



U.S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard



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iCommandant

Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

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Sunday, November 29, 2009

Weekend Wrap Up ... We have a lot of customers!

Guardians,

We returned to Washington this afternoon after a busy week in Europe. We participated in the 26th General Assembly of the International Maritime Organization and visited a number of United States, NATO, European Union, and coalition partners.

There are several themes that emerge from the world of work that our Guardians perform this week and every week beyond our maritime borders.

1. The world is becoming more complex and the trend will continue.
2. The issues we face challenge existing governing structures that were created in different times to address different threats.
3. Asymmetrical threats such as piracy, illegal fishing, and illegal immigration are proliferating and challenge our governing structures and operational response models.
4. The value, relevance, and return of investment of Coast Guard resources has never been more appreciated.
4. Allocating our forces outside the western hemisphere has always been a challenge but the demand is likely to outstrip our capability for the foreseeable future.
5. These realities will require us to make tough choices in the near future as we reconcile supply and demand for our limited resources.

I am more well informed and sensitive to the complex issues at play having made these visits.

I will be asking some of my senior staff and other leaders to comment as we move forward.

ADM A

Posted at 11/29/2009 05:17:00 PM [@comments](#)



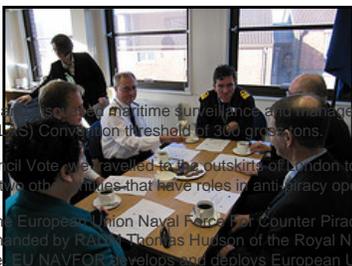
Friday, November 27, 2009

Meeting with RADM Hudson, Commander, European Union Naval Forces and Commander, UK Maritime Force

Guardians,

Another busy but fruitful day here in London. Prior to the Council vote this morning (see earlier post). I hosted delegation

leaders from Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway at a breakfast meeting.



discuss maritime surveillance and management options for vessels falling below the Safety of Life At Sea (SOLAS) Convention threshold of 300 gross tons.

Following the Council Vote we travelled to the outskirts of London to Northwood, home of the UK Joint Headquarters. Located there are the other agencies that have roles in anti-piracy operations in and around the Horn of Africa.

The first entity is the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Counter Piracy and Humanitarian Assistance (EU NAVFOR). This force is commanded by Rear Admiral Thomas Hudson of the Royal Navy. He is also double hatted as the Commander UK Maritime Force. EU NAVFOR develops and deploys European Union forces for counter piracy operations on behalf of the European Union with the Maritime Security Center - Horn of Africa (MSC-HOA) which located in the Northwood complex as well. MSC-HOA was awarded the Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award earlier in the week for their efforts.

The second entity is the Allied Maritime Component Command Headquarters Northwood (CC MAR HQ Northwood). CC MAR HQ is a NATO command responsible for the strategic picture of the position of all naval ships and Task Forces in the Atlantic. In addition, it is responsible for the administration and programming of two of NATO's four standing naval forces. One of those forces supports Operation Ocean Shield in the Somali Basin. This team is one of many critical partners that is making a difference in combatting piracy

This week has allowed us to better understand the significant effort being expended to combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Somali Basin and identified potential ways in which the Coast Guard can assist in our many roles as force provider, regulator, and delegation member at IMO.

ADM A

Posted at 11/27/2009 01:20:00 PM @comments



U.S. Delegation to the International Maritime Organization

Guardians,

Following our successful re-election to the IMO Council in Group A, we are traveling to Maritime Security Center - Horn of Africa in Northwood, England, the European Union Center that coordinates private ship movements in the Gulf of Aden.

This morning we took a picture of our delegation on the back terrace at the IMO building in London with the Parliament Building and Big Ben in the background.

My thanks to our delegation for their hard work. Some will remain this next week for the working agenda of the assembly.

ADM A



[U.S. Delegation to the International Maritime Organization](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at 11/27/2009 07:16:00 AM @comments



It's a Small World

Guardians,

During our recent visit to Brussels, we were made aware of a unique historical figure who was born in Belgium by Special Agent Kiloana Akim who is a native Hawaiian and serves on my security detail.

While Master Chief Bowen and I were at Mons visiting the Supreme NATO Command, our spouses (Pam and Jan) and S/A Akim visited a unique landmark near Brussels in the town of Louvain (Leuven is the local spelling), Belgium. At St. Anthony's Chapel there is a crypt and tomb of Father Damien who is also known as the Apostle of the Lepers and who was recently canonized by Pope Benedict XVI. Given the Coast Guard's close association with the Hawaiian Islands and the proud heritage of our Pacific Islanders, S/A Akim and I thought this would be a fitting remembrance during the Thanksgiving weekend.

Known as the patron Saint of the Diocese of Honolulu and Hawaii, Father Damien was born as Josef De Veuster in Belgium in 1840. He joined the priesthood and assumed the name of Damien. He volunteered for a mission to Hawaii and arrived in 1864. After being made aware of the conditions at the Kalawao leper colony on the island of Molokai, Father Damien elected to move their to care for the inhabitants from 1873 to 1884. Leprosy had traditionally been

inaccurately associated with behavior rather than as a disease. As quarantine laws tightened, he was ordered quarantined as well. He became ill and by 1888 it became public that Father Damien had contracted the disease himself. He passed away from the disease on 15 April 1889, a date that is celebrated in Hawaii. A statue of Father Damien has been placed on the steps of the state capitol in Hawaii and a replica is displayed in our National Capitol. On this Thanksgiving Weekend we give thanks today for Father Damien "who demanded the right for the sick to a human existence."

ADM A and S/A Akim

Posted at [11/27/2009 05:39:00 AM](#) @[comments](#) 



IMO General Assembly Election of Council Members

Guardians,

This morning at the IMO General Assembly Plenary Session the biannual election to the IMO Council (the IMO governing body) was held. There are three categories of membership in the Council (A,B, and C). The groups are tiered based on the contribution of that particular nation to global maritime transportation (i.e. amount tonnage under the state flag, amount of cargo shipped/received, number of shipowners, passengers embarked). The United States has been a member of the Council since the inception of the IMO in 1959 as a member of Group A. I am pleased to announce that the U.S. was re-elected to the Council in Group A along with China, Greece, Italy, Japan, Norway, Panama, Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom.

My remarks in support of our re-election are provided below.

ADM A

Thank you Mr. President.

I am Admiral Thad Allen, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard.

Distinguished delegates, I humbly request your support for the United States re-election to the IMO Council under Category "A".

The United States has been an active member of the Council in Category "A" since 1959. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with our international partners to ensure the oceans are safe for shipping, secure from dangerous threats, and clean for future generations to enjoy. To solve global problems, we must develop global solutions and the IMO is the right place to do that.

Since our inclusion as an IMO member state, the United States has made significant contributions to advance IMO's objectives of marine safety, security, and environmental protection and we will continue to do so. We are committed because the marine transportation system is an absolutely essential link in the global supply chain.

We are a maritime nation. My service, the U.S. Coast Guard, was founded to provide maritime safety, security, and environmental stewardship for a fledgling nation. We quickly learned that our values, economy, and security were tied to the oceans and waterways that funneled into our ports. Those ports, over 360 of them today, have become essential hubs in the global marketplace.

As a flag state, port state, and coastal state, the United States satisfies the requirements for election under Category "A". We are a leader in providing international shipping services. In addition to the U.S. flag fleet, the United States is one of the top five ship owning countries in the world. We have some of the world's busiest ports and rank second in terms of overall port calls by the world's ships.

We continue to work at IMO with the international community to address the most pressing issues of the day including air emissions from ships, climate change, piracy in waters off Somalia and the Gulf of Aden where United States forces have demonstrated resolve to address this threat, and goal-based standards for new ship construction.

After the tragic terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11th, 2001, we engaged the IMO to develop the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. This Code has led to the broad international effort to increase global shipping security. To improve maritime awareness for vessel safety and security, we are voluntarily hosting the international data exchange for the long-range identification and tracking system.

We regularly send highly qualified delegations to IMO meetings and several U.S. personnel have held leadership positions within IMO committees. American subject matter experts assisted in the meetings that produced the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the U. S. Coast Guard also posts a permanent officer at the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden, where I have personally delivered a graduation address.

Recognizing our financial obligations, the United States has remained current on its payments of assessed contributions and made voluntary offerings to various IMO projects. Over the past five years, we provided \$1.4 million in funding for the International Maritime Security Trust fund. We provide support and training expertise to help developing countries safeguard their own maritime interests and contribute to international governance.

As a member of the Council, the United States has been a strong advocate for an efficient and forward looking IMO. We will continue to support transparency in all financial and regulatory matters, accountability by adhering to internal and external audits, and the highest ethical standards.

Within the United States, President Obama recently acknowledged just how vital the oceans are to our way of life when he formed the Ocean Policy Task Force. This multi-agency group is creating a governance framework to

responsibly manage competing oceanic interests.

When I testified before the United States Senate, I stressed the need to align the Task Force's domestic policies with the international community. We appreciate that the oceans are indeed the last global commons. We share those waters with all of you and many of the challenges we face extend beyond the reach of individual nations. To facilitate trade and mitigate threats, the global community must work together.

We are committed to working within the IMO framework and with all of the member nations to meet these challenges. This is our obligation so we can leave a better world for our children to inherit.

For all of these reasons, we strongly believe that our election to Category "A" will serve the IMO's core goals of providing maritime safety, security, and environmental protection. I appreciate your consideration.

Thank you.

Posted at [11/27/2009 04:44:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Thursday, November 26, 2009

Thanksgiving Report

Guardians,

Happy Thanksgiving to you all. As we consider those things for which we are thankful, we took the opportunity while in Europe to visit those who are serving overseas and our partners and allies. Today we visited NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. Master Chief Bowen met with senior enlisted personnel while I visited with General Sir John McColl, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and Chief of Staff, General Karl-Heinz Lather, German Army. We finished our visit with a visit to the NATO Special Forces Coordination Center where our United States Forces were preparing to host our allied partners and their families in a traditional American Thanksgiving Dinner.

We give thanks to our Guardians who are serving in the United States and far from home. As posted previously, we were also honored to meet with our personnel serving in Activities Europe in Rotterdam.

Earlier today President Obama made calls to OS1 Daniel Adams who is stationed on USCGC MAUI and has deployed in the Arabian Gulf since May 2009. Petty Officer Adams is originally from Bakersfield, CA and his family currently resides in Semmes, AL (near Mobile).

The President also spoke to GM1 Nick Spence who is assigned to Maritime Safety and Security Team 91104 in Galveston, TX. Petty Officer Spence is currently deployed in Umm Qasr, Iraq where he is working to transition Iraqi forces to assume security operations in the Arabian Gulf. Prior to his deployment to Iraq, Petty Officer Spence participated in security operations on the Potomac River during President Obama's inauguration. He and his wife reside in Houston, TX.

I also had the chance to speak to BM1 Mike McGettrick who is stationed on USCGC BARANOFF in the Arabian Gulf as well. BARANOFF is moored at the Kuwait Naval Base (KNB) today. They had just finished Thanksgiving Dinner and were looking forward to the football games today. Petty Officer McGettrick had just reported aboard BARANOFF when I visited them last April. He and his wife reside in Key Largo, FL.

