

Timeline of Coast Guard Organizational History 1790 - 2004

The Coast Guard is an amalgamation of five formerly distinct federal services. The following timeline reflects the establishment of those services and when they became part of what is now the United States Coast Guard as well as changes in the organizational structure of the Coast Guard itself.

2004: To create unity of command in America's ports, better align field command structures, and improve Coast Guard operational effectiveness, Sector Commands were created throughout the Coast Guard by integrating Groups, Marine Safety Offices (MSO), Vessel Traffic Services (VTS), and in some cases, Air Stations. Sector Commands were established by 2006.

1 March 2003: The Coast Guard was formally transferred from the Department of Transportation to the newly created Department of Homeland Security.

1996: Governor's Island was closed.

1994: The concept of "Team Coast Guard" was created. The Integrated Support Commands were established.

1983: The location of the International Ice Patrol was moved to the Coast Guard Research and Development Center in Groton, CT.

1973: The National Strike Force (NSF), originally comprised of three 17-member Strike Teams (located in Elizabeth City, NC; Mobile, AL; and Novato, CA) was established as a direct result of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972.

January 1973: The Coast Guard renamed the Eastern and Western areas to the Atlantic and Pacific areas, respectively.

1 April 1967: Executive Order 16781 transferred the Coast Guard from the Treasury Department to the newly formed Department of Transportation.

1966: Governor's Island became a Coast Guard base, serving as headquarters for Atlantic Area, the Third District, Captain of the Port of New York, AMVER (Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System), the Ice Patrol Headquarters and the homeport of several Coast Guard cutters.

16 July 1946: Pursuant to Executive Order 9083 and Reorganization Plan No. 3 the Bureau of Marine Inspection was abolished and became a permanent part of the Coast Guard under Treasury Department control.

April 1946: The Coast Guard created the Eastern, Western, and Pacific Area commands to coordinate cases that required the assets of more than one district.

1 January 1946: In compliance with Executive Order 9666, the Coast Guard returned to Treasury Department control.

28 February 1942: Executive Order 9083 transferred Bureau of Marine Inspection temporarily to the Coast Guard under Navy Department control.

1 November 1941: President Roosevelt's Executive Order 8929 transferred the Coast Guard to Navy Department control.

1 July 1939: The Lighthouse Service became part of the Coast Guard (53 Stat. L., 1432).

1937: Legislation allowed for commissioning of permanent professors as heads of Departments at the Coast Guard Academy.

25 June 1936: Congress enacted legislation, formally requiring the Commandant of the Coast Guard to administer the International Ice Observation and Ice Patrol Service (Chap. 807, para. 2 49 USC 1922) and describing in general fashion the manner in which this service was to be performed. With only minor changes, this remains today as the basic Coast Guard authority to operate the International Ice Patrol. Since 1929, there have been three SOLAS conventions (1948, 1960 & 1974). None of these have recommended any basic change affecting the Ice Patrol.

27 May 1936: Public Law 622 reorganized and changed the name of the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection Service to Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation (49 Stat. L., 1380). The Bureau remained under Commerce Department control.

1932: The citizens of New London, CT donated the property for the present site of the Coast Guard Academy.

30 June 1932: Steamboat Inspection Service and Bureau of Navigation combined to form the Bureau of Navigation and Steamboat Inspection (47 Stat. L., 415). The new agency remained under Commerce Department control.

1930: As a result of Coast Guard Intelligence proving to be extremely successful during prohibition, an Intelligence Division was established at Headquarters in 1930, followed by district intelligence offices in 1933.

18 May 1920: The 66th Congress authorized in Chapter 190, Section 8: "That commissioned officers, warrant officers, petty officers, and other enlisted men in the Coast Guard shall receive the same pay, allowances, and increases as are now, herein are, or hereafter may be prescribed for corresponding grades or ratings and length of service in the Navy; and the grades and ratings of warrant officers, chief petty officers, petty officers, and other enlisted persons in the Coast Guard shall be the same as in the

Navy, in so far as the duties of the Coast Guard may require..." That same day, Coast Guard Headquarters issued General Order No. 43, Article 817 which created the rank of the Chief Petty Officers.

28 August 1919: Coast Guard reverted to Treasury Department after President Wilson signed Executive Order 3160.

1917: Congress passed and President Woodrow Wilson signed into law the Espionage Act, authorizing the Treasury Secretary to assume control of U.S. ports, control ship movements, establish anchorages and supervise the loading and storage of explosive cargoes. The authority was immediately delegated to the Coast Guard and formed the basis for the formation of the Coast Guard's Captain of the Ports and the Port Security Program.

