



COAST GUARD FILE

A boarding team from the CGC Manitou (WPB 1302) trains off the Florida coast.

are depending upon the judgment and leadership of local unit commanders to make the readiness assessments that will drive our operations tempo.

Our management goals in the next two years will focus on properly staffing, training, equipping, and maintaining operational and support units so as to sustain normal operations. Among our top priorities will be achieving sustaining fully authorized personnel strength levels by improving recruiting and retention programs and ensuring adequate training to increase qualifications and experience levels.

Most importantly, workload management has become, and will continue to be, a critical element of our success. We will be especially attuned to workforce issues and will seek to balance requirements with available resources. We will task and operate our assets only to the level that we can effectively support and sustain them.

Recapitalization

In large measure, the challenge the Coast Guard faces regarding future readiness lies with our aging fleet of deepwater assets—those resources operating greater than 50 miles offshore for extended duration.

Since becoming commandant, Admiral James M. Loy has stressed the critical need of acquiring modern ships and aircraft that will meet mission requirements during the first quarter of the 21st century. We are in the process of modernizing our coastal assets. New buoy tenders, patrol boats and motor surfboats are being commissioned into service each month. However, our offshore capability is now at the center of our concern. Our acquisition project—the Deepwater Capability Replacement Project, or Deepwater—will serve that purpose and be discussed in greater detail in the following article.

At the same time, with maritime trade expected to double by the year 2020, a virtual explosion in cruise ship demand, fishing vessels venturing further offshore in search of productive fishing grounds, and increased purchases of personal watercraft and pleasure boats, the job of ensuring maritime safety will become even more arduous.

Lives in these maritime communities depend on an effective, optimally performing National Distress System (NDS) and a robust marine safety program to prevent incidents before they occur. However, today's NDS is composed of obsolete, aging and non-standard equipment and it is deteriorating quickly. To upgrade its coastal short-range communication system, the Coast Guard is aggres-