While the General Assembly of the International Maritime Organization has taken us away from home for Thanksgiving, we are grateful for all our Guardians who are serving around the world and our sisters and brothers in arms who are serving as well. This evening IMO Secretary General Efthimos Mitropoulos hosted us for dinner here in London and recognized our great partnership with a traditional turkey dinner.

ADM A

Posted at [11/26/2009 12:30:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Wednesday, November 25, 2009

Meeting with the U.S. Mission to the European Union, Brussels

Guardians,

Catching up from Brussels after a very busy day. This morning we departed early from London and flew to Rotterdam where we met with our hard working folks at Activities Europe. I was joined by Master Chief Skip Bowen and Kirsten Madison (Director of International Affairs). We had a good inbrief from CAPT John Koster and his leadership team. It was good to see LCDR Mike Delury who I first met as the Officer in Charge of the cutter BOLLARD at Group Long Island Sound in 1993. His wife

Christine and the unit Ombudsman met with Pam and Jan Bowen on work-life issues associated with living in Europe. We held an all hands and their was a lot of discussion of the high demand for Coast Guard capabilities in international programs.

We then traveled on to Brussels where we were met by our DHS Ambassador, U.S. Representative, U.S. Ambassador to NATO, and ADM Giampaolo DiPaola, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee. Issues discussed included piracy, maritime domain awareness, the Arctic, and small vessel security.

Moving across town we were briefed by the U.S. Mission to the EU prior to a terrific meeting with Director General Fokian Fotiadis, Director General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission. The main topic was our recent work with the President's Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy with a focus on maritime planning. We also discussed maritime surveillance and small vessel security.

Tomorrow we will visit NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) prior to returning to London to resume meetings with the International Maritime Organization.

ADM A

Posted at 11/25/2009 04:23:00 PM @comments



Tuesday, November 24, 2009

Dr. Sam Ryan receiving the Distinguished Public Service Award

Guardians,

At this evening's Coast Guard Reception aboard the historic vessel WELLINGTON

(http://www.thewellingtontrust.com/wellington_trust/saving_ship_wellington.asp)

in London we were pleased to present the following awards.



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[Dr. Sam Ryan receiving the Distinguished Public Service Award](#)
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Doctor Sam Ryan, Canadian Coast Guard: Dr. Ryan was awarded the Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award for his leadership at the International Maritime Organization as Chairman of the Long Range Identification and Tracking Working Group. Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Dr. Ryan worked through a number of complex technical, diplomatic, and leadership challenges to guide IMO member states to the final LRIT agreement.

Maritime Safety Centre – Horn of Africa (MSC-HOA): MSC-HOA was awarded the Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award for their contribution to the deterrence and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. An organization established by the European Union, MSC-HOA provides 24-hour manned monitoring for vessels transiting the region and maintains a secure interactive web site for ship owners, masters, and agents to register vessel information, update their positions, and receive pertinent information to reduce the risk of pirate attacks.

A good night to recognize our international partners in an historic maritime setting.

ADM A

Posted at 11/24/2009 04:27:00 PM @comments



IMO Bravery Awards (London): AST2 Abram Heller

Guardians,

AST2 Abram Heller has received wide recognition for his rescue of 8 crew members from the fish processing vessel ALASKA RANGER. However, last night he was received the prestigious Bravery Award from the International Maritime Organization here in London. Petty Officer Heller was recognized along with Maurice and Sophie Conti who were the subject of an earlier post.

The response from the 169 countries in attendance was overwhelming and he was besieged by well wishers at the following reception. We continue to be proud of Petty Officer Heller and the recognition he has received.



[IMO Bravery Awards \(London\)](#)

ADM A

Posted at [11/24/2009 06:37:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 

Breakfast Meeting with Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, First Sea Lord

Guardians,

This morning I had the great pleasure of meeting with Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, the First Sea Lord of the United Kingdom. We have a long and close relationship with the British Navy and share many common interests. Admiral Stanhope has been very interested in the Maritime Strategy that was developed jointly between the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. We discussed our engagement through our various Coast Guard fora and some of the unique non-military relationships we have with our counterparts in Russia (Border Guard), China (Border Control Directorate), and other nations where their Coast Guard's are outside the defense structure.



[Morning breakfast meeting with the First Sea Lord, Sir Mark Stanhope](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Always a pleasure to meet and talk with the First Sea Lord.

ADM A

Posted at [11/24/2009 06:28:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 

Monday, November 23, 2009

Opening Speech: Secretary General IMO

Guardians,

As promised earlier, here is the text of Secretary General Mitropoulos' opening speech at IMO's 26th Assembly. It is lengthy but worth the read.

ADM A

Mr. President, honourable representative of the host Government and honourable Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers, your Excellencies, Coast Guard Commandants, distinguished delegates and observers, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome back! – by which, of course, I mean to welcome you back to our familiar and much-loved, fully refurbished, Headquarters' building, here on Albert Embankment to which we returned five months after the last Assembly.

I am sure you will agree that the state-of-the-art premises, worthy of the 21st century, that we were promised have indeed been delivered – and, I should add: on time and to budget.

I am pleased to report that the link between this building and all that it represents and our host nation's Royal family, which commenced with the laying of the foundation stone by Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, thirty years ago and was cemented at the official opening by Her Majesty the Queen 26 years ago, was reaffirmed with the official re-opening, in June 2008, being conducted by His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester.

This was a fitting occasion as it coincided with the Organization celebrating two key milestones in its history: the 60th anniversary of the adoption of its constitutive Convention in 1948; and the 50th anniversary of the Convention's entry into force. In the context of those celebrations, we were honoured by the presence here of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The celebrations concluded with a World Maritime Day Parallel Event organized in Greece, which included the unveiling of an International Memorial to the Wife of the Seafarer – to complement that for the Seafarer, which adorns the entrance to our Headquarters here in London.

I feel sure that the Assembly will readily wish to endorse the sentiments of the Council in acknowledging the contribution of all those involved in the successful completion of the refurbishment project and to the equally successful running of the Organization's business during the twenty months it lasted; in particular, its deep and sincere appreciation to the Host Government for its generous financial support – in the region of £60 million – and for supervising the successful execution of the project.

And, as I did two years ago, I reiterate my own appreciation to all delegates and observers for their forbearance, understanding and co operation, under the challenging circumstances experienced during the refurbishment period – in particular, at meetings held abroad, for which my appreciation goes, once again, to all the Governments and international organizations, which hosted such meetings, for their collaboration, generous support and warm

hospitality. And also to thank the Secretariat, which, through hard work and sheer dedication, ensured that the high quality of its services was maintained despite the changing and very demanding conditions and circumstances that put us all to the test.

Distinguished delegates,

I cannot speak about the challenges and achievements of our Organization over the past two years without placing them firmly within the context of the global financial crisis, which has left few, if any, immune from its consequences. Having touched most people, the crisis has provided a sombre backdrop for shipping as well, with VLCC rates dropping from Worldscale 170 to 81 and the Baltic Dry Bulk Index plummeting by more than 11,000 points from an all-time high of 11,793 in just a few months. With the container ship market claiming its own casualties, those that survived were put under enormous stresses.

For my part, I have tried, whenever possible, to urge that financial difficulties should not lead to a lowering of safety standards through cutting corners and skimping on key items such as maintenance, repair and training. If safety and the marine environment were themselves to fall victim to the financial crisis, we would all be the losers. Besides, it is my firm belief that those who are prepared not to compromise on standards and who maintain their determination to provide a quality service to their customers, will be best placed to emerge from the slump unscathed and take advantage of the better times that will certainly follow.

Later, I shall speak in more detail about some of the initiatives we took to address the challenges we faced during the past biennium. What I am going to do now, through a chronological resumé, is to outline those of the highlights from the biennium, which demonstrate that not only has the Organization as a whole worked diligently and thoroughly towards the goals and objectives identified in our Strategic and High-Level Action Plans, but that it has also been able to react swiftly and decisively to whatever new problems and unforeseen challenges have emerged in its course.

And also to demonstrate that, in spite of the inherent difficulties of a continuously and rapidly changing landscape, we were able to display a commendable quality of grip: an ability to master situations, as they emerge and come our way, rather than allowing ourselves to be mastered by them.

In January 2008, a SOLAS regulation to introduce the multi-objective orientated long-range identification and tracking of ships system entered into force and, as I speak, the system architecture and infrastructure are in place; IMSO has been appointed as LRIT Coordinator; and suitable transitional arrangements have been established. The development of a unique project with the novel aims, ambitious scope and unprecedented complexity of the LRIT system should be acknowledged not only as a technological feat of the highest standard but also as a demonstration of the undiminished determination of the maritime community to keep the industry in the forefront of technology and protect it against the unlawful acts with which it may be threatened.

In September 2008, the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships also entered into force. This Convention, another in IMO's impressive portfolio of measures designed to protect and preserve the marine environment against pollution, bans the use of harmful substances in anti-fouling paints applied on ships' hulls and is expected, when fully implemented, to make a real difference in keeping the seas clean and healthy.

A month later, in October 2008, the Marine Environment Protection Committee unanimously adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex VI that will significantly reduce harmful emissions from ships. The main changes will see a progressive reduction in sulphur and nitrogen oxides and particulate matter emissions when, together with the associated Technical Code, they enter into force in July 2010. This was a landmark achievement, a monumental decision in IMO's history that proved, once again, the Organization's ability to set global standards to serve a global industry operating in a global environment.

The fact that, when the measures to prevent air pollution from ships were deliberated, representatives of some 100 Governments were able to reach decisions by consensus on complicated issues of great importance and significance to the environment, as well as to the shipping, refining and ancillary industries, not only bears testimony to the responsible manner with which the IMO Members address environmental matters nowadays but also to the great results that can be achieved when States, with the same concerns and the determination to produce effective solutions to global issues, work together under the auspices of this Organization.

In December 2008, we heralded the institutionalization of the Facilitation Committee, which is now on a par with the other IMO Committees. This means that, in addition to its traditional role of cutting the red tape in ship/port interface operations, the FAL Committee can now complement, from a stronger position, the work of other Committees by ensuring an appropriate balance between their regulatory tasks and the maintenance of the desired efficiency and security in shipping operations, for example.

In April of this year, the Legal Committee approved a draft Protocol to the 1996 HNS Convention designed to address the practical problems that have prevented many States from ratifying the original Convention, which, despite being adopted in 1996, is some way from meeting the level of ratification that would trigger its entry into force. A diplomatic conference will be held in April next year to adopt the new Protocol.

In May 2009, the eyes of the Organization, the shipping and ship-recycling industries and environmental groups were focused on Hong Kong, China, where another IMO conference succeeded in adopting an international convention for the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships. Aimed at ensuring that ships, when being recycled after reaching the end of their operational lives, do not pose unnecessary risks to human health and safety or to the environment, this Convention strikes a finely worked-out balance between the respective responsibilities and obligations of shipowners, ship recycling facilities and flag and recycling States. I hope it will not take long before it enters into force.

To bring this brief chronological tour of the current biennium highlights up to date, June 2009 saw the MSC revising its guidance on combating piracy and armed robbery against ships, including specific guidance to prevent attacks off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. And, in July, the MEPC progressed work on a package of technical and operational measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping, which, together with our parallel consideration of market-based instruments, will be refined in the coming year with a view to facilitating decisions on their scope of application and enactment. I am confident that, through a combination of carefully crafted measures and instruments, shipping can enhance its energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint to the benefit of the environment.

