. I think I just explained it, but let me give it one more try here. We have a new acquisition organization. We have clearly delineated roles and responsibilities on how we develop requirements and who owns the requirements. We have clear and delineated roles and responsibilities for our technical authorities which ensure that any acquisition meets the standards and specifications put forward. And we have acquirers that are partnering to do that.

We have a review of the structural issues that were associated with the BERTHOLF. They've been reviewed by the Navy. We are in agreement. We can achieve the fatigue life projected with the changes envisioned for the future cutters. I believe the program is stabilized.

The best example I can give you of the new organization is the award of our fast response cutter, the Sentinel Class Contract, that survived both the GAO and a court challenge as being properly awarded.

Q7. What is the Coast Guard doing about its other recapitalization needs such as shore infrastructure?

A7. Shore infrastructure is a problem. I've tried to push that up as close to \$100 million a year as I can. I think we'll get there this year because of the money that was provided in the stimulus package. Our challenge will be to sustain that level in subsequent years. But right now I'm very satisfied with where we are. We probably need to look at the out years and whether or not that will be sufficient.

[Continued operations from our aging infrastructure do come with a risk. We have been mitigating this risk as best we can while considering the other urgent requirements competing for the limited AC&I funding available. I have given specific guidance to my resource staffs to develop a plan to restore Shore AC&I funding levels and aligning this funding with industry standards. This remains one of my top budget priorities.]

In addition to the \$68M of Shore AC&I funding appropriated in our annual FY09 Budget (a 66% increase above FY08) we have taken advantage of every opportunity for additional funding and have been able to secure \$300M in FY09 Hurricane Supplemental

funds, as well as \$88M for Shore AC&I needs in the FY09 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). These funding streams will be used, for example, to repair and improve Gulf Coast facilities damaged during the 2008 Hurricane Season, recapitalize other high-priority facilities such as SUPRTCN Elizabeth City's Thrun Hall Barracks and repair failing waterfront facilities at Station Indian River. In addition, over 20M in FY09 Deepwater logistics funding will build piers, support buildings and spaces for new National Security Cutter and Sentinel Class cutters.]

Q8. It's on departmental leadership. As mentioned in your prepared remarks, there's a new Secretary of Department of Homeland Security and she has already articulated a different perspective from the previous Secretary. How will this different perspective affect the Service's roles and missions?

A8. I think the Secretary brings a fresh perspective on what the Department does. If there's anything unique to Secretary Napolitano, it is her ability to see things from the position of the state and local governments. She came from that community. She is personal friends with the other governors in the National Governors Association. And I think she brings a perspective of what it's like down on the ground, or, as she says, boots on the ground. She knows what it's like to be the chief executive officer of a state and the implication of federal policy. It's not unlike some of the feedback we get on the cumulative impact of regulations, lack of continuity on federal policy between states and states initiatives in the absence of federal movement on regulations.

So I'd say that's a very fresh point of view that she brings to the department, and we appreciate it.

Q9. The topic is seafarer access. What is the Coast Guard doing to ensure that required facilities security plans incorporate measures to address seafarers access to shore leave?

A9. We provided pretty clear guidance to our captain of ports and our sector commanders. And I've personally spoken at numerous meetings, conferences regarding this. If there's a problem with shore leave, this needs to be immediately brought to the attention of our Captain of the Ports. While sometimes we lack the hard legal capability to force something to happen, our role in the leadership -- our leadership position in the ports can make a significant difference but we have to know that access is being denied in a near real time space and time so we can react and deal with the facilities. We support mariner access, bottom line.

[Language in the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) preamble to the implementing regulations and Navigation Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) guidance strongly encourages facility owners and operators to provide mariners with facility access under reasonable terms. However, the Coast Guard does not have a legal basis for mandating specific access conditions.]

The Coast Guard's facility security program update message in May of 2008 encouraged each Captain of the Port (COTP) to engage when issues involving seafarers' access through facilities were brought to their attention. A second message, ALCOAST 529/08 issued in October 2008, further reinforced the level of engagement expected from field units and COTPs when seafarer access issues come to their attention. To quote the message, "Captain of the Ports (COTP) should encourage, support, and facilitate vigorously any accommodations at regulated facilities, including but not limited to escort provisions, to make shore leave and access to seafarer welfare organizations possible." The Coast Guard has enjoyed substantial success with this approach of interacting directly with facility owners and operators to improve access opportunities for seafarers as well as access to vessels for seamen's welfare groups. In addition, the Coast Guard continues to leverage its relationship with the industry partners in its Federal Advisory Committees, specifically the National Maritime Security Advisory Committee (NMSAC) to assist the Coast Guard in identifying additional solutions to this issue.]

