

[Established Missions](#) 3-5.02-K

KNOW what historical events led to the establishment of the following missions, as presented in the E-PME Study Guide.

Search and Rescue  
Environmental protection  
Law enforcement  
Ice operations  
Aids to navigation  
Boating Safety  
Military readiness  
Coast Guard Reserve  
CG Auxiliary

***Homeland Security  
History of  
Coast Guard  
Missions*** Today's Coast Guard is a multi-mission organization, a product of the infusion of five agencies. This section points out the historical events that led to the creation of present day Coast Guard missions.

---

## ***Search and Rescue***

The search and rescue mission is one of the Coast Guard's earlier undertakings. Its roots go back to the middle of the 19th Century when the U.S. experienced an influx of immigration. Many immigrants were arriving from Europe in small sailing ships packed with several hundred people. During the winter storms, numerous crowded vessels ran aground on the New Jersey shore... just a few hundred yards from safety. However, many times the surf broke the crafts into pieces and the freezing, turbulent water proved no match for even the strongest swimmers.

While many rescue attempts were made from shore under these circumstances, only about half of the people on board survived. The loss of lives mostly occurred because there was no way to reach the wreck across the breaking surf and to retrieve the occupants of the ravished vessel.

To address this problem, a Federal lifesaving service began to take shape in 1848. New stations, a garage-like structure, were built and outfitted with rescue equipment. Since the New Jersey and Long Island coasts had experienced the greatest numbers of wrecks, their beaches were chosen for the new stations.

---

***Search and  
Rescue  
(continued)***

The equipment consisted of a fully equipped iron boat on a wagon, a mortar apparatus for propelling a rescue line, powder and shot, a small covered “life car” for hauling in survivors, a stove, and fuel. A community leader was put in charge of the station, usually a wreckmaster, who organized his volunteer crew.

While there were huge successes, there were also failures. However, during the period 1848 -1870, about 90% of the persons on board vessels who wrecked within the reach of this Life-Saving Service survived.

During the Civil War, all but one of the iron surfboats were appropriated for use in the Hatteras Campaign. The remaining surfboat was used to slop hogs.

One successful search and rescue incident is cited below.

In 1850, the *Ayrshire*, an immigrant ship, grounded during a snowstorm at Squan Beach, N.J. Under the supervision of wreckmaster John Maxon, the volunteers rescued 201 of the 202 persons on board.

Following the war, in 1871, the Life-Saving Service was “reborn” under the leadership of Sumner L. Kimball, assisted by Revenue Marine Captain John Faunce. New stations were built; new equipment was developed; the Service was expanded beyond New Jersey and Long Island; and personnel were federalized.

The primary focal point of search and rescue operations changed with technology.

- **1830-1870.** From 1830-1870, the larger passenger vessels carrying immigrants to the New Jersey and Long Island coasts were the main focus of search and rescue efforts.
- **1871-1914.** From 1871-1914, smaller coastal sailing vessels became the primary search and rescue focal point as innovations in the shipping industry reduced coastal disasters affecting large passenger vessels.
- **1915–1977.** From 1915, blue water cutters, joined by flying amphibians and regular trans-Atlantic air traffic in the 1930s, became primary rescue platforms. Ocean stations were established in the Atlantic and later in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific.

To provide rescue sites and to report on weather, a cutter was stationed in mid-ocean. However, increased aircraft reliability and improved electronics removed the need for the stations; the last station was decommissioned in 1977.

---

*Search and  
Rescue  
(continued)*

- 
- **1941-1945.** During World War II, the search mission focused on anti-submarine warfare. After the war, the search and rescue scene shifted back to tidewater, focusing on pleasure craft.
  - **1980s and beyond.** During the 1980s and beyond, the Coast Guard has been involved with saving thousands of people responding to numerous refugee boatlifts from Haiti and Cuba.

