

Coast Guard Missions

Aids to Navigation

Promotes safe and efficient passage of marine and air traffic by providing continuous and accurate, all-weather radio navigation service. Short range aids to navigation (e.g., buoys, light-houses) are responsible for ensuring the nations waterways are properly marked, enabling safe and efficient use by all mariners.

Boating Safety

Reduces the risk of loss of life, personal injury and property damage in recreational boating. Improves boating safety while fostering greater development, use and enjoyment of U.S. waters.

Defense Operations

Maintains constant readiness and combat capability necessary to function effectively as an armed, naval force in support of National Military Strategy and National Security Strategy. In peacetime, Maritime Defense Zone (MDZ) commanders are responsible for coastal defense planning and exercises. In wartime, they conduct port security patrols, environmental response in hostile situations and a host of other tasks related to national defense. The Service has participated in all major national conflicts since its inception in 1790.

Environmental Response

Minimizes damage from pollutants damaging sensitive U.S. waterways and throughout the maritime environment. Assists federal on-scene coordinators and Coast Guard incident commanders in their response and preparedness activities and to support the National Response System in order to minimize adverse impact to the public and reduce environmental damages.

Homeland Security

Addresses a broad array of threats in our exclusive economic zone inward to the United States and its territories. These threats include: regional and state-centered threats including major theater war; asymmetric warfare (e.g., weapons of mass destruction, smart conventional weapons and other dangerous technologies); and transnational asymmetric dangers (terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal migration, theft of critical resources like fish stocks, and environmental damage).

Ice Operations

Provides heavy icebreaking capabilities for U.S. facilities in the Polar regions, supports oceanographic research in these areas, and responds to any national contingency in the Arctic and Antarctic requiring surface ship assets. Additionally, domestic icebreaking missions facilitate the movement of maritime commerce through ice laden domestic waters, and provides cutters to respond to search and rescue and flood control emergencies occurring in ice-covered navigable waters.



COAST GUARD FILE

Two of the Coast Guard's HH-65A Dolphin helicopters are shown here. The HH-65A performs search and rescue, and supports enforcement of laws and treaties including drug interdiction, polar ice-breaking, marine environmental protection — including pollution control, and military readiness. Though normally stationed ashore, the HH-65A can land and takeoff from 210-foot, 270-foot, 378-foot and polar-icebreaking Coast Guard vessels.



PA1 KEITH ALHOLM, 17TH DIST.

Lt. Matt Jones, supervisor of Marine Safety Detachment Kodiak, investigates the cause of an engine room fire aboard the fishing vessel Provision in Kodiak. The mission of maritime safety is to eliminate deaths, injuries and property damage associated with maritime transportation, fishing and recreational boating.