Q10. Next question has to do with pay parity with the Department of Defense. Given some of the aspects of the changes in government spending, is the Coast Guard's military compensation package in danger of no longer mirroring the Department of Defense's?

A10. Well, our compensation and benefits are established in the National Defense Authorization Act, not in our authorization act. So our benefits are the same. Sometimes we have access issues on special programs because they don't clearly state Armed Forces, they may say DOD. We have to work those issues. But on pay it's all laid out in the National Defense Authorization Act. Now, how that's funded within the DOD appropriation and DHS appropriation is another matter. And we do seek parity and equity in making sure that is fully funded.

Q11. The topic is Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), and the question is: What is the current status of UAV, for the Coast Guard?

A11. Regarding high altitude UAVs, we have joined together with Customs and Border Protection to create a joint program office with the Department of Homeland Security. I don't see any reason why the Coast Guard should be out in front leading the development of a maritime predator program if we already have one up and operating inside the Department with Customs and Border Protection. The challenge is to create a maritime variant with a sensor that will give us the surface coverage that we need in a high altitude UAV.

I think we also have the challenge of coordinating with the Department of Defense. And both of us have the challenge of access to air space dealing with the FAA. And I think there's a real opportunity for DHS to partner with DOD in that regard.

On vertically launched UAVs we've had discussions with the United States Navy regarding their Fire Scout development, which is going to be the UAV for the littoral

combat ship. I've agreed with Gary Roughhead (Navy CNO) that we need to take a look at whether or not the Fire Scout is a capable UAV for the National Security Cutter.

Q12. The topic is the size of the Coast Guard. What is the current manpower strength of the Coast Guard and what is the overall goal?

A12. I said last year, and I'm not going to retract it because I said it, and I can't take it back, that we are capable of growing by 2,000 a year at our accession points without making an additional investment.

Now, having that capacity on one hand begs the issue of whether or not that will be possible in the current fiscal environment. It's clear, and I said on many occasions, the demand outstrips our supply for services.

A decision on how big the Coast Guard should be moving forward, especially in this fiscal environment, is something we'll have to work with the new administration. I'll tell you this, and I said this last year, this notion of doing more with less needs to leave our lexicon. You only do what you can with what you've got. And if you have mission creep or you have additional demands placed on you that you increase your risk position of what you don't do, and that's the discussion we have to have.

Q13. The topic is modernization. How will we measure the success of modernization if we define our ultimate mission execution as our 11 outcome measures, how will each segment of modernization move our outcome measures in a positive direction?

A13. That's an outstanding question, especially for an old budget (guy) like me. Here's the deal: This is a chicken and an egg thing. We can take a look at our performance measures and see how we can get better granularity in what we're trying to achieve and the effect we're trying to achieve, or we can create an organization that is more responsive and more competent to develop those measures.

I have not been sanguine with our performance measures for several years. Most of them predate 9/11. A lot of them don't accurately indicate what we're doing out there. And a lot of them are dealing with performance that takes place where we don't own the entire environment and somebody else may have an impact on the outcome. My goal would be to stand up force readiness command, properly allocate functions and responsibilities, and I think, for my successor, a real central issue is going to be taking a look at performance measures, are they adequate and are they the right things we should be measuring.

Unanswered Questions Submitted at the State of the Coast Guard Event:

Q1. What plans are there for the HC-144 simulator?

A1. In Fiscal Year 2009, the Coast Guard plans to develop the acquisition documents, up to the point of Request for Proposal (RFP) release, for a HC-144A full motion / mission simulator to be located at the Coast Guard Aviation Training Center (ATC) in Mobile,

Alabama. Once funding becomes available, the RFP will then be released immediately, saving approximately 8-10 months in the total acquisition cycle time.

The building designed to accommodate the HC-144A simulator was funded with \$7.1 million of Fiscal Year 2008 Deepwater Logistics funds. Construction of the building began February 2009 and is scheduled to be completed February 2010. If the project proceeds as planned, the simulator is expected to be ready for pilot / crew training in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2012.