The largest number of migrants rescued from a single vessel in Coast Guard history occurred on November 24, 1995 when CGC *Dauntless* rescued 578 migrants from a grossly overloaded 75-foot coastal freighter. In the year 2000 alone, the Coast Guard sortied 57,697 times and saved 3,400 lives.

---

*Environmental  
Protection*

The Coast Guard's mission to protect the environment had its beginnings in 1822 when Congress created a timber reserve for the Navy. To prevent the cutting of live oak on public lands, the President utilized the Revenue Cutter Service (RCS) to perform this duty. The shallow-draft revenue cutters were well suited to this task.

The purchase of Alaska in 1867 greatly expanded the Coast Guard's environmental responsibilities. Due to the high value of their coats, fur seals were being ruthlessly slaughtered. In 1870, Congress restricted the number of seals that could be killed. Beginning in 1894, small parties of RCS personnel camped on the Pribilof Islands, breeding grounds for the fur seals, to prevent raids on the rookeries. On May 11, 1908, revenue cutters were given authority to enforce all Alaskan game laws.

---

*Fish Conservation*

In 1885, the RCS cooperated with the Bureau of Fisheries in the propagation of food fishes. Twenty years later, cutters enforced the regulations governing the landing, delivery, cure, and sale of sponges in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 created a 200-mile offshore fishing zone to be controlled by the U.S. The Coast Guard enforces this law. It also monitors a number of international agreements, treaties, and conventions, including the UN moratorium on High Seas Drift Net Fishing.

---

*Fish Conservation  
(continued)*

---

Two notable cases are cited here.

- In July 1997, the vessel *Cao Yu 6025* was spotted by a Canadian aircraft fishing 1,100 miles northwest of Midway Island. Upon seeing the surveillance aircraft, the vessel's crew attempted to flee but was tracked by Canadian and U.S. Coast Guard aircraft. The USCGC *Basswood*, after a 1,700-mile chase, and the USCGC *Chase*, boarded the vessel in the East China Sea and seized the *Cao Yu*, along with its catch of 120 tons of albacore, swordfish and shark fins.
- In June 1998, Coast Guard cutters *Boutwell*, *Jarvis*, and *Polar Sea* and aircraft, along with two Russian fisheries patrol vessels seized four Chinese fishing vessels suspected of high-seas drift-net fishing. This was the Coast Guard's largest high-seas drift-net fisheries seizure ever.

---

*Waterways  
Pollution*

Pollution of our waterways has been a concern for many decades. The first attempt to address this growing problem was the passage of the Refuse Act of 1899. The Army Corps of Engineers and the Revenue Cutter Service were tasked to enforce the regulation. The current framework for the Coast Guard's Marine Environmental Protection program is the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972.

In 1973, the Coast Guard created a National Strike Force to combat oil spills, comprised of three teams:

- Pacific (based near San Francisco)
- Gulf (Mobile, AL)
- Atlantic (Elizabeth City, NC).

The teams have been deployed to hundreds of potential and actual spill sites. Some notable oil spills include:

- **August 1974:** *Metula* in the Straits of Magellan
  - **January 1975:** *Showa Maru* in the Straits of Malacca
  - **December 1975:** *Olympic Games* in the Delaware River
  - **December 1976:** *Argo Merchant* on the Nantucket Shoals.
  - **March 1989:** *Exxon Valdez* on Bligh Reef in Alaska's Prince William Sound
  - **February 1991:** In the Persian Gulf as a result of Iraqi firing of oil wells and pumping stations.
-

## *Law Enforcement*

Law enforcement is one of the Coast Guard's oldest missions. The fleet of ten cutters authorized by Alexander Hamilton in 1790 was responsible for enforcing the tariff laws. They were charged to put a stop to smuggling, protect shipping from pirates and other unlawful interdiction, and intercept material and human contraband.

While smuggling was considered a patriotic duty of maritime America during colonial days and the War of Independence, this rationale had to be reversed. The revenue from tariffs was greatly needed to support the new government.

In 1832, when South Carolina tried to nullify the tariff laws, five cutters were sent to Charleston Harbor to support Customs Officers in collecting tariffs.

