

The California Gold rush brought a large influx of people west and with it came abandoned ships, smugglers, and general lawlessness in the sea port villages and cities along the west coast of the United States.

The Revenue Cutter Lawrence was dispatched as the federal governments representative and made San Francisco its home-port in 1848, beginning the Coast Guards presence in the Pacific. Lawrence and its crew arrived on the coast and began their assignment as judge, customs agent, and whatever else was necessary to maintain order during the chaotic period.

Today the Coast Guards Pacific Area headquarters for operations is not run from the deck of a cutter but from Coast Guard Island in Alameda, California, just east across the bay from San Francisco.

The area of responsibility of PacArea is 74 million square miles ranging from South America, north to the Arctic Circle and west to the Far East.

Streamlining measures have incorporated the staff and units of the 11th District (Arizona, California, Utah, and Nevada), with Pacific Area staff.

Coast Guard Island is also the home of Maritime Defense Zone Pacific, Maintenance & Logistics Command Pacific, Joint Interagency Task Force West, Marine Safety Office San Francisco Bay, Integrated Support Command Alameda, and four High Endurance Cutters.

The areas cache of resources include 11,000 people active, reserve, civilian and auxiliary members, 10 high endurance cutters, two polar icebreakers, five medium endurance cutters, 30 HH-65A Dolphin helicopters, 13 HH-60

Jayhawk helicopters, 27 WPBs, and 17 buoy tenders.

The Coast Guards Pacific Area active duty men and women, reservists, civilian employees and auxiliarists all continue to work together as a team daily on diverse missions.

The responsibilities and mission effectiveness of PacArea ensures that our nations resources, people, and environment will be protected and managed well into the next century.



Our people and equipment can be on patrol in the Persian Gulf, breaking a path through heavy ice at either pole, escorting supply vessels to scientific research bases, participating in the exchange of training and information with some of the 50 maritime nations located throughout the Pacific.

These are only a few of the vast array of operations that the men and women of the Pacific Area perform on a daily basis.

The Pacific is immense, covering 35 percent of the earths surface. Challenges are diverse. Environmental issues cross borders and oceans. Law enforcement is a significant effort due to lack of natural choke points. Budgetary pressures add to the need for intense adaptability for PacArea to meet the expectations of not only United States citizens, but the citizens of the Pacific.