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UNITED
STATES
COAST
GUARD

EVERGREEN IV: STRATEGIC NEEDS

THE VICE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD



I am pleased to present the United States Coast Guard Evergreen Strategic Needs Report, which reflects many of the long-term challenges and trends our Service must confront as we strategically plan for an uncertain future. This report is the culmination of comprehensive research, interviews, and workshops attended by Coast Guard, industry, and stakeholder subject matter experts. The Strategic Needs within this report should be consulted when developing strategies, plans, and commander's intent. These needs should inform these processes and work in concert with established policy.

The security and prosperity of our Nation relies upon a safe, secure, and resilient maritime domain. The Nation looks to the U.S. Coast Guard to ensure safety, security, and stewardship of its waters, regardless of what the future may hold. As our operating environment continues to evolve, the Coast Guard must address increasing mission demands in the near-term as we simultaneously plan for significant challenges in future years.

Global threats and challenges will continue to test our ability to ensure a secure, prosperous, and resilient maritime environment. The emerging maritime domain is a much riskier place and is changing the nature of every Coast Guard mission. The rise of Transnational Organized Crime Networks, increasing cyber risks, the effects of climate change, and an increasingly mobile population all present challenges that the Coast Guard will need to address. This will require a continuing commitment to assess rapidly changing conditions that will have the greatest impacts on our Nation's security and prosperity, both now and in the future. We must adapt to these ever-changing realities to ensure we are *Always Ready*.

These Strategic Needs provide focus for Coast Guard long-term priorities and will help to inform future strategic development. Pursuing the Strategic Needs presented here will require careful stewardship of available resources and risk-informed balancing of our many priorities. True to our motto and traditions, we will remain focused on meeting today's mission requirements as well as providing for future capabilities. We must always be *Ready today...Prepared for tomorrow*.

Semper Paratus,

Vice Admiral Charles D. Michel
Vice Commandant

The Program

The Coast Guard Evergreen Program provides the Service with proactive foresight to avoid incrementalism and the tyranny of the present, and to identify a core set of strategic needs that will be relevant in a variety of future scenarios. The process is based on alternative future scenario planning, which is well suited for organizations with diverse mission portfolios and operating environments marked by potentially rapid structural change and high uncertainty. Scenario-based planning explicitly considers and explores a range of plausible and challenging futures.

Definitions

Strategic Challenge. A theme, concept, or issue that requires a systematic organizational response designed at the top levels of the command structure.

Strategic Initiative. A candidate course of action to address opportunities and challenges presented within alternative future worlds. Strategic initiatives include investments in new capability or capacity, organizational adaptations, doctrine or procedure changes, new authorities and partnerships, and workforce development.

Strategic Needs. Requirements that, if fulfilled, will place an organization in a position of strength and preparedness for several possible outcomes. They are stress tested across a diverse set of futures. Strategic needs provide insights on emerging complexities and their implications for internal practices, stakeholder interactions, and the Service's value proposition. They inform decisions and planning at all organizational levels.

Strategic Needs Development

Building on the Reflection and Discovery phases of Evergreen IV, Strategic Needs Workshops immersed participants in five challenging future worlds developed with widely accepted trends and drivers. Participants included civilian, military, and Auxiliary personnel from planning staffs and operational, logistics, and training units, and ranged in rank from E6 to O6. Most had minimal exposure to Evergreen or the scenario planning process prior to the workshop. They analyzed the scenarios and identified strategic challenges, strategic initiatives, and candidate strategic needs.

Workshop objectives:

- Expose Coast Guard personnel to scenario planning and leverage individual perspectives.
- Expand the portfolio of participants and stakeholders in the Evergreen process.
- Exercise each scenario and identify aspects in need of refinement.

In the mid grade sessions, participants were guided through a series of activities in small workgroups. Each group was assigned a future world scenario and led through analysis and assessment activities to facilitate immersion. The group then identified strategic challenges facing the Coast Guard within that world. Follow-on activities identified potential strategic initiatives to address those challenges.

The candidate strategic initiatives were consolidated and stress tested by each workgroup to assess the utility of initiatives generated from a single scenario across all five scenarios. Those strategic initiatives with significant applicability across all scenarios were logically grouped to reduce overlap and formed the basis of candidate strategic needs. Candidate strategic needs were assessed for significance or impact on the Coast Guard, and were further refined.

In the senior grade sessions, candidate strategic needs were assessed and further developed. Results of the east coast and west coast workshops were then reconciled. The resulting candidate strategic needs follow.

Strategic Needs

Technology

This group of candidate strategic needs addresses gaps in information and the need to keep pace with rapid technological change. Failure to do so may lead to decreased situational awareness, delay mission execution, and expose the service to unnecessary risk.

Technology and Big Data. The Coast Guard needs to procure and integrate emerging technology to adapt to changing mission requirements.

- Provides timely information for operational planning and decision support.
- Provides historical information on gaps and overlaps to enable trend analysis and adaptation.
- Leverages external partners' technology, processes, and information and increases system interoperability.

Keep Pace with Technology. The Coast Guard needs to keep pace with and quickly field technological advances to effectively execute current and future missions and minimize risk.

- Provides ongoing recapitalization of aging assets, increases range and endurance, improves ability to maintain presence, awareness, and threat identification.
- Increases surveillance capability and quality of data for identifying and analyzing maritime trends.
- Enables the Coast Guard to more effectively regulate, enforce laws, and protect American interests.
- Increases unit efficiency and decreases carbon footprint.
- Positions the Coast Guard to remain proactive and relevant.

- Attracts technically savvy talent.