Piracy was practiced well into the 19th Century. Cutters were instrumental in abolishing piracy in our waterways and protecting trade. In 1819, the cutters *Alabama* and *Louisiana* captured *Bravo*, commanded by Jean LaFarge, a lieutenant of the notorious Jean Lafitte of New Orleans. They also destroyed the pirate stronghold of Patterson's Town on Breton Island. In 1822, Louisiana, in conjunction with the Royal and U.S. navies, swept the Caribbean, capturing five pirate vessels.

Intercepting contraband was the Coast Guard's prime responsibility prior to World War II. When the war ended, the focus shifted largely to safety at sea and aiding navigation. Then in the early 1960s, law enforcement again assumed increased importance. After Fidel Castro took power in Cuba in 1959, the Coast Guard established patrols to aid refugees and to enforce neutrality, interdicting the transportation of men and arms. In the early 1970s, drug interception became a major focal point, and continues today.

---

## *Slavery*

Slavery was a tumultuous social issue in the first half of the 19th century. In 1794, cutters were charged with preventing any more slaves from Africa being brought into the country. Until Civil War broke out, cutters captured numerous slavers (persons or ships engaged in the trafficking of slaves) and freed almost 500 slaves.

In 1808, President Thomas Jefferson declared an unpopular embargo of imports and cutters closed all of our ports.

---

## *Narcotics*

On August 31, 1890, a cutter made the first recorded narcotics seizure. The USRC *Wolcott*, stationed in the Straits of Juan de Fuca, boarded and discovered a quantity of undeclared opium on the U.S. flagged steamer *George E. Starr*, seizing both the vessel and the opium. Some noteworthy examples of the Coast Guard's continuing effort to combat the flow of illegal drugs into the United States:

- On November 1, 1984, the cutter *Clover* nabbed the 63-foot yacht *Arrikis* SW of San Diego with 13 tons of marijuana on board.
- On November 4, 1984, USCGC *Northwind* captured the P/C *Alexi I* off Jamaica carrying 20 tons of marijuana.
- On May 8, 1987, Coast Guard units sized 1.9 tons of cocaine.
- In June 1995, a Coast Guard LEDET discovered and seized 24,325 pounds of cocaine hidden on the F/V *Nately I*.
- On April 28, 2001, the Coast Guard seized the Belizean F/V *Svesda Maru* carrying 26,931 pounds of cocaine, the largest maritime seizure of cocaine to date.

---

## *Liquor*

When prohibition in the 1920s was launched, Coast Guard cutters conducted the very unpopular “Rum War at Sea”. During the early days of prohibition, the Coast Guard lacked vessels, especially fast ones. Some celebrated cases are:

- On March 20, 1929, the Canadian boat *I'm Alone* carrying 2,800 cases of liquor was anchored off the coast of New Orleans. The skipper of *I'm Alone* refused to allow any searches of the vessel. The boat was finally sunk by gunfire from Coast Guard cutters, with all but one crewmember rescued. The Canadian government protested to Washington, resulting in years of legal and diplomatic bickering and arbitration.
  - The CG-249 overtook a motorboat off the coast of Florida with two men on board and 20 cases of whiskey. A young Coast Guardsman and a member of the Secret Service were killed in a skirmish that followed.
  - Having taken on board over half a million dollars worth of liquor at St. Pierre Island, *Holewood* ran down the coast to a point off New York where her crew camouflaged her to look like a well-known American coaster, *Texas Ranger*. A Coast Guard officer, detecting the fraud, consulted a shipping news bulletin, which reported that the *Texas Ranger* was in the Gulf of Mexico that day. The pseudo-*Texas Ranger* was overtaken near Haverstraw, resulting in the Coast Guard's largest single catch.
-

## *Arms*

When prohibition was repealed on December 5, 1933, some smugglers took to running guns to Central American countries, returning with narcotics.

In the 1960s and beyond, the Coast Guard was involved in interdicting the transportation of arms to Cuba.