The Coast Guard has enlisted the services of the Naval Air Warfare Center - Training Systems Division (NAWC-TSD), Orlando, Florida for project management, administration, contracting, engineering, and test support for this acquisition effort.

Q2. Conditions in the Arctic are changing. What value does the Coast Guard operating in the region bring to the country?

A2. The United States is a maritime nation and the Arctic is primarily a maritime domain. The changing conditions in the Arctic will produce its greatest effects in the maritime region. As a result of these changes, the maritime Arctic is becoming more accessible while also becoming more dangerous. As human activity in the Arctic increases the requirements to protect U.S. natural resources and the environment, enforce U.S. laws, ensure the safe passage of cargoes and people on its waters, and rescue those in distress will do so as well.

In addition to scientific research, the recently issued National Security Presidential Directive-66/Homeland Security Presidential Directive-25, which is currently being reviewed by the Administration, established U.S. policy addressing national and homeland security, sovereignty, maritime transportation, energy, and environmental protection interests in the Arctic. The Coast Guard is the primary federal agency responsible for Maritime Safety, Security, and Stewardship and we bring the U.S. the full range of benefits to address that spectrum. Since 1965, the Coast Guard has also served as the Nation's sole source of polar icebreaking capability, experience, and knowledge. The Coast Guard is currently studying future demands in the Arctic to be prepared to execute its 11 statutory missions in the region and to support our national interests. Tied to the seas for security, commerce, and resources, America must protect its maritime borders from unlawful intrusion and uphold its maritime sovereignty and with the correct mission-skills and operational experience, the Coast Guard is poised to lead.

Q3. How many icebreakers and other ships does the Coast Guard need to effectively patrol the Arctic?

A3. The Coast Guard concurs with the following conclusion of the 2006 National Research Council report "Polar Icebreakers in a Changing World: An Assessment of U.S. Needs":

The committee believes that the nation continues to require a fleet that includes a minimum of three multi-mission ships. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of an earlier study, the 1984 United States Polar Icebreaker Requirements Study conducted by the U.S. Coast Guard, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), NSF, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Defense, Maritime Administration, and Department of Transportation. It is also consistent with a 1990 Presidential report to Congress that reiterated that polar icebreakers were instruments of national policy and presence and that three (multi-mission) polar icebreakers were necessary to meet the defense, security, sovereignty, economic, and scientific needs of the nation (together with a fourth, dedicated research ship, the PALMER). The committee agrees with the findings of the two previous reports. In addition, the committee notes that icebreaking needs have increased since 1990 and will continue to increase into the foreseeable future.

The Coast Guard is currently conducting a mission analysis of the Coast Guard's statutory missions in the Arctic that will serve as the basis for future Arctic resource requirements.

Unanswered Questions Submitted On-Line prior to State of the Coast Guard:

Q1. What is the Coast Guard doing to improve the following at NMC?

- **Decrease application processing time.**
- **Decrease wait time for phone service at 1-888-I-ASK-NMC.**
- **Decrease the medical evaluation processing time.**
- **Improve consistency between regulation, evaluators, and past USCG decisions.**
- **Improve customer service generally.**

A1. Parts 1, 3-5 of your question are answered here: Coast Guard Works to Clear Mariner Backlog.

The call center is currently receiving 21,000 contacts a month. We are trying to decrease wait time for phone service by:

- Increasing call center staffing to provide support to mariners.
- Expanding the number of phone lines for the call center.
- Using storefront operations at the 17 Regional Exam Center to assist mariners.
- Mariners can send emails should they have difficulty contacting the call center.

Q2. How much of the modernization that the Coast Guard would like to implement will have to be scaled back because of the economy? What are some areas where you feel the need is too urgent to scale back?

A2. The need to functionally align the Coast Guard is driven by changes in our external environment and the need to improve internal business processes. Modernization must

proceed regardless of the status of the national economy or the Coast Guard's budget situation.

Coast Guard Modernization is neither a down-sizing effort nor a service growth initiative. It is an effort to best position the Coast Guard to meet the ever changing needs of the 21st century. During the Modernization planning process, leadership identified opportunities to increase the size of the workforce in order to perform new organizational functions and improve performance of existing functions. The identified staff increases are not required to implement Coast Guard modernization but realignment of existing resources may be needed to fill the highest priority requests given a constrained budget.