Distinguished delegates,

The two issues I just mentioned – GHG emissions and piracy – have been dominant themes on the Organization's agenda over the last two years. I will briefly elaborate on both.

As you will be aware, this year's theme for World Maritime Day is "Climate Change – a challenge for IMO, too!" – which gave us the opportunity, both here in London and at the now well-established Parallel Event (this year held, with great success, in New York) to highlight the contribution the Organization is making to what is perhaps the biggest challenge ever to face humanity as a whole.

In two weeks time, Copenhagen will open its gates to receive Heads of State or Government, national delegates and observers from international organizations, scientists, environmental experts, media representatives and a myriad of other interested persons, who will flow into the Danish capital to take part in one of the largest conferences the global community has ever staged. Their aim? To put it simply: to save the planet – and I do hope, for the sake of this and future generations, that, once there, they will show the strong political will required to do just that. It is imperative that they agree not only to ambitious emission cuts but also on the mechanisms required to achieve them in the most cost-effective manner and on how to divide the burden the decisions will imply in a way everyone can live with. Such decisions must be original, bold and commensurate with the gravity of the situation and the expectations of humankind that turns to them and us demanding action, now! So, let us go to Copenhagen with an open mind and with the only option available: to succeed in all that is realistically politically achievable in the circumstances – and, thus, pave the way for the adoption of a legally binding instrument there – or, as soon as possible, thereafter.

Mr. President, we live in, and share, the same planet and our responsibilities vis-à-vis it go beyond those we have within our borders. We should, therefore, think globally and act globally. And, above all, show the strong leadership the current circumstances demand. This applies equally to industrialized countries, emerging economies and developing countries. We are all in it together and, together, we should overcome the enormous difficulties that our past behaviour has amassed causing climatic phenomena and changes to the oceans never seen before and threatening with extinction entire States.

For IMO's part, not only have we concrete action to stand us in good stead in Copenhagen, we will seek to actively participate in the conference to ensure that actions already taken by the Organization do not go unnoticed and that those planned receive international endorsement. And all these, against the main conclusion of a recent IMO study that international shipping is responsible for only 2.7% of all anthropogenic CO₂ emissions – which, however, has not acted as an excuse for us not to redouble our efforts to further lower that percentage.

It is my hope that, when transport emissions are discussed in Copenhagen, the peculiarities of shipping (as an industry uniquely international in character, which is, to its great extent, registered in developing countries) are taken fully into account – and also that, against IMO's excellent track record on environmental issues, the Organization continues to be entrusted with the regulation of shipping while pursuing, with consistency and an admirable sense of responsibility, its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from shipping operations.

It is for this reason that, taking advantage of the presence here today of so many Ministers, I would ask them and all delegations here present to ensure that all the competent Ministries involved (of Transport or Shipping, Environment and Foreign Affairs) are properly briefed, before they depart for Copenhagen, on all the aspects of the conference pertaining to shipping, and that the complexities of this most international of all industries are duly taken into account when shaping their countries' official policies and determining their respective positions.

And, once there, they, and all the leaders attending the Conference, should, in the words of Danish Prime Minister Rasmussen, "focus on what is possible and not let themselves be distracted by what is not possible". They should aim for a politically binding Agreement, which should be "global, comprehensive and substantial – yet, flexible enough to accommodate countries with very different national circumstances" Unquote.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

The alarming escalation in incidents of piracy and armed attacks on merchant ships has been a dominant and unwelcome theme throughout the past biennium. No-one in shipping, and few in the wider world, is unaware of this problem, the threat of which has been plaguing innocent seafarers and fishing vessels personnel for far too long. Since the early 1980s, IMO has, with the invaluable support and co-operation of littoral States and industry, been addressing piracy with considerable success, most notably in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore and the South China Sea.

However, it is the recent upsurge in pirate activity off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, and now beyond the Horn of Africa and in the wider expanses of the western Indian Ocean, that has turned this phenomenon into a global issue. Pirates have become bolder, better armed and better equipped, and their attacks have grown dramatically in number and ferocity, culminating in hijacking ships and holding their crews hostage. At present, 10 ships with a total of 236 seafarers held hostage, are in their hands in various parts of the Somali coastline.

To galvanize appropriate action to stem this modern scourge, we have worked closely with the United Nations

(including the Security Council, the World Food Programme and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime) and with various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (both global and regional, such as the African Union and the League of Arab States), as well as with political and defence entities (such as the European Union, NATO and the Combined Maritime Forces). The response has been one of the greatest examples of international co-operation ever demonstrated, as will be highlighted this evening, when, following the ceremony to present this year's Awards for Exceptional Bravery at Sea, we shall honour the commanding officers and crews of those countries that have deployed naval vessels to participate in the anti-piracy campaign off Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Mr. President,

Piracy is not a problem to which a single approach will bring the desired solution. That is why the co-operation and co-ordination of all parties concerned (such as those I just mentioned) is of great value. While, however, their efforts and initiatives to bring about substantive results in the overall campaign are commendable, it should not be forgotten that the initiative to address the issue stems from this Organization. It was this Organization that identified the magnitude of the problem; assessed the seriousness of its nature; generated work to eliminate it; brought it to the attention of the United Nations; sensitized entities in a position to tackle it head on; worked together with others to coordinate a common approach to its solution; triggered action at various fora and levels; and succeeded in prompting a positive response from various sources. And, while it would be fair to say that much has been achieved so far, there is much more to be done were we to succeed in our common objective; and a lot of what needs to be done should be done by this Organization, if we want the community to continue entrusting us with the pivotal role we have played so far.

Fundamentally, Mr. President, the root cause of the piracy problem off Somalia is the political instability that has torn the country apart since 1991. Our thoughts and prayers are with those, both within and outside Somalia, who have the future of the country in their hands. While I was re-assured of the determination of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia to tackle piracy, as expressed by its Prime Minister during his visit to IMO last month, I consider it imperative that we, in the maritime community, re-double our efforts to combat piracy in all its forms, bearing in mind that it is not a cause, but a symptom.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

The emphasis I placed, while dwelling, at some length, on piracy and climate change issues, should not detract from the excellent progress we were able to make on other important topics on our agenda, such as on goal-based standards; on the development of e-navigation; the Marine Electronic Highway project; and the Globallast Partnerships project with its associated global industry alliance for marine biosecurity, all of which will be reported in detail later on.

Our work in the field of technical co-operation has been equally impressive – and, as ever, it has been pursued with a vast amount of enthusiasm and energy and delivered with a great deal of success.

Although the final details of TC expenditure incurred this year will not be determined until early 2010, I am pleased to report that, in our unrelenting efforts to enhance the maritime capability of developing regions, we have achieved a significant level of success under regional and global programmes. In terms of delivery at the field level, the results to date translate into the implementation of 91.5% of planned activities under the ITCP with a further 70 activities being delivered over and above the original plan.

The Assembly will recall that, when, two years ago, it adopted a resolution on "The Linkage between the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme and the Millennium Development Goals", it requested the Technical Co-operation Committee to give high priority to activities, which would not only promote the early ratification and effective implementation of IMO instruments, but also contribute to the attainment of the MDGs.

To give effect to that resolution, we designed, and started implementing, several programmes (such as support for Africa's maritime development; protection of the marine environment; integration of women in the maritime sector; and development and improvement of partnerships for technical co-operation) along with a new global programme to address the special needs of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries.

One of our most ambitious projects in Africa concerns the establishment of an adequate search and rescue infrastructure off its coasts facing the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Four of the five planned regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres are now in place, two of which (in Lagos and Monrovia) I had the privilege to commission in 2008 and 2009, respectively. They join those established in Mombasa and Cape Town in 2006 and 2007, so that, with the establishment of the fifth, and last centre, in Morocco, we will complete the network of regional centres recommended by the 2000 Florence Conference.

Turning now to maritime training, another key part of IMO's technical co-operation portfolio, this biennium has seen our two major affiliated training institutions, the World Maritime University in Malmö and the International Maritime Law Institute in Malta, reach milestones in their respective histories.

In June 2008, WMU celebrated its Silver Jubilee with a series of events, including the hosting of two international conferences on the impact of climate change on the maritime industry and on Empowering women in the maritime world, while, in May 2009, IMLI celebrated its 20th anniversary with a commemorative seminar on the Rule of international maritime law. These fine maritime institutions now have an ever-expanding global network of graduates, whose professional success bears testimony to the excellent achievements of both.

In 2008, we signed an agreement of co-operation with the Italian Government for the delivery of courses on safety and environment-related subjects, at the International Maritime Safety, Security and Environment Academy established in Genoa that year.

Still on maritime training, the Assembly will be pleased with the progress we made intersessionally on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, to ensure that both meet the challenges facing the shipping industry today and those anticipated in the foreseeable future. This review is expected to be completed in the

coming January to enable a Diplomatic Conference, which is scheduled to be convened in Manila in June 2010, to adopt the resultant text.

Appropriately, "2010: Year of the Seafarer" has been chosen as the theme for next year's World Maritime Day, to provide, first and foremost, an opportunity for us all to pay tribute to seafarers for their unique contribution to society; to show them what good care the Organization takes of them; and bring home the message that they should be treated fairly in the event of an accident. The theme will also complement the "Go to Sea!" campaign, which we launched in November 2008, in association with ILO, the "Round Table" of shipping industry organizations and ITF, to help address the industry's looming labour supply crisis. Our specific aim is to promote seafaring as an attractive option for young people of the right calibre, one which can provide them with rewarding, stimulating and long-term prospects, not only at sea but also in the broader maritime industry.

Distinguished delegates,

During this Assembly you will consider a draft resolution on the further development of the Organization's audit scheme, principally aiming at moving the Scheme from its current voluntary form to an institutionalized process within the respective IMO treaty instruments, thus providing an opportunity for all Members to enhance their capacity to implement and enforce all the relevant IMO treaties.

So far, the audit scheme has proven its worth in many ways and I am convinced that a decision to make it universally applicable to all Member States will enhance safety and environmental protection, while contributing substantially to their improving their performance as flag, port and coastal States and to the Organization attaining its objectives.

I will turn now to matters pertaining to the Organization's governance and management. Our key resource here is the staff and, over the last year, we overhauled our Staff Rules to align them further with the UN common system, incorporating in them the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. There is no doubt that the demands arising from Members can only be effectively met if we have sufficient human and financial resources to do so. This biennium has been a particularly challenging one in this regard as the Organization, in common with our Member Governments, has not been immune from the upheavals in the world's financial markets. I can, however, advise that none of our investments were adversely affected, thanks to our prudent and risk-averse investment strategy, which is reflected in our risk management framework. And, despite the economic turmoil, I am pleased to report that the level of contribution receipts last year was 98.02 per cent and this year, to date, has reached 99.25 per cent – a record performance, which, I believe, is a clear demonstration of your support for the Organization and the value you place on our work.

While on resource matters, I wish to thank the Organization's External Auditors for their constructive approach in discharging their responsibilities. You will be pleased to know that they have issued unqualified opinions for the two financial years since the Assembly's last session. We have sought and welcomed their recommendations for further enhancing accountability and strengthening controls, particularly in relation to our work to introduce new, UN system-wide, accounting standards. And this Assembly will be invited to approve revised Financial Regulations so that we start implementing the new standards as from January 2010 – rendering IMO one of the few UN system organizations to do so.