---

## *Ice Operations*

Icebergs in the North Atlantic have always posed a danger to vessels. History records a number of casualties in the vicinity of the Grand Banks. To cite a few, the *Lady of the Lake* sank in 1833 with a loss of 70 lives. Between 1882 and 1890, ice was responsible for the loss of four vessels and 40 more seriously damaged, plus countless other whaling and fishing vessels lost or damaged.

Major disasters often serve as a catalyst for initiating safety measures or improving upon those already in place. It took one of the greatest marine disasters of all times to arouse public demand for international cooperative action to deal with this marine hazard.

On April 15, 1912, more than 1,500 lives were lost when the RMS *Titanic* struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic Ocean and sank. The vessel had been built with the latest safety design, featuring compartmentation and such innovations as automatically closing water-tight doors. The ship was touted as being unsinkable.

This much-publicized disaster resulted in procedures to protect merchant traffic in the North Atlantic from roaming icebergs. The U.S. Navy assigned the *Chester* and *Birmingham* to patrol the Grand Banks for the remainder of 1912.

In 1913 when the Navy could no longer spare ships for ice patrol, the Revenue Cutter Service (RCS) assumed responsibility, assigning the cutters *Seneca* and *Miami* to conduct the patrol.

The sinking of the *Titanic* was the driving force for establishing the International Ice Patrol. On February 7, 1914, the RCS was tasked with maintaining the International Ice Patrol. The Service was to locate and radio reports of icebergs in the North Atlantic shipping lanes to merchant ships in the area. Today, Coast Guard aircraft provide this service.

---

## ***Aids to Navigation***

Shipping was vital to trade in the New World. To provide some safety for the merchants during our colonial days, lighthouses were funded and built by local interests. One of the first acts passed by the new congress was to provide aids to navigation. On August 7, 1789, all existing lighthouses built by the colonies were federalized and funds were appropriated for lighthouses, beacons, and buoys. This newly assembled Lighthouse Service came under the jurisdiction of the Treasury Department.

The more than 1,000 lighthouses guided mariners into the major harbors of the United States. For the first fifty years, little bureaucracy existed. There were no tenders, only the lone keepers who kept the lights burning.

---

## ***Lighthouse Technology Evolution***

Some of the earliest optics used to guide ships were multiple-wicked oil lamps with reflectors to concentrate the light.

French physicist Augustin Fresnel invented an effective lens with annular rings, reflectors, and reflecting prisms that all surround a single lamp. Many of these lamps are still in use today.

Sound was also used to guide ships:

- In colonial times during fog, cannons fired on shore to warn ships away from land.
- In 1852, fog bells went into service.
- In 1969, a mechanical striking bell was used.
- In 1872, a fog trumpet was sounded.
- In 1887, an air siren provided the warning.

With the introduction of Long Range Aids to Navigation (LORAN) technology, lighthouses were phased out. Today, the Global Positioning System (GPS) is in use.

After a rash of steamboat explosions, Congress passed a federal steamboat inspection law in 1838. Federal inspectors enforced this law. In 1903, the Steamboat Inspection Service was merged with the Lighthouse Service and put under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce. In 1939, the Lighthouse Service was absorbed into the Coast Guard.

Lighthouse became obsolete with the emergence of new technologies, such as the Global Positioning System (GPS).

Many light stations were decommissioned and transferred to other agencies or private individuals. The only Coast Guard-manned light station in the U.S. today is Boston Harbor.

---

***Notable Lighthouse Keepers***

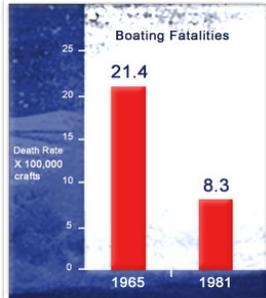
The men and women of the Lighthouse Service were among the most dedicated in government service, frequently performing their duty in extreme hardship. Keepers were often cited for saving lives in shipwreck disasters. In 1906, a hurricane destroyed 23 lights along the Gulf Coast, killing the keepers at Horn Island and Sand Island. In 1946, an earthquake caused a tsunami in Alaska, killing the crew of the Scotch Cap Lighthouse.