At this stage of Coast Guard Modernization, the most important area requiring action is the establishment of our basic organizational elements, listed in no specific order: the Deputy Commandant for Operations (DCO), Deputy Commandant for Mission Support (DCMS), Force Readiness Command (FORCECOM), and Operations Command (OPCOM). The Coast Guard is working closely with Congress to develop the necessary legislation to establish this new organizational construct. In preparation for the anticipated receipt of legislation, the Coast Guard will continue to align organizational functions while complying with existing legislation, and exceeding Congressional notification requirements.

Q3. Admiral, are there any plans to deploy TACLET's or CG cutters as part of NATO's "Standing Response Maritime Group" (SNMG) or the American Task Force 151?

A3. The USCG has not received any Request for Forces (RFF's) from U.S. European Command for any TACLETs or CG Cutters to support NATO's SNMG efforts.

A Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) and USCG Cutter BOUTWELL are currently deployed in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility. These USCG units support CTF-151 as directed by Central Command. LEDET 405 recently assisted in the apprehension of 16 suspected pirates from two different events.

Q4. What steps is the Coast Guard planning to take to address the safe manning and crewmember fatigue problem found on many domestic and foreign vessels?

A4. The Coast Guard is addressing fatigue domestically through the voluntary Crew Endurance Management System (CEMS) program. CEMS is based on scientific knowledge about human physiology and restorative sleep requirements. CEMS participants develop an awareness of the risk factors that induce fatigue and decrease situational awareness. With this awareness, they use the scientifically developed tools and tactics in CEMS to minimize the risks.

The Coast Guard is helping the U.S. maritime industry understand the various risk factors and minimize the perception that managing fatigue is difficult. To do so, the Coast Guard works through existing partnerships to help operators identify risk factors and

implement control strategies. The Coast Guard also conducts extensive training with companies trying to combat fatigue with CEMS and works with others to demonstrate the feasibility and ease of effectively managing endurance.

The Coast Guard acknowledges a voluntary program is not equivalent to formal regulations addressing fatigue related risks for domestic operators but notes that CEMS is a viable step towards generating the cultural changes needed to reduce the barriers and burdens of any hours-of-service requirement. The Coast Guard continues ongoing development of scientifically supported hour-of-service regulations to combat crew fatigue.

Representing the U.S., the Coast Guard for the last several years has served as the coordinator of a comprehensive revision of the International Maritime Organizations (IMO) Circular A.890 (21) for the minimum safe manning of ships. An IMO work group recently completed a draft revision now being circulated to the appropriate committees for comment and ultimately formal adoption by the IMO. The revision is based largely on the work provided to the IMO by the U.S. This circular is currently non-mandatory, however IMO members recently agreed to a proposal by the United Kingdom and supported by the U.S to transition the non-mandatory guidelines into mandatory regulations under the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention. IMO States support a manning evaluation framework that is goal based rather than prescriptive and adaptable to the specific operational circumstances of each ship. The U.S. with the support of other nations has insisted that any safe manning framework includes evaluation of fatigue. For U.S. ships on both domestic and international voyages, the Coast Guard has long standing regulations and policy for safe manning. Our objective is to enhance international regulations and enforcement efforts through the IMO states and enforcement for manning which fully considers the impact of fatigue on crew performance. These international regulations will also apply to foreign ships applicable to SOLAS that call on U.S. ports and will enhance our enforcement posture for port state control.

Q5. What steps is the Coast Guard planning to take to address the problem of inadequate training of crewmembers that is found on increasingly sophisticated domestic and foreign vessels (for example, ECDIS)?

A5. 46 CFR Subchapter B contains the requirements for the training of US seafarers, and the Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) , 1978, as amended, contains the training requirements applicable to seafarers on foreign vessels coming into the United States. Furthermore, 46 CFR 15.405 requires that individuals serving on vessels must become familiar with the relevant characteristics of the vessel on which engaged prior to assuming his or her duties, including vessel arrangements and equipment (such as navigation equipment). This requirement is also applicable to foreign vessels coming into the United States, as prescribed by the STCW Convention.