On the budgeting side, the challenges that have arisen, due to the global economic and financial crises, have been compounded by the impact on our budgets of increases in professional salaries decided by the UN International Civil Service Commission, following its regular review of the London duty station. These have resulted in unbudgeted cost increases that we have had to absorb and I wish to thank all concerned for their contribution in ensuring that we could do so.

In this respect, I appreciate not only the Council's recognition of our efforts to provide clear, transparent, user-friendly and thorough 'results-based' budgetary proposals in support of the Organization's Strategic and High-level Action Plans for the forthcoming biennium, but also its understanding of the difficulties we face and the hard choices we have to make to deliver within our set budgets.

As the work of the Organization intensifies, the burden on some of the "unsung heroes" on which we have all come to rely, becomes even heavier. I mentioned earlier the tribulations of the period 'in exile', all of which the Secretariat as a whole took in its stride with calm, efficiency and a sense of humour. The Conference Division was, of course, particularly affected, providing logistical support to a total of 38.4 meeting weeks and numerous intersessional group meetings during the biennium, at external venues both in London and abroad. As if that were not enough, the volume of documentation processed has, of late, increased considerably, as a result of the very high volume of documents submitted to our meetings. In spite of that, the response of our processing units and translators has been exemplary – and I wish to express my deep appreciation to all concerned.

Distinguished delegates,

I trust that my report thus far has reassured you that, as an organization, we continue to work diligently and conscientiously not only to respond to the increasing demands placed upon us but also to make certain that we are well prepared to meet future challenges and expectations. I should like to thank all staff members equally for their hard work and dedication, without which we simply would not be able to function. A special expression of thanks goes to all the Directors for their painstaking efforts to ensure that all six Divisions fire on all cylinders.

As ever, there have been, during the biennium, several departures, arrivals and transfers among the staff and I trust you will join me in offering thanks to those who have left and welcome those who have either joined us for the first time or who have taken on new responsibilities.

The same applies to those among you who you choose to lead the various IMO bodies. And, although I should not discriminate among the excellent chairmen, vice-chairmen and other officers who serve committees, sub-committees

and groups of any sort, I am sure you will all agree that one of them, Johan Franson of Sweden, the Chairman of the Council, deserves a very special mention here. Mr. Franson is due to retire soon and, last week, he bid farewell to the body he chaired, with unique distinction and unparalleled success, over the last four years. During a very demanding time, he shrewdly led the Council to making the right, well-balanced decisions that were needed for the Organization to move forward successfully. He was straightforward, honest and correct in all his undertakings. With him, you knew where you stood and his stewardship of the Council will make it a hard act for his successor to follow. For me, our working relationship has been one of the most harmonious and pleasant I have ever experienced – and would have been ideal were I able to always understand his Swedish sense of humour!... I know the Assembly would wish to thank him most sincerely and warmly wish him a long and happy retirement.

Mr. President,

It is a customary, yet sad, duty on occasions like this to turn our thoughts to those, who having served this Organization well, passed away during the interim period. Among them, I would, in particular, mention Mr. Joachim Jens of Germany, who served in the Maritime Safety Division between 1966 and 1985; Ambassador George Dove-Edwin of Nigeria, who presided over the IMO Assembly in the early 1990s; Mr. Urban Hallberg of Sweden, a former Chairman of the COMSAR Sub-Committee; and Mr. Jim Smith, a former Permanent Secretary of IACS. We are saddened by their passing and will remember them all with affection.

Distinguished delegates,

As the first decade of the 21st century draws to a close, the world faces an uncertain and difficult future. As we look around us today, what we see is but a world beset with problems: climate change and global warming, the faltering global economy, insecurity over food and energy supplies, armed conflicts, declining ecosystems, extreme poverty and the threat of pandemics are among several 21st century realities – most of them inter-connected, and all of which conspire to make the need for concerted action on all fronts stronger than perhaps ever before.

What really pleases me enormously is that, in a world such as this, our Organization remains a beacon of stability, displaying virtues of calmness, self-confidence and, above all, a strong determination to move on and succeed. Our foundations are strong and solid and we feel confident that we will be able to withstand the impact of any storm that may come our way in the period ahead, although we cannot possibly predict all of the challenges that will face us between now and the next time we meet. As if to prove the point, I looked back at the speech I gave to this Assembly two years ago. It was a time when the world markets were thriving and shipping was doing extremely well. I did not, therefore, make then any mention whatsoever of the impending but as yet unforeseen global financial crisis, and just a single, brief mention of Somalia – yet, both went on to be major and recurrent themes for all of us during the biennium that is to come to a close soon. So, who knows what we will be faced with as the next biennium unfolds?

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

It now remains only for me to say that I look forward with great interest, indeed with excitement, to the deliberations that will take place during the next two weeks. I feel confident that you will sanction the work of the Organization over the reporting period and that you will provide the direction and resources we need to continue rendering good services to the causes of safety, security, efficiency and environmental protection.

I would, therefore, ask that you give favourable consideration to all the resolutions before the Assembly and, in particular:

- those on the Audit Scheme, piracy and the financial sustainability of the World Maritime University; and, of course,
- the one on the results-based budget.

Let me now conclude by thanking you, Mr. President, for your valuable services to the Organization and assuring you all, distinguished delegates, that we, in the Secretariat, will spare no effort to provide any assistance needed to ensure the smooth running of this Assembly, to which I wish every success.

Thank you.

Posted at 11/23/2009 05:40:00 PM [@comments](#) 



IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery At Sea

Guardians,

The first day of the IMO Assembly ended with the recognition of Exceptional Bravery at Sea. I was extraordinarily proud to take part in the ceremony. For the first time, the IMO Council selected two winners. Both were U.S. citizens.

AST2 Abram Heller was recognized for his extraordinary performance in rescuing 8 persons in the water after the sinking of the ALASKA RANGER. Abram has been honored on several occasions, but the ceremony today was witnessed by thousands of international partners and they were astounded.

The second award would surprise you. It was awarded to two Americans who rescued three people from a grounded sailing vessel at Takau Lakaleka Reef in the Fiji Islands in October 2008.



[IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery At Sea](#)

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Maurice and Sophie Conti who were anchored in their sailing vessel OCEALYS heard a distress call from the sailing vessel TIMELLA reporting they had been driven aground on a reef approximately 12 miles away. After exhausting comms checks and the possibility that a response unit could reach TIMELLA, the Contis elected to attempt a response.

With 4 and 6-year old children on board they got underway and closed the reef where the TIMELLA had grounded. Arriving on scene, they found all three persons on board (POB) in the water and the sailing vessel hard aground and breaking up on the reef.

While Sophie coned the their vessel (she told the told the two kids to stay on the cabin and lay down), Maurice deployed their inflatable launch and went after the people in the water. Maurice recovered all three and then returned to OCEALYS. They were safely recovered.

The Contis were recommended for this award by the government of New Zealand.

Pam and I were proud to meet the Contis and hear their story.

ADM A

Posted at 11/23/2009 05:23:00 PM @comments



Morning Session at IMO (11/23/09)

Guardians,

Following the Heads of Delegation meeting, the first Plenary Session was held on Monday morning. The remarks of Secretary General Eftimios Metropoulos were significant and I will include them in a future post when we obtain an "as delivered" copy. Significant issues raised included piracy, air emissions from ships, climate change, and seafarer rights. We received praise for our World Maritime Day Parallel Event held in October in New York (we continue to receive tremendous feedback from our countries, industry, and NGOs).

We hosted a bi-lateral luncheon for the Singapore delegation and discussed their successful approaches to piracy in the Straits of Malacca and the tracking of small vessels.

This afternoon was allotted for statements by delegations. I spoke in the first group which included Australia, Nigeria, Russia, Greece, Italy, China, Turkey, Germany, Kenya, Singapore, Congo, and Sweden.

My remarks are below.

ADM A

Thank you Mr. President, Secretary General Mitropoulos, and the distinguished delegates here today.

I am grateful to the IMO under the leadership of the Secretary General for advocating the maritime issues that affect all of our nations, most notably climate change and air emissions. The Secretary General's participation in the recent World Maritime Day Parallel Event in New York City highlighted the need for the world to take action on climate change.

The people of the United States heard his message and appreciate his support and the support of all members for the North American Emission Control Area which will hopefully be adopted in March 2010.

Recently, I testified before the United States Senate regarding President Obama's Ocean Policy Task Force. This multi-agency group is creating a collaborative governance framework for managing our oceanic resources. During my testimony, I stressed the importance of the IMO's role to ensure our national policies are aligned with our international partners.

I also highlighted the IMO's unique ability to bring the maritime community together to address shared concerns. This is essential because today's transnational threats exceed the grasp of individual nations. By working together, we can bring the light of governance to troubled regions of the maritime domain.

Piracy is a menace to individual ships but the economic ramifications ripple throughout the marine transportation system. The threat of piracy has endured, in part, because individual pirates have eluded our existing legal system.

I applaud the Secretary General's leadership and support his draft resolution regarding piracy off Somalia. And we support IMO's continued progress to implement the Djibouti Code of Conduct. Building inherent capability within nation states and facilitating regional coordination are critical first steps.

However, we must also remain vigilant to deter pirate attacks and develop the legal frameworks to prosecute these criminals after they are caught. I am hopeful that the Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Kenya can serve as a model for future legal agreements that can disincentivize acts of piracy.

Small vessel security is another global challenge. If you look at piracy, the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, as well as the



Morning Session at IMO (11/23/09)

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use of self-propelled semisubmersible vessels to smuggle narcotics, the common thread is the use of small, unregulated, and unmonitored vessels.

Finding a small vessel amidst the busy backdrop of a typical coastline is "a needle in a haystack" proposition. That needle has the potential to pierce the fabric of port security operations and tear at the efficiency of maritime transportation.

We must raise awareness of small vessel movements so we can identify the few hostile vessels from the thousands of legitimate recreational and work boats that ply our shores. I am grateful to the IMO for developing guidelines on the security of small vessels that are not covered under SOLAS or the International Ship and Port Facility Security Codes.

I also applaud the individual nations which have focused their resources against this potential threat. I often cite the effectiveness of the international community's efforts when explaining the need for broader applicability of Automatic Identification Systems within U.S. waters.

The Copenhagen talks next month will put a spotlight on the profound impacts of climate change. The IMO has led the global response to climate change in the maritime domain – a leadership role we strongly support. The IMO is the right body to develop common guidelines that will help preserve our maritime environment.

Nowhere are the effects of climate change more apparent than the Arctic. There is now water where there was once ice and it is inviting more shipping, exploration, and human activity. We will continue to work with the other Arctic nations to manage our common interests in this pristine yet resource-laden environment.

In the past, the oceans were barriers that separated us. Today, the oceans are the last global commons that connect us. Our collective challenge is keeping the maritime environment safe for shipping, secure from dangerous threats, and clean for our children to enjoy long after we are gone. This is our obligation to the next generation and we proudly stand with the IMO to accomplish this goal.

I applaud the IMO's diligence and the Secretary General's leadership. I look forward to working with you to develop global solutions to these global challenges.

Thank you.