Some notable lighthouse keepers are:

- Abbie Burgess, who served 38 years at the Matinicus Rock and White Head Light Stations Maine while simultaneously caring for her family.
  - Ida Lewis, who served 39 years at the Lime Rock Lighthouse, saving 18 lives.
  - Marcus Hanna, who served at the Cape Elizabeth Light. He is probably the only man in history to have been awarded both the Medal of Honor and the Gold Lifesaving Medal.
-

## ***Boating Safety***

One of today's most visible Coast Guard missions is boating safety. Legislation enacted in 1896 authorized the Secretary of the Treasury "to prescribe regulations to insure the safety of passengers on...[all] craft...attendant...upon regattas...."



This was the first endeavor to regulate pleasure boat safety. In 1908, this responsibility was transferred to the Department of Commerce and Labor; however, only a single vessel was available to enforce the law.

The Motorboat Act of 1910 established a creditable boating safety program. Boats were required to be equipped with navigation lights, whistles, fire extinguishers, and life preservers. Accidents immediately decreased even though enforcement still proved to be difficult.

Enforcement became more manageable with the creation of the Coast Guard Auxiliary in 1939. This serviceable volunteer organization, working with the regular Coast Guard, has significantly contributed to boating safety.

The Motorboat Act of 1940 brought out improved safety standards. Technology advances require constant updating to the law. Major revisions occurred in 1958 and 1971.

The Coast Guard's philosophy toward boating safety is to educate the public rather than carry out punitive measures. The boating fatality rate has greatly declined over the years. The Coast Guard Auxiliary's dedicated volunteers ably assist the Service in ensuring that the 14 million boats in American waters operate safely.

---

***Military Readiness*** As a result of the Coast Guard's conglomerate and diverse history, it refers to itself as a *military*, *multi-mission*, and *maritime service*. The Coast Guard has been and continues to be a major force in America's national defense program.

When Alexander Hamilton founded the Revenue Cutter Service, he visualized it to be organized along military lines. Hamilton ordered that the Revenue Marine Officers be commissioned.

Title 14 of the U.S. Code cites that the Coast Guard is a military service. It is a branch of the Armed Forces of the United States unceasingly...not just in wartime or when directed by the President.

The 1915 legislation that established the Coast Guard recognized the organization as critical for national defense duties and in need of military discipline and training. Our cutters are designated as warships of the United States. As such, they are afforded certain rights under international conventions and practice, i.e., being able to approach any vessel to determine its identity and country of origin.

The Coast Guard has served in all of our nation's wars as a naval augmentation force, providing Coast Guard's specialized skills of needed.

In addition to general defense operations and polar icebreaking duties, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed on October 3, 1995, assigning the Coast Guard five specific national defense missions.

In 1995, the Coast Guard national defense missions were:

- Maritime interception operations
  - Military environmental response operations
  - Port operations, security, and defense
  - Peacetime military engagements
  - Coastal sea control operations.
-

## ***Coast Guard Reserve***

The Coast Guard Reserve is a part-time force, composed of approximately 8,000 specially trained people. Coast Guard Reservists serve with the Coast Guard one weekend a month plus two weeks every year, working directly alongside active duty personnel performing the same tasks.

Established under the Coast Guard Reserve and Auxiliary Act of February 19, 1941, the Coast Guard Reserve was modeled after the Naval Reserve as a military component.

Reservists were classified under two broad categories:

- **Regular Reservists.** Regular Reservists served on active duty during World War II until the end of the war.
- **Temporary Reservists.** Temporary Reservists were volunteers and former Auxiliary members, both paid and unpaid, who served in a military capacity performing coastal patrols and port security tasks.