The International Maritime Organization is currently reviewing the requirements in the STCW Convention to address inconsistencies within the Convention, and to address

technological advances on board vessels. Some of the additional changes that are currently under consideration are electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS), integrated bridge systems (IBS), integrated navigation systems (INS), and engine resource management. Additionally, mariner training and competence is evaluated under the Coast Guard inspections program.

Given the existing regulations and ongoing international work, the Coast Guard is not planning to introduce additional regulations on this matter at the present time. Regulatory changes may be necessary once the amendments to the STCW Convention are finalized.

Q6. Can the Coast Guard take any steps (such as designating small vessels as having no secure areas for MTSA purposes) to reduce the TWIC burden for owners/operators/crewmembers of small vessels (such as whale-watching boats)?

A6. Small passenger vessels of less than 100 gross registered tons and carrying 150 or FEWER passengers in domestic service are not required by 33 CFR 104 to have Coast Guard approved Vessel Security Plans or to designate secure or restricted areas. Aboard such vessels, only holders of Merchant Mariner Credentials must possess a valid TWIC as required by 46 USC 70105. Often, the master of the vessel is the only holder of a Merchant Mariner Credential. Deckhands aboard such vessels are not required to hold merchant mariner credentials nor a valid TWIC.

Small passenger vessels of less than 100 gross registered tons and carrying more than 150 passengers in domestic service must comply with the requirements of 33 CFR 104 and have valid Coast Guard Approved Vessel Security Plans. These vessels represent a higher consequence in the event of a Transportation Security Incident. The Coast Guard considers the spaces required to be designated as restricted and listed in 33 CFR 104.270 to be vital to the security of such vessels and is challenged in supporting such waivers due to the current statutory mandate that all U.S. Coast Guard credentialed mariners must obtain a TWIC.

With the exception of any crew members holding merchant mariner credentials, only those crew members requiring unescorted access to secure areas in the performance of their duties are required to hold a valid TWIC. Vessel operators should ensure that an adequate number of their crew hold TWICs for the safe and secure operation of their vessels and to provide escort as may be needed to crew members that do not hold a TWIC. Escorting arrangements should meet the minimum requirements of the applicable regulations, be based upon Coast Guard approved field guidance such as Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular 03-07, and be documented in the approved vessel security plan which will be validated by the local Coast Guard Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection.

Q7. Is the Coast Guard working with the various state governments to address their concerns and reduce direct state involvement in commercial vessel operation?

A7. The term “commercial” vessel operation encompasses both Coast Guard inspected, and uninspected vessel operations. In some cases, the States have acted within their authority to manage their coastal zones or respective marine resources and these state regulations may impose specific restrictions on a particular class of commercial vessels. When the Coast Guard and a given State have developed an agreement on a particular matter, it has typically involved the cognizant Coast Guard District and a State within that District’s Area of Responsibility (AOR). These agreements can vary considerably from District to District and State to State.

With regard to inspected vessel operations, Coast Guard-enforced safety regulations typically pre-empt State regulations, but there are some exceptions. In most cases, this comes down to specific State requirements when enforced by the state. For example, disposal of hazardous waste from an inspected passenger vessel or barge may require use of a state-mandated hazardous waste manifest or similar documentation. Another example would be a State-imposed limitation on how close a Coast Guard-inspected small passenger vessel can approach certain pinniped rookeries.

In the case of uninspected commercial vessels, such as commercial fishing vessels or uninspected passenger vessels, in many cases, our existing regulations are minimal in nature and a given State may impose additional requirements with regard to certain aspects of the operation of these vessels. In the case of uninspected commercial fishing vessels, the State may impose restrictions on the extent of the season and limit the size of the vessel’s catch or additional lifesaving equipment above the level required by Coast Guard regulations.

Q8. What steps is the Coast Guard taking with respect to the new EPA Vessel General Permit (VGP) program?

A8. The Coast Guard’s current role is to assist the EPA by informing the maritime industry of the new VGP requirements through an EPA provided fact sheet. The EPA developed and manages the VGP, and has the primary federal responsibility for enforcing its provisions. However, in fulfilling its role as the nation’s lead maritime law enforcement agency, the Coast Guard is involved in assisting the EPA’s enforcement of the VGP. Roles and expectations regarding Coast Guard VGP enforcement will be detailed in a formal memorandum of agreement (MOA) between the EPA and the Coast Guard. Until further enforcement procedures and guidance is established, the Coast Guard’s initial enforcement posture is limited to education and outreach. Coast Guard marine inspectors and boarding officers are currently educating the maritime industry by distributing the EPA fact sheet.