Posted at 11/23/2009 10:31:00 AM 0 comments



Morning Meeting of Delegation Heads - International Maritime Organization (London)

Guardians,

The 26th General Assembly of the IMO began this morning. The first event was the meeting of the Heads of Delegation where the officers were elected to lead the General Assembly for the next two years (General Assembly meetings are held biannually and these officers manage the work during that period). Those elected included:

President: Georg Boomgarden, Germany

Vice Presidents: (1) Paul Farquarson, Bahamas
(2) Haneka Lubidi, Tunisia

Chairman of Committee 1 (administrative, financial, and legal cooperation): Paul Peche, Australia

Chairman of Committee 2 (technical matters): Svining Oftedal, Norway

As the Head of the US Delegation, I had the honor to nominate Svining Oftedal as the Chairman of Committee 2.

ADM A

Posted at 11/23/2009 07:53:00 AM 0 comments



Sunday, November 22, 2009

26th General Assembly of the International Maritime Organization

Guardians,



[Morning Meeting of Delegation Heads - International Maritime Organization \(London\)](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

We arrived in London this evening for the 26th Session of the General Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Throughout this week I will be posting on our activities and providing some background on this very extraordinary organization that is critical to maritime safety, security, and environmental stewardship of our maritime commons. In this first installment, let's talk about the history of the IMO (I have condensed the information here from back briefing papers for our delegation and open source information provided by IMO on their website).

The IMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations. The UN Convention that established the IMO was adopted in Geneva in 1948 and the first meeting was held in 1949. IMO has the responsibility to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for worldwide shipping. Throughout its history IMO has created a comprehensive body of international conventions governing every facet of shipping including safety, environmental concerns, legal matters, technical cooperation, maritime security, and the efficiency of shipping.

Based in London, the IMO has 167 member states, three associate members, and various intergovernmental (IGO) and non-governmental organizations (NGO). I have designated by the Department of State as the Head of Delegation for the United States. The U.S. participation is a "team sport." Providing support and advising are the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of Transportation, Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Transportation Safety Board. We also consult academia, industry groups and associations who are also represented at IMO through IGO/NGOs. In all 250 U.S. members participate in various IMO fora over the course of a year.

There are a number of conventions and treaties that have been developed, agreed on, and approved through the IMO. The three most commonly known are:

The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS),

The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and,

The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW).

Recently, the IMO has been instrumental in advancing a global agenda regarding piracy and the need to establish a global code of conduct and a regime to attach consequences to the actions of pirates.

I will make a short address to the General Assembly on Monday and will post those remarks on this blog after their delivery. We are also looking forward to the IMO presentation of awards for bravery on Monday night where AST2 Abram Heller, who distinguished himself in the rescue of crewmen from the fish processing vessel ALASKA RANGER.

More to follow on our agenda and key issues we are addressing in this 26th Session of the General Assembly of the IMO.

ADM A

Posted at 11/22/2009 03:39:00 PM [Comments](#) 



Saturday, November 21, 2009

CDR Evans: Sector Ohio Valley

Guardians,

In my meeting with CAPT Hung Nguyen of Sector Ohio Valley, our Hamilton Award winning command, he discussed their reading program and his XO CDR Dennis Evans offered these thoughts.

ADM A

What's Your Book?

CDR Dennis C. Evans, Logistics Department Head, Sector Ohio Valley

"Everybody's got a book." This quote is from Mr. Kerry Patterson, the keynote speaker at the 2009 Innovation Expo in reference to the myriad of leadership and management books available, including ones he authored. Even for those of us not blessed with the gift of prose, we all have "our books" – books that we've found particularly meaningful in the growth of our own personal leadership skills. Leaders share "our books" with others, often in the form of reading lists, in the hopes of fostering leadership development in them as well. This is a great approach. Others value the lists of leaders they admire, wanting to similarly learn and grow. In addition to offering our own books however, it's also important that



[CCG CDR Evans.JPG](#)

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leaders ask "What's your book?"

Why are leadership books even important? The Coast Guard strives to be a learning organization. We recognize that leadership is a skill, one we can continually hone and improve. As Coast Guard leaders, it is our duty to strive to continuously improve our own leadership abilities, as well as develop the leadership of those around us. For centuries, books have been recognized as a great source of knowledge from those that have "been there and done that". Leadership books are a great tool to promote leadership growth at all levels.

In Sector Ohio Valley, we've found it helpful to ask "What's your book?" A bottom-up approach has proved particularly useful in obtaining buy-in and stimulating sustained leadership discussions, as the source material is selected by member consensus as "our book". It's one thing for a command to pick a book and ask members to read it - it's quite another for members to pick themselves. Utilizing discussion tabs available on CG Portal, Sector Ohio Valley started a "Brown Bag Leadership Book Club" as a forum for unit wide leadership discussions. It's public place, check it out by searching "Sector Ohio Valley" on CG Portal. Michael Abrashoff's "It's Your Ship" was selected by group consensus as the inaugural book for discussion. To date, over 40 posts have been made across sub-units throughout the Sector discussing the leadership lessons of that book, voicing both consenting and dissenting opinions. It's been an excellent vehicle to foster meaningful unit leadership discussions of the exact sort needed to promote leadership growth.

What's your book?

Posted at 11/21/2009 06:33:00 PM @comments



Thursday, November 19, 2009

Sector Ohio Valley Commander, CAPT Hung Nguyen, after receiving the Hamilton Award from the Commandat

Guardians,

Today we awarded the first prestigious Alexander Hamilton Award to Sector Ohio Valley. This award establishes a unit award for excellence to parallel our personal awards for leadership. Sector Commander, CAPT Hung Nguyen provides a guest post below.

ADM A

Achieving a More "Agile, Change-centric and Thinking" Organization
CAPT Hung M. Nguyen, Commander, Sector Ohio Valley



CCG & CAPT Nguyen.JPG
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

During his tenure as Commandant, Admiral Thad Allen continually expresses his desire for the Coast Guard to be a more "agile, change-centric and thinking" organization. This is because we are operating in a very challenging environment, where the demand for our service is increasing but the budget picture is not as favorable as it has been during the last eight years. Additionally, a natural or man-made disaster could happen at anytime and the public has very little tolerance for failure.

To meet the Commandant's vision, in late 2007, Sector Ohio Valley began to implement the Coast Guard Management Framework, which is also known as the Commandant's Performance Excellence Criteria, to enhance our unity of effort, to focus our limited resources on the highest risks, and to promote continuous improvement. Since then, our collective efforts have resulted in significant readiness and performance improvement, more satisfied external stakeholders and better care for our workforce. As with other sectors, we still have many resource gaps and do not meet all of our performance targets. However, our highly effective integrated management system and culture of workforce empowerment have enabled us to anticipate change, make the timely adjustments, and achieve the desired results.

With our subordinate units' implementation of the Coast Guard Management Framework at their level and the availability of the new CG Portal's collaboration tools, we have achieved even greater vertical alignment and workforce empowerment. It is easier now for every member of the Sector to make the connection between their activities to their unit's goals, to share their perspectives on current issues, and to collaborate on improvement.

The "Brown Bag Leadership Book Club" of the CG Portal Sector Ohio Valley Place is a great example of our enhanced workforce empowerment. The purpose of this discussion forum is to promote leadership development for junior officers and senior petty officers. The books are selected by this group and its members share the responsibility for identifying leadership principles that they can employ to enhance their personal effectiveness and the Sector's organizational excellence. This approach is much more effective than the normal practice of a senior officer's recommending a professional reading list for subordinates. Oftentimes, this top-down approach results in very little response.

In his keynote speech at this year's Coast Guard Innovation Expo, Mr. Kerry Patterson, the author of "Influencer: the Power to Change Anything", suggested that, in order for an organization to be "agile, change-centric and thinking", its leaders must change the behaviors of the workforce. He recommended six change strategies (values, skills, support, teamwork, incentives, and environment). In winning this year's Alexander Hamilton Award for Excellence, we believe that our integrated management system and culture of workforce empowerment are in alignment with Mr. Patterson's recommendations, and it is our solution for sustaining organizational excellence.

Posted at 11/19/2009 06:59:00 PM [@comments](#)



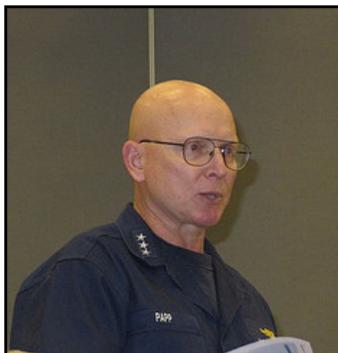
Senior Executive Leadership Conference (SELC), Day Three: VADM Papp

Guardians,

We closed out our Senior Leadership Executive Conference this afternoon after closing ceremonies for the Innovation Expo.

We spent time today consolidating our work group activity and briefings regarding diversity, strategy and resources, cyber security, and command/ control/culture.

Your senior leaders rolled up their sleeves and worked tough implementation issues related to diversity as an operational imperative, understanding the complexity and challenges associated with cyber security, insuring we resource to our strategic goals, and the command and control issues related to our new bi-level maintenance model and attendant cultural changes.



[Senior Executive Leadership Conference \(SELC\), Day Three: VADM Papp](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at 11/19/2009 06:14:00 PM [@comments](#)



Wednesday, November 18, 2009

SELC Day Two: RADM Nimmich and Senior Exec Marty Rajk

Guardians,

Yesterday morning we opened the Innovation Expo with a keynote from organizational behavioral expert Kerry Patterson. He was very insightful and very amusing as he explained how we can influence behaviors and create effects to improve organizational performance.

Our Senior Leadership Executive Conference (SELC) continued yesterday as well with operational briefs from Atlantic Area Commands, US Southern Command (RADM Parker) and US Northern Command (RDML Parks).

We closed the day with a reception on the Innovation Expo floor with our innovators and industry partners. Look for posts from some of those folks.



[SELC Day Two: RADM Nimmich and Senior Exec Marty Rajk](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at 11/18/2009 12:54:00 PM [@comments](#)



Coast Guard Exchange, Chesapeake, VA

Guardians,

I took some time yesterday from the Innovation Expo to visit our newest facility in the Coast Guard Exchange System. The store is located in a former Circuit City building in a heavy shopping area in Chesapeake, VA (near Greenbriar Mall). A perfect location and our first Exchange located in such an area. The store is beautiful and expansive. Hats off to our CGES folks on the great decision to locate the store and the highly motivated team that is serving our military family. Check it out at www.cg-exchange.com.

ADM A

Posted at 11/18/2009 12:36:00 PM 1 @comments



Monday, November 16, 2009



Senior Leadership Executive Conference, Day One: RADM Brice-O'Hara (DCO) and RADM Mary Landry (D8)

Guardians,

We finished a full and busy first day at the Senior Executive Leadership Conference. Today's focus was on field operations with presentations by commanders from Pacific Area, 11th District (California), 13th District (Pacific Northwest), 14th



Senior Leadership Executive Conference, Day One: RADM Brice-O'Hara (DCO) and RADM Mary Landry (D8)
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District (Hawaii and Pacific Rim), and 17th District (Alaska). We also heard presentations from the Superintendent of the Coast Guard Academy, both JIATF South and West, the Deployable Operations Group (DOG), FORECOM, and the PACAREA Senior Reserve Officer. We are tweeting out these events as they happen.

