

U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Station Islamorada, Florida



Location:	Mile Marker 85 in the Florida Keys; on Snake Creek just off U.S. Highway 1, 86 miles north of Key West on Plantation Key.
Date of Conveyance:	1965
Station Built:	1965
Fate:	Still in operation.

Remarks:

Coast Guard Station Islamorada was opened in June of 1965 at Venetian Shores on Islamorada, Florida. It was at that time a very modern houseboat that served as headquarters for a mid-Keys rescue station.

As of 2010, Station Islamorada was defined as a multi mission Coast Guard Station with a large area of responsibility spanning from Long Key to the south, Biscayne Bay to the north east and to Flamingo Florida to the north west. On a daily basis the active duty, reservists and the volunteer men and women of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary performed the missions of Search and Rescue, Enforcement of Laws and Treaties, Drug Interdiction, AMIO, Recreation Boating Safety and Environmental Protection. These missions were performed unitizing the compliment of five vessels: one 41' Utility Boat (UTB), three 33' Special Purpose Craft Law Enforcement (SPC-LE) and one 24' Special Purpose Craft Shallow Water (SPC-SW).

Photographs:



Station Patch



100324-G-2184A-001-Station Islamorada

ISLAMORADA, Fla. -- A view of Coast Guard Station Islamorada from the Snake Creek Bridge March 24, 2010. Station Islamorada is located near Mile Marker 85 in the Florida Keys, and its crew is tasked with search and rescue, law enforcement, environmental protection, and recreational boating education. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Nick Ameen.



No caption/date/photo number; photographer unknown.



United States Coast Guard Station Islamorada

Guardians of the Upper Keys

About the Station

United States Coast Guard Station Islamorada is located adjacent to Snake Creek just North of U.S. Highway 1, 87 miles north of Key West on Plantation Key. We proudly serve the surrounding communities of Islamorada, Tavernier, Key Largo, and South Miami-Dade County. Station Islamorada is a multi-mission unit with a challenging area of responsibility spanning from Long Key to the South West, Biscayne Bay to the North East, and to Flamingo Florida to the North West. Daily, we conduct the Coast Guard Missions of:

- ◆ [Drug interdiction](#)
- ◆ [Aids to navigation](#)
- ◆ [Search and rescue](#)
- ◆ [Living marine resources](#)
- ◆ [Migrant interdiction](#)
- ◆ [Marine environmental protection](#),
- ◆ [Law enforcement.](#)



Artist Rendition of Station

Missions are performed using a complement of four vessels: one 45 foot Response Boat, two 33 foot Special Purpose Craft—Law Enforcement, and one 24 foot Special Purpose Craft - Shallow Water.



United States Coast Guard
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

COAST GUARD STATION ISLAMORADA

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Station Overview 2014



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Coast Guard Station Islamorada

The United States Lighthouse Service, first established the Alligator Reef Light House in 1873; Coast Guardsmen have served the citizens of the upper keys continuously ever since.



*Alligator Reef
Light House
Established 1873*

The Alligator Reef Lighthouse served as a navigational beacon to aid mariners in safe passage along the shallow waters of the Florida Keys. The original design of the lighthouse required a crew of four to live on the structure. On the lighthouse these members were without luxuries, only going ashore occasionally for short shore leave and supply runs. This changed with the automation of the

lighthouse in 1963.

Throughout the 1960's, the upper keys population grew steadily leading to the United States Coast Guard's establishment of a permanent facility on the south tip of Plantation Key. This island, bordered by Tavernier Creek to the north and Snake Creek to the south, is one of several Islands that make up the Village of Islamorada. The first facility was a house boat moored in a manmade canal off Snake Creek. This floating station supported a crew of 15 enlisted crew members and three response vessels. Radio communications were monitored locally by a radio watch stander 24 hours a day utilizing the Citizens Band (CB) radio and marine VHF radio. In 1974, the Coast Guard completed the construction of the current shore based facility.

Two World War II era cutters, the USCGC DUANE (WPG-33) and USCGC BIBB (WPG-31), were intentionally sunk off the

south shore of Key Largo and today serve as artificial reefs. Station Islamorada is home to



Above:

USCGC DUANE

Below:

USCGC BIBB

borders and mission sets with several agencies. These common areas include the waters of the Everglades National Park, the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, and 12 separate Sanctuary Preservation Areas. Station boat crews work side by side with partner agencies

at the local, state, and federal levels in patrol-

both cutters bells and houses a small memorial dedicated to these historic cutters and those who sailed them.

Today, Station Islamorada responds to Search and Rescue cases, conducts recreational boating safety / living marine resource inspections, and interdicts migrants attempting illegal entry into the United States.

The station shares common



*Special Purpose
Craft—Law Enforcement (SPC-LE) underway*

ling the waters of upper keys. These agency's include:

- ◆ Islamorada Fire and Rescue
- ◆ Key Largo Fire and Rescue
- ◆ Monroe County Sheriffs Office
- ◆ Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission
- ◆ National Park Service
- ◆ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ◆ Customs and Border Protection

True to our service motto, Semper Paratus, crewmembers of Station Islamorada stand ready to respond to all calls everyday. Our unit slogan states we are the Guardians of the Upper Keys, **we are**. The Commander of Sector Key West's directions are to own the straights, **WE DO!!!**

FY 2013 Operational Statistics

◆ SAR Cases:	138
◆ LE Cases:	044
◆ Migrants Interdicted:	122
◆ RBS Boardings:	662
◆ LMR Boardings:	340
◆ SORTIE Total:	809
◆ Patrol Hours	<u>2741</u>

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