Q9. What steps is the Coast Guard taking to reduce the backlog of rulemaking projects?

A9. The Coast Guard made significant progress in 2008 toward improving its Rulemaking Development Program (RDP), and continues to do so in 2009. This progress is attributable to the many innovative steps we have taken which, in large part, are

possible only because of additional funding from Congress. Appropriations in FY08 and FY09 have allowed the Coast Guard to take aggressive steps to remedy our rulemaking backlog by hiring additional personnel and contractors, streamlining rulemaking processes, and improving RDP management processes technological applications, and oversight..

Some of the more noteworthy steps the Coast Guard has taken are as follows:

- A rigorous hiring effort to fill the 31 additional full time employees and contractor support specializing in rulemaking development which Congress authorized. As of March 2009, the Coast Guard hired 29 personnel and published an additional 27 rulemakings since March 2008. This hiring effort alone has enabled the Coast Guard to work on and publish a greater number of resource intensive rulemaking projects. We expect to see an incremental decrease in the backlog during the coming years once all personnel are hired and trained.
- Oversight and prioritization of Coast Guard rulemaking projects is provided by the Marine Safety and Security Council (MSSC), a group of Coast Guard Flag officers and Senior Executive Service members associated with the various programs impacted by rulemaking development. In 2008, the MSSC chartered a Rulemaking Review and Reform Project (RRRP) team to review and streamline the internal rulemaking processes. The RRRP assessed the current state of Coast Guard rulemaking, determined some root causes of rulemaking delays, and identified several specific opportunities for improvement. The result of this effort was 27 recommendations, which the MSSC adopted. Six teams have been chartered to implement the recommendations by the end of 2009.
- Development of a multifunctional database to comprehensively manage the Coast Guard's rulemaking process is currently in progress, and is expected to be online this year. This collaborative project management software tool is known as the Electronic Project Management Office (ePMO).

Q10. Does the Coast Guard plan to post its marine casualty investigations on the Internet in a more complete and timely manner?

A10. The Coast Guard constantly strives to improve the timeliness and quality of its marine casualty investigation reports. However, prior to publishing such information on the internet each report must be carefully reviewed to ensure information protected by the Privacy Act is not released. Such a review process must be done in a deliberate and careful fashion, a process which requires time. That said, the Coast Guard will prioritize its focus to ensure the most important and beneficial reports are posted as expeditiously as possible. .

Q11. Why doesn't the Coast Guard post merchant mariner documentation information on the Internet so that employers/prospective employers/others can see the mariner's qualifications? States routinely post such information for individuals that they license, from doctors and lawyers to barbers.

A11. The Coast Guard currently provides this service to the employer and others through the Mariner Information Call Center at (1-888-IASKNMC) or by email at iasknmc@uscg.mil. Plans are in place to provide this capability via the Internet by June 2009.

Q12. Why doesn't the Coast Guard post on the Internet information regarding documented vessels? NOAA now posts an abbreviated version on its site. The information is available if a FOIA request is submitted.

A12. The Coast Guard publishes information on documented vessels and their owners on CD-ROM to meet the requirement in 46 USC 12119 to "publish periodically a list of all documented vessels and information about those vessels that the Secretary considers pertinent or useful." The information was previously published in a document called the Blue Book but is now provided on the "Merchant Vessels of the United States" CD-ROM, which, is available to the public from the National Technical Information Service.

Q13. What is the state of the Coast Guard's historical program?

A13. The Historian's office interfaces with every program in the Service. It has direct contact with the Commandant and nearly all the flag officers and directly communicates with politicians on their behest. The office works directly with hundreds of museums, academics, veteran groups, the retired Coast Guard community and all components of the public. The Museum Program has currently loaned-out thousands of artifacts to over 100 museums nationwide, and tracks and oversees about 20,000 artifacts. The loan program gives the Coast Guard exposure throughout the country and in many different venues. Provided below is an overview of what resources are available to the Historian's office, their key tasks, and major undertakings.

Resources

CG Headquarters office, 2 Area offices, CG Museum at the CG Academy, and the Exhibit Center in Forestville, MD.