Secure C4IT System. The Coast Guard needs to create a secure Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Information Technology (C4IT) system capable of detecting network infiltration, identifying and correcting vulnerabilities while disrupting cyber threats, and leveraging interagency systems.

- Prevents unauthorized actors from infiltrating automated systems within the Maritime Transportation System (MTS).
- Increases and enhances the security of national critical infrastructure.
- Builds and shares information and leverages interagency systems.

Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). The Coast Guard needs a fully integrated MDA capability that provides a real time Common Operating Picture and Common Intelligence Picture. This must be a fully integrated capability and include visibility of blue forces, hostile entities, recreational users, and suspect traffic. It must feature the ability to communicate intelligence, planning, and operational information to the fleet. The Intelligence Community (IC) and Department of Defense (DOD) have robust MDA, and the Coast Guard should continue to capitalize on access to that information for MDA and intelligence purposes.

- Increases awareness and information accuracy.
- Improves the use of time, assets, and money.
- Supports intelligence-driven deployment and operations.
- Provides greater visibility throughout the operational area.

Organizational Alignment

These candidate strategic needs address ways for the Coast Guard to become a more efficient and effective organization. They establish systems to measure performance, analyze process improvement, and assess mission execution and support.

Redefine the Missions. The Coast Guard needs to examine all statutory missions, capabilities, and authorities to identify potential efficiencies and opportunities as we partner with other Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and DOD agencies.

- Accounts for potential organizational shifts and fiscal constraints.
- Establishes a sustainable posture across all mission sets.
- Fosters interagency cooperation within DHS.

Maximize Partnerships. The Coast Guard needs to leverage existing partnerships and build new ones to execute missions efficiently, provide support, and sustain infrastructure.

- Enhances adaptability to rapidly changing requirements.
- Responds to resource demands through partnerships and integrated budgeting throughout the department.

- Clarifies interagency roles, responsibilities, and authorities.

Scale Down the Organization. The Coast Guard needs to scale down and flatten organizational structures, consolidate and remove redundant managerial levels, and realign organizational boundaries to support high operational tempo areas and optimize efficiency.

- Streamlines operational command and control and provides greater tactical mobility.
- Eliminates redundant efforts, reporting, and approval requirements.
- Simplifies the chain of command.
- Consolidates fields of expertise within new organizational boundaries.
- Enhances adaptability to changing requirements.

Reevaluate Performance Standards. The Coast Guard needs to reevaluate performance standards across all mission sets and focus recruitment, budgeting, and training efforts to meet future demands.

- Establishes clear personnel proficiency standards.
- Provides clear, repeatable, and visible procedures to report on return on investment to the American people.
- Establishes metrics to support resource allocation decisions.
- Develops a Measures of Effectiveness-based performance culture.

Workforce

These candidate strategic needs address the composition, stability, and effectiveness of the Coast Guard's workforce.

Talent Management. The Coast Guard needs to recruit, retain, and employ a workforce that maximizes mission effectiveness.

- Enables the Coast Guard to compete with the civilian market for desired skills.
- Shapes the workforce to respond to advances in technology, changing priorities, and the need for a physically and intellectually resilient Service.
- Emphasizes the importance of retaining subject matter expertise and a workforce mix of civilian, active duty, and reserve personnel.

Individual Technology Specialization. The Coast Guard needs to develop a specialized workforce capable of leveraging technology to support mission effectiveness while staying ahead of technological change.

- Avoids professional stagnation and its negative impacts on mission execution, recruitment, and retention.
- Maintains Service relevance as other agencies enhance their technologies.
- Develops an organizational culture committed to exploiting the latest technologies to improve mission performance and security.

Resilience

These candidate strategic needs address the requirement to withstand, recover from, and thrive in the face of disruptions and changing demands. Resilience applies to acute, traumatic events and chronic, cumulative stress that can undermine readiness.

Cyber Domain. The Coast Guard needs to achieve information dominance to protect U.S. interests in the cyber domain. Information dominance includes intelligence, investigation, information assurance, and cyber operations.

- Limits and mitigates risk to critical infrastructure.
- Informs and drives operations in all statutory mission areas.
- Sustains Coast Guard relevance and integrity within the cyber domain.

Mission Resilience. The Coast Guard needs to rapidly recover from disruptive events (i.e. natural disasters, political or economic failure, international conflict) and continue to execute critical missions.

- Prepares the Coast Guard for significant, disruptive events.
- Enables the Coast Guard to support recovery, stability, and security (including economic).
- Establishes planning, foresight, and risk assessment as critical skills for all levels of the workforce.

Resilient Infrastructure. The Coast Guard needs to invest in resilient infrastructure that enables agile, efficient, and effective operations, maintenance, support, and logistics. This includes moorings, air stations, small boat stations, maintenance depots, and information networks. Consider current and future high-tech solutions to minimize costs.

- Recapitalizes assets and improves safety.
- Mitigates risks to the Service's ability to sustain operations and surge during contingencies.
- Streamlines logistics and creates more adaptive support systems.

Renewable Energy. The Coast Guard needs to explore and implement renewable energy sources for all assets and facilities.

- Increases self-sufficiency and reduces reliance on fossil fuels.
- Creates higher endurance assets.
- Decreases carbon footprint.
- Establishes a diverse energy portfolio.

Stabilize Funding. The Coast Guard needs to sustain a stable source of funding while seeking additional, non-traditional sources of revenue.

- Increases the Service's ability to communicate and collaborate with those who make federal budget decisions.

- Extends the budget outlook to ensure that mission requirements and priorities to drive the budget.
- Ensures the Coast Guard's accountability to the American taxpayer.
- Establishes alternative sources of funding.



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