



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
REAR ADMIRAL JOSEPH EDWARD VORBACH
CHIEF COUNSEL, U.S. COAST GUARD



Rear Admiral Joseph E. Vorbach graduated from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy with a Bachelor of Science Degree and was commissioned an ensign in June 1959.

His first two assignments were at sea, as a deck watch officer and assistant operations officer on the Polar Icebreaker USCGC WESTWIND stationed at Brooklyn, NY (6/59-2/60) and Commanding Officer of the 95 foot patrol boat CAPE FAIRWEATHER stationed at New London, CT (2/60-6/61).

He was next stationed at LORAN Station Eniwetok, Marshall Islands, as Commanding Officer (8/61--8/62) and was then assigned to the Fifth Coast Guard District Office, Portsmouth, VA as Chief, Law Enforcement Section (10/62-3/64).

After another tour of duty at sea as Operations Officer onboard the USCGC ABSECON homeported at Norfolk, VA (3/64-7/65), he entered George Washington University, Washington, DC in August 1965 and earned the Degree of Juris Doctor with Honors in January 1968.

He was then assigned to Coast Guard Headquarters where he served in the Office of Chief Counsel and as Assistant Chief, Legislation and Regulations Division (1/68-7/69). He served as an Assistant Professor of Law at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy from July 1969 to June 1973 and was reassigned to the Eleventh Coast Guard District, Long Beach, CA serving as Legal officer to the Commander, Eleventh Coast Guard District and presiding as a Military Judge at Courts Martial held in other Coast Guard Districts (7/73-7/77).

In August 1977 he was reassigned to Coast Guard Headquarters as Special Assistant for Law of the Sea to the Deputy Secretary of Transportation and the Chief Counsel of the Coast Guard. In the spring of 1979 he was appointed the Acting Assistant General Counsel for International Law U.S. Department of Transportation.

In August 1980 he entered the National War College, Washington, DC and was graduated in June 1981.

He was again assigned to Coast Guard Headquarters where he served as Chief, International Affairs Staff from June 1981 to June 1983. In June 1983 he was assigned as Commandant of Cadets U.S. Coast Guard Academy, responsible for the military and professional training and development of 750 cadets in an intensive four-year preparation for commissioning as ensigns in the U.S. Coast Guard. In June 1986, he was selected for promotion to Rear Admiral (Lower half) and reassigned to Coast Guard Headquarters as Chief Counsel U.S. Coast Guard where he is presently serving. Rear Admiral Vorbach was promoted to the grade of Rear Admiral (O-8) in July 1989.

Rear Admiral Vorbach has been a member of numerous United States delegations and an alternate Representative of the United States to the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and to the Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) headquartered in London, U.K. In 1988 he served as alternate U.S. representative to the Rome conference on the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and in 1989 he served as the U.S. Representative to the London Conference to Revise the Law of Salvage.

He is a member of the Bar of the District of Columbia and the States of New York, and Virginia. He is also a member of the Bar of the U.S. Court of Military Appeals, and a member of the Federal Bar Association.

Rear Admiral Vorbach has authored numerous articles and papers on Law of the Sea and Military Justice. He has lectured on Law of the Sea at the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Georgetown University Law School, Manhattan College, College of Mount St. Vincent and has participated as a Panel Chairman and Panelist in seminars presented by the Center for Oceans Law and Policy of the University of Virginia School of Law.

He is married to the former Alice Patricia Gordon of Jamaica, Long Island, New York. They have four children: Frances Ann, Joseph Edward III, Emily Marie and Justin James.