We also had an in depth brief regarding cyber security (defense, exploitation, and attack) as well as an update on the standup of the Coast Guard's Cyber Command led by the Deputy Commandant for Operations, RADM Brice-O'Hara.

I opened the conference with an overview of the current external environment, including the ongoing Fiscal Year 2011 budget process.

Tomorrow we will be opening the Innovation Expo at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. We will also continue with field briefings from the Atlantic Area commands and our flag officers assigned to Northern Command and Southern Command. In the afternoon our remaining senior leaders will lead and engage in interactive breakout sessions on diversity (VADM Currier), strategy (VADM Papp), Governance and Management: Command, Control, and Culture (VADM Breckenridge).

We just dodged a bullet on the weather at Virginia Beach after the Nor'easter that plowed through late last week and the weather is beautiful.

ADM A

Posted at 11/16/2009 05:07:00 PM 0 @comments



Coast Guard Featured on ESPN

As part of its Veterans Day programming, ESPN featured several minutes of footage from the Coast Guard Training Center in Cape May, NJ. In case you did not see it, here is a [compilation of several individual clips](#) which were featured throughout the day on 11 November.

For those of you who haven't visited Cape May recently, you might be surprised at some of the new facilities and training programs. It is still inspiring to see the spirit of our new Guardians in action.

Posted at 11/16/2009 04:21:00 PM 0 @comments



Senior Executive Leadership Conference and Innovation Exposition

Guardians,

Our Senior Executive Leadership Conference takes place this week in conjunction with the Innovation Exposition at Virginia Beach. I will posted and tweeting as I get the opportunity. Stay tuned

ADM A

Posted at 11/16/2009 07:27:00 AM [@comments](#) 



Sunday, November 15, 2009

North American Marine Environment Protection Association

Guardians,

Over the last several years the Coast Guard has developed a close working relationship with NAMEPA, the North American Marine Environment Protection Association. I recently asked Carleen Lyden-Kluss, a co-founder to guest blog and her post is provided below. NAMEPA was a critical partner in our very successful World Maritime Day event in New York in October. You will enjoy the work of Kevin Lopez.

ADM A

Thank you for suggesting inclusion of information on NAMEPA in your blog. We greatly appreciate your attention to the organization, which is leading the effort to "Save our Seas".

To summarize:

NAMEPA (North American Marine Environment Protection Association) is a non-profit organization which was formed two years ago as a marine industry-led effort to "Save our Seas". Its mission is to educate seafarers, port communities and students on marine environment protection. Specifically, NAMEPA has the goal of informing maritime practitioners and the wider public and school communities about the critical importance of the world's oceans to mankind and the maritime industry's role and actions to preserve it.

Through its strategic alliances with port chaplains, industry, and marine interests, NAMEPA reaches seafarers and port communities in most ports in North America. Additionally, NAMEPA connects with children with the message of protecting the marine environment through its children's drawing contest. This year's winner, Kevin Lopez, gave marine life a voice to protest man's negligence of the seas (see attached poster -- [/NAMEPA%20Poster%20winner-Lopez.pdf](#)).

NAMEPA has also created and distributed a Marine Debris Poster spotlighting the duration of our litter (also attached--/ [Marine%20Debris%20Poster-final.pdf](#)). This message has been sent throughout North America, and been requested by organizations in Chile, Thailand and the United Kingdom.

NAMEPA is also engaged in convening industry events to explore strategies for improving our marine environment. Through National and World Maritime Day events, as well as response simulations, the message of improving our protection and practices is promoted. Most recently, NAMEPA worked in collaboration with the USCG and IMO to produce the 2009 World Maritime Day Parallel Event in New York City, where the topic was Climate Change. Other activities include wreck oil removal initiatives, emissions strategies, and collaboration with marine sanctuary and conservation efforts.

NAMEPA has over 80 industry members, and numerous strategic alliances with industry groups. It has become a voice for environmental vigilance and stewardship of our oceans, seas and rivers.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to seeing it on your blog!!

Best always,

Carleen Lyden-Kluss, Co-Founder and Executive Director

NAMEPA (North American Marine Environment Protection Association)

Posted at 11/15/2009 01:37:00 PM [@comments](#) 



Saturday, November 14, 2009

Accepting the Admiral Of The Ocean Sea Award (AOTOS) from the United Seaman's Service in New York, 13 November 2009.

Guardians,



On Friday night in New York, the United States Coast Guard was awarded the Admiral Of The Ocean Sea (AOTOS) Award by the United Seaman's Service. I accepted the award on behalf of the men and women of the Coast Guard. Honored with us were Donald Kurz, Chairman and CEO of Keystone Shipping and Ronald Widdows, Group President and CEO of Neptune Shipping Company. Also honored were merchant mariners who distinguished themselves by bravery in the performance of their duty. These individuals included MAERSK ALABAMA Captain Richard Phillips and LIBERTY SUN Captain Don Gross, both of whom were involved in piracy cases involving United States flag vessels. Of interest, Don Gross is a retired Coast Guard Captain and graduate of the Coast Guard Academy Class of 1969.

For those of you who are not familiar with the USS, from their website, "The mission of the United Seamen's Service is to promote the welfare of American seafarers and their dependents, seafarers of all nations, US government military and civilian personnel, and other persons engaged in the maritime industry."

The Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award "recognizes that the Western hemisphere owes its discovery to great seafarers and to the seafarers who transported the colonists, the privateers who helped win its freedom, and the people and ships that opened the world trade for our commerce. With 78 per cent of the world made up of bodies of water, this event is a continuing affirmation that this country will maintain its historic destiny with the great oceans, the ships that fly its flag, and the seafarers of all nations who serve in freedom." The Coast Guard was recognized for our continued efforts to promote access and fair treatment for seafarers.

I was honored to represent my fellow Guardians among these very deserving individuals.

ADM A

Posted at 11/14/2009 02:48:00 PM 2 comments



Visit to Station Eastport, Maine with Senator Collins

Guardians,

Our thanks to BMCS Jim Malcolm, XPO BM1 Terry Bailey and the crew Station Eastport for hosting us on Friday for a quick visit and All Hands. Station Eastport and Sector Northern New England are engaged in a fascinating prototype project to capture energy from the extreme tidal currents in the area (20 foot tidal range) to generate electrical power that is stored in batteries and used for various uses on the station.



Visit to Station Eastport, Maine with Senator Collins
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at 11/14/2009 02:17:00 PM 0 comments



Honoring Maine Guardians with Sen. Collins

Guardians,

On Friday I traveled to Eastport and Southwest Harbor Maine with Senator Susan Collins to make units visits that were cancelled last spring due to poor weather. The delay offered the opportunity to combine the visit with an awards ceremony for the team at Southwest Harbor that responded after a rogue wave knocked a number of people into the water at the "Thunder Hole" at Acadia National Park on August 23, 2009. Of the seven that were swept into the water, four made it back to shore. Of the three remaining, two were rescued and lived. They were Peter Axilrod and Simone Pelletier, age 10. The third, Clio Axilrod, age 7, was recovered but could not be revived and tragically passed away. Quick thinking and a coordinated response from the Coast Guard, National Park Service, and the Marine Marine Patrol resulted in the rescue of Mr. Axilrod and Simone Pelletier. While Mr. Axilrod could not attend the ceremony (he

sent a letter that was read to those attending), Simone Pelletier did attend with her parents and older sister. It was a special day to have Simone there as we presented individual and team awards to the responders.

Individual awards went to BMC Ed Iversen, BMC Kevinn Smith, BM1 Thomas Sands, BM3 Stephen Hatch, MK3 Ryan Valdasz, and BM3 Josh McGowan.

We thank Captain Jim McPherson (Sector Northern New England) and the crews at Eastport and Southwest Harbor for their hospitality. We also thank Senator Susan Collins for taking time to visit our units and take part in the ceremony.

You can watch a video of the award ceremony and the dramatic rescue below.

ADM A

Posted at [11/14/2009 11:19:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 



Friday, November 13, 2009

Chamber of Shipping of America Environmental Achievement Awards

Guardians,

I was pleased on Wednesday night to participate in the Chamber of Shipping of America (CSA) Environmental Achievement Awards. The CSA represents United States Flag shipping companies. These awards are given to vessels who operate for two years or more without a discharge violation.

I noted in my remarks that it is very difficult to create "non events" or to measure what doesn't happen. In this case, CSA has been able to measure and recognize the environmental stewardship of the U.S. Flag fleet. We thank CSA for this initiative and our long standing partner the President and CEO, Joe Cox.

Well done CSA and well done to those award winners (see the attached listing)

[/CSAAwardVessels.pdf](#)

Posted at 11/13/2009 07:24:00 AM @comments 



Wednesday, November 11, 2009

Secretary Napolitano speaks on Coast Guard Hill at Arlington Cemetery on Veterans Day

Guardians,

I have chosen Veterans Day to change my salutation on these posts from Shipmates to Guardians. The terms is inclusive of all of those who serve our Nation in the Coast Guard: active duty members, Reservists, Auxiliarists, and our terrific civilian workforce. It is also inclusive of all specialties, career paths, job series, and ratings. It is all of those who execute the mission and all of those who support mission execution.



[Secretary Napolitano speaks on Coast Guard Hill at Arlington Cemetery on Veterans Day](#)
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Guardians, we gathered today in a cold rain at Arlington Cemetery to remember our fallen Guardians, those who are serving today, and those who have served. We met as

we do each year on Coast Guard Hill where many of our heroes and leaders are resting. We were privileged to have Secretary Napolitano make remarks. She noted that there are 47,000 veterans serving as civilian employees in the Department of Homeland Security and announced a goal to increase that number to 50,000.

I have been in close contact with the Secretary since the loss of CG 1705 and its crew. She has reached out to the families and those who have assisted in the aftermath of the tragedy. She singled out this event as an example of the sacrifice we make to protect, defend, and save the public we serve.

As Master Chief Bowen commented "it was Chatham Bar weather." I noted we cannot control the conditions we operate in, our challenge is to apply our skill and competency to execute our missions.

A cold, rainy, windy day ... but a beautiful day just the same.

ADM A

Posted at 11/11/2009 06:01:00 PM @comments 



President Obama's Memorial Speech at Fort Hood

Shipmates,

I recently posted my remarks from our memorial service the crew of CG1705 and our Marine shipmates. We also grieve for those lost at Fort Hood. Here are the President's remarks at that ceremony.

ADM A

For Immediate Release November 10, 2009 Remarks by the President at Memorial Service at Fort Hood Fort Hood - III Corps, Fort Hood, Texas
1:55 P.M. CST

THE PRESIDENT: To the Fort Hood community; to Admiral Mullen; General Casey; General Cone; Secretary McHugh; Secretary Gates; most importantly, to family, friends and members of our Armed Forces. We come together

filled with sorrow for the 13 Americans that we have lost; with gratitude for the lives that they led; and with a determination to honor them through the work we carry on.

This is a time of war. Yet these Americans did not die on a foreign field of battle. They were killed here, on American soil, in the heart of this great state and the heart of this great American community. This is the fact that makes the tragedy even more painful, even more incomprehensible.

For those families who have lost a loved one, no words can fill the void that's been left. We knew these men and women as soldiers and caregivers. You knew them as mothers and fathers; sons and daughters; sisters and brothers.

