



COAST GUARD STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2022



U.S. Coast Guard



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD



The Coast Guard is on the front lines of our Nation's effort to protect the American people, our homeland, and our way of life. We are a unique instrument of national power with specialized and adaptive capability across the full spectrum of maritime activities. As challenges to our national security and global influence grow more complex, the need for a Ready, Relevant, and Responsive Coast Guard has never been greater.

I am proud to deliver the *Coast Guard Strategic Plan 2018-2022*, which represents our Senior Leaders' shared vision to advance the Service over the next four years. This *Strategic Plan* supports the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the National Security Strategy (NSS) to ensure a safe, secure, and prosperous homeland. The lines of effort in this plan emphasize our need to invest in Service readiness while fine-tuning mission execution and operational support to meet the needs of the Nation.

Maximizing Readiness Today and Tomorrow is my top priority. Service readiness begins with our people — our greatest strength — including our dedication to maintaining an inclusive workplace and striving to mirror the great diversity of the American public we serve. Supporting our mission-ready total workforce requires capable assets, modern systems, resilient infrastructure, and sufficient Operations and Support (O&S) appropriations to operate and sustain them.

Our unique position within DHS and our enduring role with the Department of Defense (DOD) allows our Service to effectively **Address the Nation's Complex Maritime Challenges**. We will employ our leadership within the maritime domain to foster domestic and international cooperation, build stakeholder capacity, and exert influence at home and abroad. As Commandant, I intend to leverage the Coast Guard's broad authorities, capabilities, and partnerships to safeguard the American people, promote economic prosperity, and advance national interests.

Upholding our legacy of on-scene initiative across our broad missions, we will **Deliver Mission Excellence Anytime, Anywhere**. This begins with orienting all of our Service's initiatives to promote organizational efficiency, agility, and effectiveness and extends to the daily work of Coast Guard women and men during steady state or in times of crisis.

While it is impossible to predict what the next four years will bring, I can assure you we will face complex challenges around the world that will require our very best – the best people, best tools, and our best performance. Collectively, we will ensure that the Coast Guard remains *Always Ready* to meet the needs of our great Nation.

Semper Paratus,

Admiral Karl L. Schultz
Commandant



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AMERICA'S COAST GUARD

The U.S. Coast Guard has the enduring responsibility to safeguard the American people and promote our security in a complex and persistently-evolving maritime environment. We are a military service, a law enforcement organization, a regulatory agency, a first responder, and a member of the intelligence community. With unique authorities, broad jurisdiction, flexible operational capabilities, and an expansive network of domestic and international partnerships, the Coast Guard advances national security, economic prosperity, and global maritime influence.

While the missions of the Coast Guard have evolved over the last two centuries, our commitment to be "Always Ready" has remained steadfast.



While the missions of the Coast Guard have evolved over the last two centuries, our commitment to be "Always Ready" has remained steadfast. *Semper Paratus* is more than a motto; it defines our legacy as the world's best Coast Guard. We have matured throughout our history, adapting our people, assets, and capabilities in response to emerging national demands and international challenges. Today, our Service remains locally based, nationally responsive, and globally impactful.

The *Coast Guard Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022* provides the framework for a *Ready, Relevant, and Responsive* Coast Guard to address America's most complex maritime challenges across the full spectrum of maritime operations.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The United States is a maritime Nation. With unfettered access to major oceans, internal waterways, deep-water ports, and protected straits and bays, we depend on the sea for our security and prosperity. To sustain its strength, America must protect its borders from unlawful intrusion and defend sovereignty while safeguarding and facilitating commerce. Our national and economic security depends on open trade, travel, and rules-based order. However, the vastness, anonymity, and inherent challenges of governance over the maritime domain make it vulnerable to dangerous threats, including transnational crime, terrorist activity, illegal exploitation of natural resources, and territorial expansionism. These sources of maritime disorder have global reach and pose a significant threat to U.S. national interests.

While keeping pace with the dynamic security environment and changing character of maritime operations, the Coast Guard faces readiness challenges in a resource constrained budget climate.



Transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and other malicious non-state actors erode maritime governance, the rule of law, and regional stability. These networks thrive in crisis, leveraging instability to smuggle drugs, weapons, and people - wreaking havoc wherever they operate. Their nefarious activities weaken government institutions, stymie legitimate economic activity, and terrorize peaceful citizens. TCOs threaten America's neighbors and partners in the Western Hemisphere, driving migrants to our borders, emboldening human traffickers on our shores, and enabling the movement of narcotics into our communities. Left unbridled, TCOs will flourish and further erode maritime governance and regional order.

Another shift in the strategic environment is the return to great-power competition. Rival powers, such as China and Russia, are challenging rules-based international order through inter-state aggression, economic coercion, maritime hybrid warfare, gray zone activities, and overreaching territorial claims. Through their actions, they are attempting to diminish American and partner-nation influence abroad. By exploiting pockets of weak governance, these near-peer competitors could undermine democratic institutions, escalate conflict, poach maritime resources, jeopardize access to critical sea lanes, and ultimately disrupt peaceful regions.

The security environment is also affected by the rising importance of the cyber domain - where adversarial nation states, non-state actors, and individuals are attacking our digital infrastructure and eroding the protections historically provided by our geographic borders. At the stroke of a key, rivals in remote regions of the world can attack, disable, and alter our critical infrastructure and financial networks. These bad actors can unleash volatile malware that could have devastating consequences worldwide. While improved interconnectivity expands our capabilities, we must be wary of the corresponding increase in risk.

Rapid technological advancements are changing the character of maritime operations. The accelerating pace of innovation manifests itself through increasingly complex vessels, high traffic volumes, and greater demands on

the Marine Transportation System (MTS). Advanced technologies, such as autonomous and robotic systems and new propulsion methods usher in an era of new regulatory, legal, and operational challenges. While these technologies increase the complexity of our operating environment, they also present great opportunities for improved safety and efficiency. Our ability to set and enforce effective standards that advance maritime safety and environmental stewardship must keep pace with rapid technology application in the afloat, ashore, and cyber elements of the MTS.

Our role in the Arctic is growing. Diminishing Arctic sea ice is expanding accessibility to the region and attracting the attention of rival states across the globe. Resource extraction, fisheries, tourism, and commercial shipping are driving increased maritime activity and a greater need for Coast Guard presence in the region. This reality will require new assets, integrated technologies, and creative ways of thinking. For more than a century, the Coast Guard has been a visible U.S. presence in the Arctic, ensuring security and sovereignty for American resources. Our role there has never been more crucial.

The increasing severity and scale of catastrophic incidents is another reality. Coastal regions are densely populated, and ports have become heavily developed. Catastrophic events, whether man-made or natural, can have enormous consequences to our coastal communities and disrupt regional and global commerce. Recent hurricanes, floods, and other maritime disasters have reinforced the Nation's need to prepare for the size and impact of such incidents.

While keeping pace with the dynamic security environment and changing character of maritime operations, the Coast Guard faces readiness challenges in a resource constrained budget climate. Aging surface and aviation assets, as well as antiquated shore- and information-technology infrastructure, challenge our operational readiness. While we are working to recapitalize essential assets, we also require the resources to sustain and operate them.

OUR VALUE TO THE NATION

The Coast Guard is positioned to steadfastly serve and staunchly defend the Nation - now and into the future. As the only branch of the Armed Forces within DHS, the Coast Guard applies military, regulatory, incident management, and law enforcement expertise to ensure safety, security, stewardship, and resiliency across the Homeland Security enterprise. In partnership with other DHS components, we prevent terrorism, secure our borders, and reduce the physical and cyber security risks faced by our Nation. We do this through a layered approach of rules, awareness, and capabilities that protects our Nation's security, exerts our sovereignty, and enables the efficient movement of global commerce.

The key to Coast Guard success has always been our people—our diverse workforce of Active Duty, Reserve, Civilian, and Auxiliary.



As a military service, our unique authorities, capabilities, and partnerships complement both DHS and the DOD. As the challenges to our national security grow more complex across the full spectrum of international competition and conflict, the Coast Guard capably bridges the gap between the law enforcement prowess of DHS and the lethality of DOD. The Coast Guard cooperates in ways that other military services cannot in order to support our national goals of preserving peace through strength and advancing American influence. Across the full range of operations, our law enforcement capability discourages aggression, supports stability, and fortifies regional coalitions. At the same time, our military capabilities deter our adversaries, whether nation states, terrorists, or international criminals.