6 April 1917: With the declaration of war against Germany, the Coast Guard was transferred by Executive Order to the control of the Navy Department.

April 1916: CAPT Charles A. McAllister was assigned to a new Coast Guard Headquarters position as Chief Engineer, Aviation Section. That August, CAPT McAllister drafted legislation, introduced in the Senate, to provide \$1,500,000 to establish an "Aerial Coastal Patrol." This legislation was included in the Navy Deficiency Act of August 29, 1916. In addition to putting life back into Naval Aviation it contained a provision which authorized the Coast Guard to build ten air bases along the sea coasts and the Great Lakes and provide for the training of pilots at Pensacola. Thus Congress officially recognized that aviation was needed to carry out the duties of the Coast Guard.

1915: Coast Guard intelligence came into existence in 1915 by the assignment of a "Chief Intelligence Officer" in Coast Guard Headquarters. Article 304 in the first set of Coast Guard *Regulations* provided for the establishment of a Chief Intelligence Officer who was to be attached to the Office of Assistant Commandant. The Chief Intelligence Officer's duties were spelled out in Article 614 of those same *Regulations*: "securing of information which is essential to the Coast Guard in carrying out its duties; for the dissemination of this information to responsible officers, operating units of the Coast Guard, the Treasury Department and other collaborating agencies; and the maintenance of adequate files and records of law enforcement activities."

28 January 1915: President Woodrow Wilson signed into law the "Act to Create the Coast Guard," an act passed by Congress on 20 January, 1915 that combined the LifeSaving Service and Revenue Cutter Service to form the Coast Guard (38 Stat. L., 800).

1914: Revenue Cutter Service School of Instruction a service academy at Fort Trumbull in New London, Connecticut, replaced the School of Instruction for the Revenue Marine,

from 1914–15. In 1915 it merged with the Life Saving Service and became the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

1912: Establishment of International Ice Patrol.

14 February 1903: Department of Commerce and Labor was created (32 Stat. L., 825). Bureau of Navigation and the Steamship Inspection Service was transferred to the new department.

5 July 1884: Bureau of Navigation was established under the control of the Treasury Department (23 Stat. L., 118).

18 June 1878: U.S. LifeSaving Service was established as a separate agency under the control of the Treasury Department (20 Stat. L., 163).

1876: Revenue Cutter School of Instruction was developed to ensure consistent training. Training was conducted mostly at sea aboard the two-masted topsail schooner *Dobbins* homeported in Baltimore, MD but moved to New Bedford, MA in 1877.

9 October 1852: The Lighthouse Board, which administered the nation's lighthouse system until 1 July 1910, was organized. "This Board was composed of two officers of the Navy, two officers of the Engineer Corps, and two civilians of high scientific attainments whose services were at the disposal of the President, and an officer of the Navy and of the Engineers as secretaries. It was empowered under the Secretary of the Treasury to "discharge all the administrative duties" relative to lighthouses and other aids to navigation. The Secretary of the Treasury was president of the Board, and it was authorized to elect a chairman and to divide the coast of the United States into twelve lighthouse districts, to each of which the President was to assign an army or navy officer as lighthouse inspector."

30 August 1852: Steamboat Act established Steamboat Inspection Service under the control of the Treasury Department (10 Stat. L., 1852).

14 August 1848: Congress appropriates funds to pay for lifesaving equipment to be used by volunteer organizations (9 Stat. L., 321, 322).

12 April 1843: Revenue Captain Alexander V. Fraser, Revenue Cutter Service, was appointed Chief of the newly created Revenue Marine Bureau of the Treasury Department, thereby becoming the "first" Commandant.

7 July 1838: Service to provide better security of the lives of passengers on board of vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam is established under the control of the Justice Department (5 Stat. L., 304). This "service" later became the Steamboat Inspection Service.

4 August 1790: Congress authorized the Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, to create a maritime service to enforce customs laws (1 Stat. L. 145, 175). Alternately known as the system of cutters, Revenue Service, and Revenue Marine this service would officially be named the Revenue Cutter Service (12 Stat. L., 639) in 1863. This service was placed under the control of the Treasury Department.

7 August 1789: The service, eventually to be known as the US Lighthouse Service, was established under the control of the Treasury Department (1 Stat. L., 53).