But here is what you must also know: Your loved ones endure through the life of our nation. Their memory will be honored in the places they lived and by the people they touched. Their life's work is our security, and the freedom that we all too often take for granted. Every evening that the sun sets on a tranquil town; every dawn that a flag is unfurled; every moment that an American enjoys life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness -- that is their legacy.

Neither this country -- nor the values upon which we were founded -- could exist without men and women like these 13 Americans. And that is why we must pay tribute to their stories.

Chief Warrant Officer Michael Cahill had served in the National Guard and worked as a physician's assistant for decades. A husband and father of three, he was so committed to his patients that on the day he died, he was back at work just weeks after having had a heart attack.

Major Libardo Eduardo Caraveo spoke little English when he came to America as a teenager. But he put himself through college, earned a PhD, and was helping combat units cope with the stress of deployment. He's survived by his wife, sons and step-daughters.

Staff Sergeant Justin DeCrow joined the Army right after high school, married his high school sweetheart, and had served as a light wheeled mechanic and satellite communications operator. He was known as an optimist, a mentor, and a loving husband and loving father.

After retiring from the Army as a major, John Gaffaney cared for society's most vulnerable during two decades as a psychiatric nurse. He spent three years trying to return to active duty in this time of war, and he was preparing to deploy to Iraq as a captain. He leaves behind a wife and son.

Specialist Frederick Greene was a Tennessean who wanted to join the Army for a long time, and did so in 2008, with the support of his family. As a combat engineer he was a natural leader, and he is survived by his wife and two daughters.

Specialist Jason Hunt was also recently married, with three children to care for. He joined the Army after high school. He did a tour in Iraq, and it was there that he reenlisted for six more years on his 21st birthday so that he could continue to serve.

Staff Sergeant Amy Krueger was an athlete in high school, joined the Army shortly after 9/11, and had since returned home to speak to students about her experience. When her mother told her she couldn't take on Osama bin Laden by herself, Amy replied: "Watch me."

Private First Class Aaron Nemeika was an Eagle Scout who just recently signed up to do one of the most dangerous jobs in the service -- diffuse bombs -- so that he could help save lives. He was proudly carrying on a tradition of military service that runs deep within his family.

Private First Class Michael Pearson loved his family and loved his music, and his goal was to be a music teacher. He excelled at playing the guitar, and could create songs on the spot and show others how to play. He joined the military a year ago, and was preparing for his first deployment.

Captain Russell Seager worked as a nurse for the VA, helping veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress. He had extraordinary respect for the military, and signed up to serve so that he could help soldiers cope with the stress of combat and return to civilian life. He leaves behind a wife and son.

Private Francheska Velez, daughter of a father from Colombia and a Puerto Rican mother, had recently served in Korea and in Iraq, and was pursuing a career in the Army. When she was killed she was pregnant with her first child, and was excited about becoming a mother.

Lieutenant Colonel Juanita Warman was the daughter and granddaughter of Army veterans. She was a single mom who put herself through college and graduate school, and served as a nurse practitioner while raising her two daughters. She also left behind a loving husband.

Private First Class Kham Xiong came to America from Thailand as a small child. He was a husband and father who followed his brother into the military because his family had a strong history of service. He was preparing for his first deployment to Afghanistan.

These men and women came from all parts of the country. Some had long careers in the military. Some had signed up to serve in the shadow of 9/11. Some had known intense combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, and some cared for those did. Their lives speak to the strength, the dignity, the decency of those who serve, and that's how they will be remembered.

For that same spirit is embodied in the community here at Fort Hood, and in the many wounded who are still recovering. As was already mentioned, in those terrible minutes during the attack, soldiers made makeshift tourniquets out of their clothes. They braved gunfire to reach the wounded, and ferried them to safety in the backs of cars and a pickup truck.

One young soldier, Amber Bahr, was so intent on helping others, she did not realize for some time that she, herself, had been shot in the back. Two police officers -- Mark Todd and Kim Munley -- saved countless lives by risking their own. One medic -- Francisco de la Serna -- treated both Officer Munley and the gunman who shot her.

It may be hard to comprehend the twisted logic that led to this tragedy. But this much we do know -- no faith justifies these murderous and craven acts; no just and loving God looks upon them with favor. For what he has done, we know that the killer will be met with justice -- in this world, and the next.

These are trying times for our country. In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the same extremists who killed nearly 3,000 Americans continue to endanger America, our allies, and innocent Afghans and Pakistanis. In Iraq, we're working to bring a war to a successful end, as there are still those who would deny the Iraqi people the future that Americans and Iraqis have sacrificed so much for.

As we face these challenges, the stories of those at Fort Hood reaffirm the core values that we are fighting for, and the strength that we must draw upon. Theirs are the tales of American men and women answering an extraordinary call -- the call to serve their comrades, their communities, and their country. In an age of selfishness, they embody responsibility. In an era of division, they call upon us to come together. In a time of cynicism, they remind us of who we are as Americans.

We are a nation that endures because of the courage of those who defend it. We saw that valor in those who braved bullets here at Fort Hood, just as surely as we see it in those who signed up knowing that they would serve in harm's way.

We are a nation of laws whose commitment to justice is so enduring that we would treat a gunman and give him due process, just as surely as we will see that he pays for his crimes.

We're a nation that guarantees the freedom to worship as one chooses. And instead of claiming God for our side, we remember Lincoln's words, and always pray to be on the side of God.

We're a nation that is dedicated to the proposition that all men and women are created equal. We live that truth within our military, and see it in the varied backgrounds of those we lay to rest today. We defend that truth at home and abroad, and we know that Americans will always be found on the side of liberty and equality. That's who we are as a people.

Tomorrow is Veterans Day. It's a chance to pause, and to pay tribute -- for students to learn the struggles that preceded them; for families to honor the service of parents and grandparents; for citizens to reflect upon the sacrifices that have been made in pursuit of a more perfect union.

For history is filled with heroes. You may remember the stories of a grandfather who marched across Europe; an uncle who fought in Vietnam; a sister who served in the Gulf. But as we honor the many generations who have served, all of us -- every single American -- must acknowledge that this generation has more than proved itself the equal of those who've come before.

We need not look to the past for greatness, because it is before our very eyes.

This generation of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen have volunteered in the time of certain danger. They are part of the finest fighting force that the world has ever known. They have served tour after tour of duty in distant, different and difficult places. They have stood watch in blinding deserts and on snowy mountains. They have extended the opportunity of self-government to peoples that have suffered tyranny and war. They are man and woman; white, black, and brown; of all faiths and all stations -- all Americans, serving together to protect our people, while giving others half a world away the chance to lead a better life.

In today's wars, there's not always a simple ceremony that signals our troops' success -- no surrender papers to be signed, or capital to be claimed. But the measure of the impact of these young men and women is no less great -- in a world of threats that no know borders, their legacy will be marked in the safety of our cities and towns, and the security and opportunity that's extended abroad. It will serve as testimony to the character of those who served, and the example that all of you in uniform set for America and for the world.

Here, at Fort Hood, we pay tribute to 13 men and women who were not able to escape the horror of war, even in the comfort of home. Later today, at Fort Lewis, one community will gather to remember so many in one Stryker Brigade who have fallen in Afghanistan.

Long after they are laid to rest -- when the fighting has finished, and our nation has endured; when today's servicemen and women are veterans, and their children have grown -- it will be said that this generation believed under the most trying of tests; believed in perseverance -- not just when it was easy, but when it was hard; that they paid the price and bore the burden to secure this nation, and stood up for the values that live in the hearts of all free peoples.

So we say goodbye to those who now belong to eternity. We press ahead in pursuit of the peace that guided their service. May God bless the memory of those that we have lost. And may God bless the United States of America. (Applause.)

Posted at 11/11/2009 02:41:00 PM [0 comments](#)



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iCommandant

Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

10 November: 234th Birthday of the United States Marine Corps

Here is the ALCOAST ([./USMC2009.pdf](#)) we released to recognize the USMC.

Posted at [11/10/2009 08:07:00 AM](#) [@comments](#)



Monday, November 9, 2009

Discussing research on invasive Asian Carp with Rep. Bennie Thompson at the Army's Engineering Research and Development Center (ERDC), Vicksburg, MS



[Discussing research on invasive Asian Carp with Rep. Bennie Thompson at the Army's Engineering Research and Development Center \(ERDC\), Vicksburg, MS](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Shipmates,

As we coped with the loss of our Guardians and Marines last week, I kept a previous promise to visit Vicksburg, MS on Sunday, 1 November 2009. After meeting with the crew at Air Station Sacramento (Friday) and the first responders in San Diego (Saturday), we stopped in Vicksburg, MS.

The visit was fascinating and I will be passing on our impressions in a series of posts here.

The main purpose of my visit was to fulfill an obligation I made to Representative Bennie Thompson, Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security. In 2006 I visited Greenville, MS and met with local officials on port security and marine safety issues with Chairman Thompson. For those of you who are not familiar with the long history of flood control on the Mississippi River, Greenville was "ground zero" in the Great Flood of 1927, that was chronicled in the extraordinary book "Rising Tide" by John Barry. For anyone who is interested in understanding the dynamics of the Mississippi River and the levee system in and around New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina, I recommend this book. We agreed following the Greenville visit to that a trip to Vicksburg was important.

Our visit to Vicksburg was a continuation of my more detailed education and understanding of the unique conditions and ecology of the Mississippi River Basin. This post is dedicated to our challenge with a particular invasive species in the Mississippi River system, the Asian Carp.

Asian Carp were brought into the country by catfish farmers in the 1970's (see EPA website www.epa.gov/glnpo/invasive/asiancarp/) to algae from ponds. After escaping into the Mississippi they have migrated to the Illinois River which is connected to Lake Michigan by the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

We have been working extensively with the Army Corps of Engineers as they are constructing an array of cables across the canal to electrically charge the water and prevent the carp from crossing.

I received an onsite brief at the canal during my visit to Chicago in late August when I was in the area to participate in the CG Auxiliary National Conference (NACON). The research being conducted on the behavior of these fish is being carried out at the Army's Engineering Research and Development Center (ERDC) in Vicksburg, MS.

ERDC has an invasive species laboratory where they focus on invasive plants and animals. Chairman Thompson and I received in depth briefs and visited the tanks where the young carp are observed and tested in reacting to various levels of electrical charges in the water.

The lab was fascinating as were the various species being observed. We now know have a better idea of what we are dealing with in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

Next topic ... modeling the hurricane flood gates being built to protect New Orleans.

ADM A

Posted at 11/09/2009 05:24:00 PM [g@comments](#) 



National Security Cutter #2, WAESCHE, delivered to the Coast Guard

Guest post by RADM [Ronald J. Rábago](#), Assistant Commandant for Acquisition and Chief Acquisition Officer (CG-9).

Friday, November 6, our second National Security Cutter, WAESCHE, was preliminarily accepted for delivery by the Coast Guard, and I had the honor of participating in the ceremony at the shipyard in Pascagoula, Miss.

It was a sunny day in Pascagoula as I stood on the flight deck of the Coast Guard's newest cutter.