Tasks

- 1) The office regularly interacts with the media and participates in documentary interviews.
- 2) Public speaking is performed periodically but is restricted by staffing and budgetary limitations.
- 3) Part of the office mission is archiving historical material not destined for the National Archives. The Historian's Office has an archive of nearly 2,300 linear feet of documents. This includes books, manuals, and photos. These collections are available to the Service and the public.
- 4) Historical website development is a major component of the business of the office. The website gets over 100,000 visits a year.
- 5) The office collects a limited number of oral histories each year.

- 6) The Historian's Office is responsible for the preservation and management of the Service's 20,000 artifacts.
- 7) The office is also responsible for the Coast Guard Museum and the promotion of the Service's history through loans to other museums
- 8) The office answers over 7,000 inquiries a year which requires 40% of the staff's time.

Major Projects

- 1) The National Coast Guard Museum initiative could have the greatest impact on the program. The historian's office is currently working on a system to provide creative and curatorial input into the design and construction process.
- 2) Another current issue that the office is involved with is creating the historical record of the Service's transition to the OPCOM and FORCECOM organization.
- 3) The office is currently working with the Commandant to preserve his legacy and to document his tenure. The office has gathered hundreds of documents and collected many hours of oral history interviews.
- 4) The addition of the Area Historians has allowed the office to collect more oral histories and have a presence in the field.
- 5) The on-going development of the internet site allows the office's information and collections to be viewed by members of the Service and the public. This helps with the overall promotion and dissemination of Coast Guard History.

Q14. Is there a push for more specialized rates, i.e., Maritime Enforcement Specialist and Intelligence Specialist, in the Coast Guard? And is that a needed thing or is it turning the Coast Guard into the Navy?

A14. Actually, since 2000, the Coast Guard has reduced the number of Active Duty ratings from 22 to 20 while adding two new ratings: Intelligence Specialist (IS) and Maritime Enforcement Specialist (ME). The ME rating standup will eliminate the Reserve-only Port Security rating, enabling the Coast Guard to better meet mission requirements. Currently, there are no other new ratings under consideration after ME. Creating new ratings in the Coast Guard is a deliberate process we don't embark on lightly. Establishing rates such as ME and IS required exhaustive cross-programmatic analyses and concurrence from the highest levels of the organization. Only after a perceived need or gap has been analyzed and vetted within the organization do we move forward with creating a new rating.

The decision to stand up the new ME rating was made after many years of consideration and a focused 14-month Coast Guard-wide analysis of mission execution requirements, human resource issues, and safety matters facing our members who perform Law

Enforcement/Security duties. The analysis clearly supported the need to establish this rating to:

- 1) Improve our service to the public, the maritime industry, and our interagency partners.
- 2) Increase training and advanced LE/S competency proficiency.
- 3) Ensure the safety of our front line personnel.
- 4) Improve career development and management opportunities for personnel interested in LE/S focused assignments (increasing the service's return on training investment as we effectively sustain the critical and perishable skills demanded by LE/S duties).

Q15. With the budget cuts military wide should active duty members expect lower Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) and Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRBs) in the upcoming years?

A15. No, members should not automatically expect lower allowances or bonuses. Housing allowance rates are market driven and reflect the median cost of housing for selected areas. The cost of rentals in a military housing area are captured every spring in the BAH data collection survey, which is the determining factor used to provide data to the Department of Defense (DOD) to set the rates for the coming year. If the cost of rentals decreases in an area, you can expect the new rates the following year to be somewhat lower. Members already in place are always rate protected and will not see a decrease in the BAH if the new rates are lower.

Reenlistment bonuses are determined by the needs of the workforce and retention rates. If there are shortages in certain rates then we would need to allocate more funding to retain those personnel.

Q16. Will the increasing amount of vessels required to be screened by the port state control program result in an expanded program? If there is an expansion of Port State Control, when will we be seeing the effects of this?

A16. Since its formation in 1995, the U.S. Port State Control (or PSC) Program has seen a steady increase in the number of vessels calling on the United States. In the past decade, the number of foreign flag vessels coming to the U.S. has risen by more than 800 vessels or approximately 10%.

Over that time period, we have received additional resources from Congress, enhanced our training and qualification programs and leveraged technology to create automated risk based targeting schemes to ensure the Coast Guard is examining the vessels posing the highest risk to our ports and environment. Our PSC Officer Course in Yorktown, which was significantly revised in 2006, is producing personnel with the expertise and philosophy to needed to efficiently carry out the PSC mission.