The Coast Guard is deployed globally to promote peace, fortify alliances, attract new partners, and challenge threats far from U.S. soil. For example, we provide United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) detection, monitoring, and response capability in the Western Hemisphere to combat transnational crime in the Transit Zone while building the interdiction and crisis response capabilities of our partner nations. In United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), our Rotary Wing Air Intercept assets and Maritime Security Response Teams rapidly deploy as singular elements or as a supplement to joint-force packages in support of Homeland Defense missions. As the Federal surface presence in the Arctic, we advance safe, secure, and environmentally-responsible maritime activity by improving awareness, modernizing governance, and broadening partnerships. In the Indo-Pacific, we are actively building partner capacity and theater security cooperation throughout the region to enhance maritime governance and bolster stability in collaboration with United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM). In United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), our patrol boats and advanced interdiction teams conduct maritime security operations in the Arabian Gulf. Along the West African coast, we support United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) to strengthen partner-nation capability for self-policing in order to thwart transnational threats such as piracy, illegal fishing, and contraband trafficking.

The Coast Guard plays a critical role in strengthening governance in areas of strategic importance. We mature other nations' inherent capabilities to police their own waters and support cooperative enforcement of international law through dozens of robust bilateral agreements. Our leadership on global maritime governing bodies and our collaborative approach to operationalize international agreements drives stability, legitimacy and order. As global strategic competition surges, adversaries become more sophisticated and the maritime environment becomes more complex. The Coast Guard provides a full spectrum of solutions, from cooperation to armed conflict. The demand for our Service has never been greater.

Fundamentally, the key to Coast Guard success has always been our people—our diverse workforce of Active Duty, Reserve, Civilian, and Auxiliary. The Coast Guard trusts and empowers its workforce at every level to lead with a bias for action – taking on-scene initiative and bringing solutions to complex problems. Our distributed leadership and trusted expertise draws together disparate stakeholders for an integrated response to incidents within the maritime domain. We leverage our partnerships to deliver output far greater than the sum of its parts. “All-in” collaboration is the only way to produce the “all-out” effort necessary to protect our Nation.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Shaped by the laws, executive orders, international conventions, and agreements that determine U.S. maritime policy, the *Coast Guard Strategic Plan 2018-2022* sets the course for the future of our Service. It reflects and directly supports the National Security Strategy, DHS goals and priorities, and the National Defense Strategy. Further, the plan operationalizes existing Coast Guard strategies and outlooks addressing targeted challenges in our operating environment, linking long-term vision to ongoing operational and mission support efforts. It also serves as the framework, for the next four years, under which to nest priority work of the Service that is in addition to the existing strategies and outlooks. As a strategy-driven organization, we will continue to assess the external environment as part of our strategy development and renewal cycle. Our cumulative efforts will inform and shape the Service's policy and doctrine development, acquisition efforts, budget process, and risk and performance assessments.

We must embrace the fast pace of technology, be comfortable operating in a dynamic and complex environment, and build resilience in everything we do.



To meet the Nation's needs and address the most difficult maritime challenges, the Coast Guard must be nimble, adaptive, and anticipatory. To avoid the temptation to build and perfect the Coast Guard of the past, we must be bold, think anew, integrate new capabilities, challenge the status quo, and innovate how we conduct operations and provide related support. We must embrace ever-changing technology, be comfortable operating in a dynamic and complex environment, and build resilience into everything we do.

The *Coast Guard Strategic Plan 2018-2022* provides the framework for a *Ready, Relevant, and Responsive* Coast Guard. To this end, the Coast Guard seeks to:

- **Maximize Readiness Today and Tomorrow;**
- **Address the Nation's Complex Maritime Challenges; and**
- **Deliver Mission Excellence Anytime, Anywhere.**

These strategic priorities position the Coast Guard to protect America's economic prosperity and national security.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

MAXIMIZE READINESS TODAY AND TOMORROW

The Coast Guard's top priority is Service readiness. As with the other Armed Services, an uncertain, constrained budget environment has eroded our operational readiness. At the same time, the increasing global complexity and expanding demand for Coast Guard services necessitates the best people, modern technology, resilient infrastructure, and highly-capable assets. With a clear understanding of the fiscal environment, we will support our people, invest in mission-enabling technologies, and modernize our assets to guarantee we are ready for the challenges of today while preparing for the threats of tomorrow.

