

demands placed on our Service in the most efficient manner while remaining Semper Paratus as Americas Lifesaver and Guardian of the Seas.

Readiness Facts

The size of todays Coast Guard is roughly the same as it was in 1967, but our missions (drug and migrant interdiction, fisheries enforcement, and pollution prevention) have expanded.

- ¥ The Coast Guard currently operates an aging fleet of deepwater ships dating back to World War II.
- ¥ The Coast Guard operates the 40th oldest fleet of the worlds 42 major navies.
- ¥ Eighty percent of small boat station crews stand port/starboard 24-hour duty with Coast Guardsmen standing watches every other day.
- ¥ Fixed wing aircraft deployments have doubled.
- ¥ Helicopter deployments have increased 25 percent.
- ¥ Patrol boat underway program hours have been exceeded year after year to meet the demand for their services.
- ¥ C-130 availability decreased from 80 percent to 60 percent.
- ¥ Field technicians are experiencing a critical shortage of aircraft, cutter and small boat spare parts.
- ¥ The Service currently has a shortage of fixed wing pilots and small boat surfman.
- ¥ It is not uncommon to find junior petty officers filling mid-senior petty officer billets.
- ¥ Recruiting numbers are up but retention problems are challenging the Service.
- ¥ Although the Coast Guard is an armed service residing in the Department of Transportation, it is required by law to provide compensation and benefits set by the Department of Defense. (E.g. pay health care & housing allowances). Often these personnel cost increases must be taken out of the Services operating funds.
- ¥ Emergency supplemental funds allowed the Coast Guard to avoid drastic downsizing and/or operating cut-backs in 1999 and 2000. Without supplemental relief in 2001, the Coast Guard again may be restricted in its ability to perform its crucial missions. The Coast Guards 2002 budget will again emphasize the importance of permanent base funding relief to restore readiness and support operations through a multi-year approach.



COAST GUARD FILE

The Coast Guard enforces all federal laws on the high seas, including those related to drug smuggling, migrant smuggling, illegal fishing and terrorism. Today we face the challenge of enforcing increasingly complex laws against much more persistent and sophisticated criminals. It is essential that we modernize our equipment and increase our presence in high-threat areas to keep up with both drug and migrant smugglers and to ensure our fisheries are protected.