Additionally, we have automated the targeting matrices to reduce workload and save thousands of man-hours associated with manual calculation. The PSC Program Office at USCG Headquarters is continually refining the matrices to ensure they are optimally configured. It is through the use of these items that we are able to examine each of the more than 8,600 foreign vessels coming to the U.S. each year. We regularly review the performance of this program and at the present time do not have plans to expand it.

Q17. With training being an important element to any successful mission, will there be a more direct link to training available at each District Level to assist, train, facilitate and training throughout that District?

A17. While there has been an effort to establish Training Officers at every sector, there has not been a similar effort to establish a district training officer. Establishment of FORCECOM will integrate performance analysis, training, doctrine development and feedback (STAN teams and lessons learned) to improve the overall performance of our operators. This will not only make the link "more direct" but also increase its impact. In addition, FORCECOM destined organizations are studying the distribution methods for training funds and a new allocation process will be implemented for FY10.

The service-wide Training System is set up to deliver training that enhances individual performance through "A" schools for apprentices and "C" schools for advanced training. The individuals who complete these courses go to various units throughout the Coast Guard including Districts. The best measure of our success is how quickly our forces become ready to perform when shifted to operational control. It's our vision and focus to enhance this performance-training link by providing a "mission-ready" capability. FORCECOM staff and units will be responsive to District needs in accomplishing this vision.

Q18. Would you support Congress mandating a politically appointed Secretary of the Coast Guard in order to guarantee authorization of the service's plans for modernization?

A18. The Secretary of Homeland Security and the Commandant of the Coast Guard are Senate-confirmed presidential appointees. This fact has not decisively influenced or guaranteed congressional action on the legislative proposal to facilitate completion of the Coast Guard's Modernization initiative. The presence of another Senate-confirmed presidential appointee, therefore, would likely not necessarily resolve the issue.

Q19. What is the USCG doing to ensure that the tools and resources necessary to reduce abuse and misuse of alcohol by Coast Guard members are available and used?

A19. The first thing the Coast Guard and Department of Defense (DoD) is doing is measuring the extent of the problem regarding alcohol abuse, binge drinking and dependency within the services. The gold standard that DoD uses to measure behavioral

health related issues, like alcohol abuse and dependency, is the Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel (HRB). The USCG joined the HRB effort in 2007. The 2008 Department of Defense Survey of Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Military Personnel is currently being briefed up the chain of command and has an anticipated publication date of late April or early May. These results have yet to be publicly released and therefore I cannot specifically comment on them. However, for the first time, the USCG will have a USCG specific, scientific valid, replicable study upon which to base behavioral health decisions, such as alcohol abuse & dependency interventions.

Secondly, the Directorate of Health Safety, Work-Life has a proactive Substance Abuse Prevention program. This program has 11 Substance Abuse Prevention Specialists who travel the country providing substance abuse prevention training to commands, supervisors and members.

Each unit has a designated Collateral Duty Alcohol Representative (CDAR) to assist and educate our members in an effort to deter abuse and aid/assist after an incident (or alcohol related incident).

Work-Life has also partnered with CG-113, Environmental Health and Safety to promote the "None for the Road Campaign" and the HQ effort has been bolstered by strong support from both Areas and MLCs to discourage alcohol use and abuse through their aggressive campaigns. In 2008, one out of every 2 civil arrests involving a Coast Guard member was the result of a DUI. We have asked our Command Drug and Alcohol Representatives to "Declare War on DUI" when they provide their trainings to units. DUI is preventable and unfortunately a choice.

Work-life is also engaged with CG-12, in developing a direct access module to record alcohol incidents, alcohol related incidents, and treatment. This data capture, which has never been attempted, will address a critical gap and facilitate the Coast Guard's ability to better serve its personnel with regard to stemming their dependence on or abusive use of alcohol.

The Vice Commandant has stood up a work group to look at the Coast Guard's policy on Substance Abuse and Treatment. This policy review will look at how we conduct screenings, education, treatment and disciplinary actions. The research is clear - addiction is treatable and alcohol abuse is preventable.

Finally, each command is responsible for the health and safety of its members. I have asked my shipmates to not only look out for themselves but to be Guardians of each other.