Public Law 773, enacted November 23, 1942, established the Women's Reserve as a branch of the Coast Guard. Members of this branch became known as SPARs. SPARs is derived from the Coast Guard's motto:

### **Semper Paratus, Always Ready.**

The Reservists serve in all Coast Guard mission areas. Of the 214,000 personnel who served in the Coast Guard during World War II, more than 92% were Reservists. An additional 125,000 served in the Temporary Reserve. When the war ended, most Reservists were released to inactive duty or discharged; the Women's Reserve was terminated in July 1947 but reestablished in August 1949.

---

***Coast Guard  
Reserve  
(continued)***

The first organized Coast Guard Reserve unit was formed in Boston in October 1950 to support the Coast Guard's recently expanded port security responsibilities. This set the framework of today's Coast Guard Reserve. During the Vietnam Conflict, the Selected Reserve reached a peak post-WW II strength of 17,815 in 1969.

- **1970s.**

- ▶ In the spring of 1973, 134 Reservists are recalled to support flood response operations in the Midwest. This is the Reserve's first involuntary recall.

- **1980s.**

- ▶ In 1980, the Mariel Boat Lift exodus from Cuba necessitates the Reserves invoking another involuntary recall.
- ▶ From 1981 to date, the Reservists log over 5,900 person-days augmenting the Active Component to enforce Security Zones for space shuttle operations in Florida.
- ▶ The Reserve supplies 65% of the personnel employed in massive cleanup operations in Alaska following the Exxon Valdez oil spill on March 23, 1989...the much publicized environmental tragedy.

- **1990s.**

- ▶ In 1991-1992, over 15% of the Selected Reserve – 1,650 Reservists – participate in Operations Desert Shield/Storm in the Persian Gulf.
  - ▶ In 1994, the successful Reserve-sponsored program, Sea Partners, is initiated. Teams of Reservists are assigned to USCG Marine Safety Offices across the country to foster marine pollution awareness and marine environmental protection laws and regulations compliance.
  - ▶ The Reserve again provides personnel to the Active Component to support hurricane response operations for Hurricane Floyd in September 1999. To date, the Reserve has supported 12 hurricane and six major flood operations.
  - ▶ Late 1999, the Coast Guard is authorized to recall reservists to respond to possible Y2K-related contingencies in the Egypt Air 990 plane crash off the New York coast on October 31, 1999. This authorization is not exercised since Reservists volunteered for both the search-and-recovery effort following the John F. Kennedy Jr. light plane crash in July 1999 and the Egypt Air 990 tragedy.
-

*Coast Guard  
Reserve  
(continued)*

- **2000s.**
    - ▶ In 2000, approximately 1,000 reservists serve on active duty in support of Operation Sail, a product of President John F. Kennedy's vision to promote unity and goodwill between nations through sail. Majestic vessels from around the world participate in eight ports on the East Coast.
    - ▶ Since March 2002, 3,900 Reservists are involved in Operation Liberty Shield, protecting the U.S. in the heightened terrorist alert.
    - ▶ In 2003, almost 600 Reservists from five Port Security Units (PSUs 305, 308, 309, 311, and 313) are deployed to the Persian Gulf area.
- 

*Coast Guard  
Auxiliary*

The volunteer organization, known today as the Coast Guard Auxiliary, was created on June 23, 1939 by the Coast Guard Reserve Act of 1939. The objectives of this new civilian organization were to promote safety on navigable waters; efficient operation of motorboats and yachts; better understanding and compliance with motoring laws, rules, and regulations; and to assist the Coast Guard in certain operations.

Members were not military nor government employees but volunteers who offered their boats and services to the Coast Guard:

- For the “conduct of duties incident to the saving of life and property“
- In the “patrol of marine parades and regattas.”

The Coast Guard and civilian boating community were extremely enthusiastic about the new Coast Guard Reserve, headed by CDR Merlin O'Neill. By June 1940, 2,600 men and 2,300 boats were enrolled. Coast Guard bases began offering reservist training courses, conferring three reserve classifications (Senior Navigator, Navigator, and Engineer) to those who passed.

