Memorandum of Understanding

For

Use of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

In Support of the Department of Transportation's

Office of Emergency Transportation

OBJECTIVE: Utilize the HF telecommunications resources of the Coast Guard Auxiliary to augment the radio communications network supporting the Office of Emergency Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration.

BACKGROUND: Recent experience, particularly with natural disasters such as hurricanes, has shown that contingency communications systems and resources can play a significant role in providing a minimum essential command, control, and communications (C3) capability to begin restorations efforts when normal common carrier communications are disrupted. The Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) and The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) would like to integrate the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary's communication resources into existing DOT communications resources. The enhanced communications interconnectivity will support departmental responses to all emergencies including natural disasters and other transportation related crises.

RSPA is the DOT's research, safety, and transportation systems administration. RSPA serves as principal advisor to the Secretary of Transportation (SECDOT) in planning and implementing the civil sector response to emergencies impacting the nation's transportation systems. The Administrator of RSPA has delegated secretarial authority to exercise powers and carry out functions related to emergency preparedness as specified in Executive Order 12656. RSPA also directs activities of the Crisis Management Center (CMC) to facilitate interface between modal administrations during transportation related emergencies, and natural disasters.

FHWA provides proactive leadership, expertise, resources, and information to continually improve the quality of our nation's highway system and its intermodal connections. FHWA is an integral part of the Department's emergency response system and fully supports the CMC. Additionally, FHWA maintains a high frequency (HF) radio system with transceivers located in several offices throughout the country. These radios provide connectivity with many State Emergency Operations Centers (EOC). The FHWA also maintains an HF radio in the CMC and provides trained operators during CMC activities.

The men and women of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary are trained volunteers who operate almost 6,000 operational vessels and more than 100 aircraft. Additionally, Auxiliarists operate more than 2,000 VHF radios and approximately 70 HF radios. Auxiliarists can provide real-time information during emergencies and natural disasters.

DISCUSSION: FHWA has a high frequency radio network dedicated to providing contingency communications for the Department's CMC. This network has a limited number of stations and, in many disaster situations, has no reporting station within the disaster area. The Coast Guard Auxiliary has HF telecommunications capabilities throughout the country which can enhance the current system. These radio facilities have been inspected and conform to Coast Guard requirements and the owners/operators have completed telecommunications training as required by the Coast Guard.

AUTHORITY: The primary statutory authority for this agreement is 14 U.S.C. Sec. 141. This statute authorizes the Coast Guard, including the Auxiliary, to provide certain assistance to federal, state, and local entities.

PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

A. RSPA agrees to:

(1) Utilize the Coast Guard Auxiliary communications system in support of emergency response operations during CMC activation.

(2) Notify FHWA and the Coast Guard Auxiliary when emergencies and/or natural disasters may require activation of the CMC.

(3) Provide coordination support, training, and other technical assistance.

(4) Provide space for Auxiliarists to assist the Office of Emergency Transportation during CMC activation.

B. United States Coast Guard agrees to:

(1) Commandant (G-SCT) will obtain authority for the Coast Guard Auxiliary to operate on existing FHWA HF radio frequencies during emergencies, natural disasters, drills, operational nets, and operational tests.

C. FHWA agrees to:

(1) Due to the differences in communications operating procedures between the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the FHWA, assist the Coast Guard Auxiliary in developing administrative procedures establishing interoperability of the Coast Guard Auxiliary communications system with the FHWA communications system.

(2) Provide coordination support, training, and other technical assistance.

D. United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, upon direction of the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, agrees to:

(1) Support departmental emergency response operations with communications support to the CMC during a CMC activation.

(2) Develop procedures with FHWA assistance to ensure interoperability of the Coast Guard Auxiliary HF communications system with the FHWA communications system. Periodically review utilization of the interoperability with FHWA assets for the purpose of improving future operations.

(3) Provide coordination support, training, and other technical assistance.

(4) Report system capabilities/limitations during emergencies and natural disaster response operations to RSPA Office of Emergency Transportation.

FUNDING

The National Telecommunications Information Administration (NTIA) charges all government entities for the use of government frequencies. This fee is levied when the frequency authorization is issued by NTIA. The Coast Guard (G-SCT-2) processes all DOT (less FAA) frequency assignments. It is anticipated up to 70 Auxiliary radio stations will require assignments of two frequencies each. The associated fees for these Auxiliary spectrum assignments will be Coast Guard funded. All contemplated Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary activity is conditioned on the availability of appropriate funding.

The Chief, Office of Auxiliary, has overall funding responsibility for the administrative management and basic organizational support of the Auxiliary program to include overall policy development, maintenance of administrative and management functions, new member acquisition, and basic organizational support and entry level training for the Auxiliary. The Program Manager or Agency benefiting from Coast Guard Auxiliary services is expected to provide additional incremental funding for program specific administrative, operational, and training requirements.

AGREEMENT

The Chief, Office of Auxiliary (G-OCX), the National Vice Commodore for Coast Guard/State Support (NADCO-CG/SS), the Administrators of the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) hereby establish this **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** which institutionalizes Auxiliary involvement in the radio communications network of the Office of Emergency Transportation through the Federal Highway Administration. The Auxiliary Telecommunications Division Chief (DVC-OT), the Administrators of the Research and Special Programs Administration and the Federal Highway Administration are designated Action Officers for the purpose of coordinating and implementing this **MOU**. Action officers shall treat this **MOU** as a living document, reviewing and updating it to reflect changing priorities and initiatives. Any material modifications to this **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** must be approved in writing by all four signatory parties. Action Officers, Signatories, and Commandant (G-SCT-2), shall maintain an up-to-date copy of the **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** for reference and review.

This **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** will remain in effect until terminated in writing by any party upon 90-day notice to all other parties and will be reviewed every year, unless cancelled in writing by either party.

Mortimer L. Downey
Deputy Secretary
Department of Transportation

Date: 8/26/99

Ernest R. Riutta
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Assistant Commandant for Operations

Date: 8/26/99

Everette L. Tucker, Jr.
National Commodore,
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

Date: 8/26/99

Mark S. Kern
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Chief, Office of Auxiliary

Date: 8/26/99

Stephen D. Van Beek
Deputy Administrator
Research and Special Programs
Administration

Date: 8/21/99

Gloria J. Jeff
Deputy Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

Date: 8/21/99