I was joined by CAPT [Lance Bardo](#), the first CO of WAESCHE, as well as officials from Northrop Grumman and Lockheed Martin, personnel from the Gulf Coast Project Residence Office under the leadership of CO CAPT Jim Knight, and WAESCHE's crew. The crew was mustered and at attention as we formally began the process to bring WAESCHE into the Coast Guard fleet. As a member of the acquisition team, this was a very satisfying day. [Handing the ship's keys](#) to the Commanding Officer of our newest cutter was a real thrill for me. After years of hard work by hundreds of Coast Guard men and women and craftsmen from the shipbuilding industry, this was the day we were all waiting for.

Today's delivery by the shipbuilder and preliminary acceptance by the Coast Guard marks a huge milestone in transitioning WAESCHE to full operational status in the fleet.

Preliminary acceptance starts off her one-year warranty period, during which we will work with the shipbuilder to resolve outstanding discrepancies from last month's [acceptance trials](#) and the entire build process. Final acceptance about a year from now will follow. Preliminary acceptance also puts WAESCHE in "In-Commission Special" status, which means she is part of the Coast Guard but not yet assigned to full mission duties. She'll leave Pascagoula in late December and make her way to her homeport in Alameda, Calif., to prepare for formal commissioning in May.

WAESCHE now joins [BERTHOLF \(WMSL 750\)](#) as the Coast Guard's most technically advanced cutter, capable of taking on our most challenging maritime security and national defense missions around the world. We learned many lessons during BERTHOLF's construction that were applied to WAESCHE, which will leave us with fewer items to resolve with the shipbuilder in the coming months.

WAESCHE can reach speeds of 28+ knots and features state-of-the-art propulsion gear and weapons suites, small boat stern launch and recovery, communications interoperability with Defense Department and other government assets, and outstanding accommodations. This is a tremendously capable cutter that will enable the Coast Guard to meet its many post-9/11 missions.

The Acquisition Directorate is working hard to bring a total of eight National Security Cutters to the fleet. The third National Security Cutter, STRATTON, is 30 percent complete and already making good use of lessons learned from the first two ships as evident in her construction.

After the ceremony, I had a chance to briefly talk with some of WAESCHE's crew. Everyone was excited about being a part of Coast Guard history and their role in bringing this cutter to life. With the enthusiasm and professionalism I



[WAESCHE preliminary Acceptance](#)
Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

saw on their faces, I am completely confident that WAESCHE is off to a great start.

Posted at 11/09/2009 04:07:00 PM @comments 



Modernization 2.0: Evolving Mission Support

Guest Post by Coast Guard Chief of Staff, [VADM John Currier](#).

Coast Guard Mission Support has undergone substantial changes in the past year, but our work is not yet complete. I refer to our current mission support structure, which was just implemented in the field on [27 September 2009](#), as Modernization Version 1.0. Effort focused primarily on establishing five Service and Logistics Centers and the Asset Project Office (APO) to support the Coast Guard Logistics [Business Model](#). The recent changes were a realignment of our organization intended to prepare the field to receive support through product lines. The command and control design for local delivery of that support has not been adequately developed, so I have commissioned an analysis, which when complete, will lead to a defined construct for service delivery to the field level.

Now fully established, the new Service and Logistics Centers are squarely focused on establishing product support under a standardized business model with assistance from the APO. Each center will initialize at least one product line in the next year. Currently the APO and the Surface Forces Logistics Center are introducing the Patrol Boat Product Line (PBPL), which includes the 87' Coastal Patrol Boat (WPB), the 110' Patrol Boat (WPB), and Fast Response Cutter (FRC). The 87' WPB re-baselining effort is well underway. A pilot was successfully implemented at Group Port Angeles last week. The FRC, one of the first new acquisitions expected to be delivered since modernizing, will be provided in accordance with our new CG business model. 35% of small boats and 35% of Sectors are now operating under the Coast Guard Logistics Business Model. We anticipate reaching 100% of small boats at Sectors and subordinate units by the end of calendar year 2010.

Mission Support Modernization 2.0 is now working to build an efficient operating structure that creates a stronger partnership between sector logistics and other field support units previously attached to the Maintenance and Logistics Commands (MLCs). Additionally, this next phase will continue to establish a peer relationship between the support community and our operational partners.

People at all levels and across the organization are participating in discussions relating to how we can continue to evolve mission support's operational model. I especially appreciate the open discussions on [iCommandant](#), our [Mission Support blog](#), and elsewhere about these changes. This input is guiding the actions we're taking now and those that will frame our future strategies. Approximately one hundred people in the support and operational communities are coming together on seven new integration study teams, what we call iTeams. Chartered by me personally, they are studying ways to better integrate the support community with operations and will provide input that helps define our mission support operating model.

From a field support perspective, the most notable iTeam is the Field Mission Support Delivery Integration Team (iTeam) being led by CAPT Timothy Heitsch of our Logistics Directorate (CG-44). This iTeam will propose the most effective and efficient field support structure considering sector logistics and major asset logistics -- areas not studied extensively during the Version 1.0 review. The iTeam is reviewing the structure and roles of logistics support elements below the Logistics and Service Center, including the Sector Logistics Department. The other six iTeams are studying mission support Headquarters functions, including communications, integration, resources, security, and the role/staffing of the APO.

Multiple options will be evaluated, except for one -- we will not halt our positive momentum. Sector logistics personnel and the aviation community attest that this business model works. It will enhance mission support readiness and execution. Through this change, we will forge a better Coast Guard. Our mission support business processes will formalize the effective and consistent delivery of services at all levels of the organization.

If the current structure appears immature, it's because we're not done. Change itself is not the goal. We must become a Coast Guard that constantly looks for ways to deliver better mission support by increasing accountability, lowering risk, and increasing operational effectiveness. We need All Hands on task everyday to achieve this objective.

Change isn't easy. Improvement is what we're after. I appreciate everyone's patience, and especially their passion for supporting our operational partners. I expect that all of you will assume a positive leadership role in implementing Modernization.

As we transform the way we do business, clear direction and open communication will ensure success throughout this evolution. The mission support Service and Logistics Centers and their field units are encouraged to foster open conversations with their peers in the operational community. People also can submit ideas or questions to AskMissionSupport@USCG.mil. We want the input of our workforce and invite participation by our union partners and other stakeholders to collectively build a better Coast Guard.

Thank you for your continued support of Modernization and for your dedication to help ensure we meet our call to be "Always Ready."

Semper Paratus!

John P. Currier, VADM
Chief of Staff, United States Coast Guard

Posted at 11/09/2009 10:22:00 AM @comments



Alaskan Native Outreach -- Guest Post

Guest Post by Ms. Donna Walker-Ross, [Diversity Outreach Manager](#).

As the Coast Guard examines how we will conduct our missions in the "opening" Arctic, it is imperative that we reach out to our neighboring Alaskan Native communities and inform them of the Coast Guard's intentions and capabilities. This goes hand-in-hand with educating their youth so as they grow; our relationship with the tribal communities and organizations also grows. Additionally, community and tribal leaders have expressed interest in providing their children information about career options in the U.S. Coast Guard. Therefore, the Alaska Outreach team of 28 Team Coast Guard members (active duty, auxiliary, reservist and civilians) conducted an education and recruiting outreach in Nome, Kotzebue, and Barrow, Alaska from 23-25 September 2009 that introduced the youth (pre-K through College) to the Coast Guard. Moreover, the outreach provided the Coast Guard an opportunity to expand our organizational diversity with respect to Alaskan Natives. (You can view [pictures from the visit here](#).)



[Alaskan Native Outreach Photos](#)
Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

LCDR Mia Dutcher was the team leader. Prior to the team's departure, Mr. Joel Casto presented a cultural class introducing the team to Alaska and the cultural mores. The Alaska Outreach team consisted of the following groups: Health & Wellness; Water Safety Team; Search and Rescue; Law Enforcement; Air Operations; Marine Safety; Small Boat Operations; Civilian & Military Recruiting; Diversity Outreach; and the Partnership in Education Program Manager.

At each school, groups conducted a brief presentation for two grade levels at a time and allowed for one-on-one engagement at the end of the presentations. The grade levels rotated through the two rooms and visited the C130. We found that the students asked more relevant and personal questions when meeting with the team members face-to-face.

The AST1's rescue basket and gear was also a hit among the students. We engaged with over 2,500 students in total.

Publicity: YN1 Eileen Nelson and MST3 Corey Lind (Alaskan Natives) conducted a radio interviews with Derek Lee of KOTZ. LCDR Mia Dutcher was also interviewed by a local radio station. The C130 crew hosted field trips at the Army National Guard hangar. KNOM conducted an interview with the aircrew.

In summary, the relationships forged with the staff, faculty, and students are extremely promising. This positive and meaningful experience shared our cultural similarities and built a bridge to a lasting relationship with our Alaska Native neighbors.

The Alaska Native Outreach Team Members:

LCDR Mia Dutcher - Project Coordinator, SAR, OPS Ashore, D17 Command Center
 OSCM Jeremiah Roberts - Asst Project Coordinator, SAR, OPS Ashore, OPS Afloat, D17 Command Center
 LT Ray Slapkunas - Asst Project Coordinator, Air Operations (helo), Air Station Kodiak
 Ms. Donna Walker-Ross - Diversity Outreach, Coast Guard Headquarters, CG-12B
 Ms. Shelly Campbell - Civilian Recruiting, Coast Guard Headquarters, CG-1212
 AMT1 Sammy Atkins - Coast Guard Recruiting, RUITOFF Anchorage
 Ms. Gwendolyn White - Partnership in Education Program, Coast Guard Headquarters, CG-00H
 CAPT Henry Shen - AK Native Representative (Medical Doctor and Flight Surgeon), ISC Ketchikan
 YN1 Eileen Nelson - AK Native Representative, MSU Morgan City
 MST3 Corey Lind - AK Native Representative, Sector Honolulu
 PA3 Charly Hengen - Public Affairs and Media Coordination, D17 PADET Kodiak
 AST1 Brian Goodbody - Rescue Swimmer, Air Station Kodiak
 MST1 Thomas Watts - Marine Safety (Marine Inspections, Spill Response), Sector Anchorage
 BMC Luis Nieves - Maritime Law Enforcement, Small Boat Operations, Sector Anchorage
 Mr. Mike Folkerts - Water Safety, D17 (dpi)
 Mr. Mike Swanson - Water Safety, D17 (dpi)
 Mr. Mike Morris - Water Safety, CG Auxiliary, Sitka
 Ms. Sue Lang - Water Safety, CG Auxiliary, Seward
 Ms. Terri Telkamp - Water Safety, CG Auxiliary, Nome
 LT Kerri Merklin - CG Air Operations, C130 Pilot, Air Station Kodiak
 LT Robert Botnen - CG Air Operations, C130 Pilot, Air Station Kodiak
 AMT1 Samuel Loska - CG Air Operations, C130 Crew member, Air Station Kodiak
 AMT2 John Anderson - CG Air Operations, C130 Crew member, Air Station Kodiak
 AMT3 Brian Meyers - CG Air Operations, C130 Crew member, Air Station Kodiak
 AMT3 Brandon Rodriguez - CG Air Operations, C130 Crew member, Air Station Kodiak
 AMT3 Matthew Morris - CG Air Operations, C130 Crew member, Air Station Kodiak
 BM1 Michael Beety - Maritime Law Enforcement, Small Boat Operations, Sector Anchorage
 MK2 Cody Lathrop - Maritime Law Enforcement, Small Boat Operations, Sector Anchorage

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