By early 1941, it seemed inevitable that the U.S. would be drawn into World War II, thus creating a demand for manpower and boats.

On February 19, 1941, a new law restructuring the Coast Guard Reserve was passed, establishing two reserve organizations to be operated by the Coast Guard. The existing civilian reserve was renamed the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. A new U.S. Coast Guard Reserve would function on a military basis as a source of wartime manpower.

---

*Coast Guard  
Auxiliary  
(continued)*

Coast Guard Reserve members were divided into two categories “Regular Reservists” and “Temporary Reservists.”

- Regular Reservists:
  - ▶ Received remuneration for their services
  - ▶ Had to meet normal military physical standards
  - ▶ Could be assigned to stations anywhere the Coast Guard deemed appropriate when called to active duty.
- Temporary Reservists. Men unable to meet the Regular Reservist requirements were invited to become temporary members of the reserve. A Coast Guard Temporary Reservist served:
  - ▶ As a volunteer only in some designated geographic area (usually near his home or workplace)
  - ▶ Less than full-time
  - ▶ Between the ages of 17 and 64.

Physical requirements were not stringent.

Members of the Auxiliary were invited to enroll in the Reserve as Temporary Reservists and to bring their boats with them. The Auxiliary proved to be a tremendous asset during the war...much more than just a boaters' organization. Members:

- Patrolled the waterfronts and inlets
- Manned lookout and lifesaving stations
- Performed rescue missions
- Served as a recruiting and training agency for the Coast Guard Reserve
- Filled gaps left by Coast Guardsmen who were deployed outside the U.S.
- Served in many other important ways.

After the war, the organization rose to a new level. Auxiliary members were given rates and ratings, uniforms, and insignia. New programs were introduced.

---

*Specialties*

Training in five branches is available to Auxiliarists:

- Seaman (Boatswain's Mate, Coxswain)
- Artificer - Radio
- Artificer - Engine Room Force
- Aviation (Pilot and Machinist's Mate)
- Special Branch (Yeoman, Storekeeper, and Pharmacist's Mate).

Upon passing the appropriate examinations, Auxiliarists are rated as third class, second class, first class, or chief petty officers.

---

*Uniforms*

Coast Guard Auxiliary uniforms are similar to those of regular Coast Guard officers, with distinctive Auxiliary buttons and insignia. A sleeve badge similar to that of Coast Guard enlisted personnel, minus the Eagle, indicates each member's grade in specialty.

---

*Airplanes*

In September 1945, Congress enacted Public Law 451, which included owners of aircraft and radio stations eligible for Auxiliary membership. Having lost most of its regular aviation element after the war, the Coast Guard heartily embraced these Auxiliary aviators.

By 1950, several Auxiliary Districts had air flotillas. Pilots from the 11th District, operating out of Vail Field in Los Angeles, flew SAR patrols over the mountains and deserts of southern California.

The 14th District formed two air divisions in Hawaii, where the Coast Guard's air strength consisted of two obsolescent planes.

---

*Vessel Examination*

The Courtesy Marine Examination program is one of the Auxiliary's most important assignments.

The Coast Guard published a booklet of safety standards and regulations, and gave authority to the Auxiliary to train its members as inspectors.

---

*Public Education*

The Public Education (PE) program, another important Auxiliary activity, was initiated in January, 1948. The Auxiliarists offered a series of free courses at the annual Motorboat Show in New York City's Grand Central Palace.

---

*Public Education  
(continued)*

By the early 1950s, an eight-lesson course in Outboard Safety was offered. During the next few years, one-lesson and three-lesson basic courses were added. Individual flotillas experimented with their own education programs.

By the mid-fifties more than 30,000 men and women had taken part in Auxiliary education programs.

---

*Operations*

The Auxiliary assists the Coast Guard in several of its non-military functions, including search-and-rescue (SAR), safety, regatta, and harbor patrols, and checking aids to navigation.

In 1952, the Commandant authorized Auxiliary Operational Units (AUXOPS). Specially-trained groups, each consisting of 50 Auxiliarists, five boats, two aircraft, and two radio stations, would be organized to assist the Coast Guard in emergencies.

A few years later, a specialized, rigorous training program was offered to Auxiliarists. Passing the program's seven courses (Administration, Communications, Patrols, Piloting, Seamanship, Search-and-Rescue, and Weather) made an Auxiliarist eligible for the coveted AUXOP status, symbolized by an insignia incorporating a wreath of excellence.

---

*Coast Guard  
Auxiliary  
Organization*

Today's Auxiliary is organized into four units:

- Flotilla
- Division
- District Regions
- National.

A senior Coast Guard officer serves as the Chief Director, directing management of policies established by the Commandant. Overall supervision of the Coast Guard Auxiliary is the responsibility of the Assistant Commandant for Operations (G-O), who reports directly to the Commandant.

The Auxiliarists, who are dedicated civilian volunteers, receive no remuneration...only a "thank you for a job well done." However, they are an integral component of Team Coast Guard.

**Additional untestable information on the Coast Guard Auxiliary can be found on the Coast Guard website and the Auxiliary website:**

<http://www.cgaux.org/>

---

*Flotilla*

The flotilla is the basic unit of the Auxiliary, with each flotilla headed by a Flotilla Commander (FC). A flotilla consists of 15 or more qualified members responsible for executing the Auxiliary program. Every Auxiliarist is a member of a local flotilla.

---

*Division*

Flotillas in the same general geographic area are grouped into divisions, headed by a Division Captain (DCP) and a Division Vice-Captain (VCP). The division:

- Is usually composed of five or more flotillas
  - Provides flotillas with administrative, training and supervisory support
  - Promotes district policy.
-

***District Regions*** Some districts are grouped into regions. The district/region:

- Provides divisions with administrative and supervisory support
- Promotes policies of both the district commander and national Auxiliary committee.

A District Commodore (DCO), District Vice Commodore (VCO), and District Rear Commodore (RCO) under the guidance of the Coast Guard District Commander govern all districts and regions.

At this level, Coast Guard officers are assigned to oversee and promote the Auxiliary programs.

---

***National***

The Auxiliary has national officers, along with the Commandant, who are responsible for the administration and policy-making for the entire Auxiliary.

These officers (Chief Director of Auxiliary, an Active Duty officer; National Commodore; and National Vice Commodores) make up the National Executive Committee (NEXCOM).

---

***Homeland Security***

Following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, President Bush authorized the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to protect America against future attacks on our homeland. Over 20 separate agencies came under the DHS umbrella.

The Secret Service and the Coast Guard are also positioned in the Department of Homeland Security. The two organizations remain intact and report directly to the Secretary.

On March 1, 2003, the U.S. Coast Guard was officially transferred to DHS.

Following the September 11th terrorist attacks, the Coast Guard immediately mobilized more than 2,000 Reservists in the largest homeland defense and port security operation since World War II. The Coast Guard has increased its vigilance, readiness, and patrols to protect the country's 95,000 miles of coastline, including the Great Lakes and inland waterways.

---

*Coast Guard's Role* The Coast Guard's homeland security role includes the following:

- **Safeguard:** Safeguard ports, the flow of commerce, and the marine transportation system from terrorism.
  - **Maintain:** Maintain maritime border security against illegal drugs, illegal aliens, firearms, and weapons of mass destruction.
  - **Ensure:** Ensure that we can rapidly deploy and resupply our military assets, both by keeping Coast Guard units at a high state of readiness, and by keeping marine transportation open for the transit assets and personnel from other branches of the Armed Forces.
  - **Protect:** Protect against illegal fishing and indiscriminate destruction of living marine resources, prevention and response to oil and hazardous material spills--both accidental and intentional.
  - **Coordinate:** Coordinate efforts and intelligence with federal, state, and local agencies.
-