CULTIVATE

THE MISSION READY TOTAL WORKFORCE

Objective 1.1. | Service readiness starts with investing in our greatest asset — our people.

To meet the Nation's needs, the Coast Guard will recruit, train, support, and retain a Mission

Ready Total Workforce that is empowered with the information, knowledge, skills, equipment,

and support systems needed to excel across the full spectrum of Coast Guard operations.

We are also committed to broadening diversity and building a Service that is representative

of the American public. To best position a mission-ready Service, we must treat personnel

services as key enablers of operational success, embrace digital tools in the performance of

duties, and seek creative solutions to maintain a highly-skilled workforce. Throughout the

organization, we will find ways to make our organization appeal to current and potential

members as an employer of choice.



1.1.1. Improve Support Programs for the Mission Ready Total Workforce

Our support programs must ensure that our workforce is ready to successfully perform frontline operations and provide world-class mission support. To meet the needs of our people, we will:

- Instill a customer service culture and improve the delivery of services to our workforce;
- Identify and implement policies and practices that improve quality of life;
- Foster positive work environments, embracing and leveraging the differences among us, while ensuring equal opportunity for all;
- Modernize support services, including improved access to quality health care; and
- Strive to eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment from the Service.

1.1.2. Sharpen the Skills of the Mission Ready Total Workforce

Our organizational success is predicated on a highly-trained, properly-equipped workforce that employs technology to maximize its impact across all mission areas. To build our competencies and maintain our competitive advantage, we will:

- Leverage digital tools and relevant technologies, including mobility solutions to enhance frontline operations;
- Employ predictive analytics to identify and develop critical skills to meet emerging mission demands;
- Update training and education programs to develop specialized skills for current and future mission needs; and
- Invest in and sustain a Prevention workforce that meets the evolving needs of the maritime industry.

1.1.3. Recruit and Retain an Inclusive and Diverse Workforce that Reflects the American Public We Serve

The magnitude and complexity of our global operations and mission support activities necessitates a workforce possessing diverse backgrounds, different perspectives, unique experiences, and original ideas. To grow a diverse workforce supported by an inclusive culture, we will:

- Enhance recruiting, hiring, and personnel management policies that advance inclusion and diversity;
- Increase non-traditional accessions and expedite civilian hiring;
- Explore creative and adaptive workforce retention policies for mission critical skills; and
- Improve workforce career development to ensure we are an employer of choice.

1.1.4. Strengthen Our Ready and Responsive Reserve and Auxiliary Forces

The Reserve component is an essential force multiplier that merits optimized policies, efficient processes, and an integrated organizational structure. The Auxiliary, through their volunteer service, donates time, skills, and resources across Coast Guard operations and mission support activities. To advance the strategic value of both the Reservists and the Auxiliarists, we will:

- Modernize the Coast Guard Reserve workforce governance and support services;
- Bolster recruiting, advocacy, and retention for Reservists;
- Better identify and leverage the civilian skills of our Reserve workforce to solve complex problems facing the Service and the DHS;
- Accelerate onboarding for new Auxiliarists; and
- Match the unique skills and abilities of the Auxiliary with operational and mission support needs at all levels of the organization.

MODERNIZE

ASSETS, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND MISSION PLATFORMS

Objective 1.2. | In order to meet increasing demands on the Coast Guard, we must continue to build momentum on our current recapitalization efforts, including the timely acquisition and deployment of the Offshore Patrol Cutter, the Polar Security Cutter, and the Waterways Commerce Cutter. Our modernization needs extend beyond our surface assets and include the Command and Control, Communications, Computers, Cyber and Intelligence (C5I) enterprise; shore-side infrastructure; aircraft fleets; and other key mission enablers. We will prioritize investments in technology that will enable mission success today and revolutionize the way we conduct operations in the future.



1.2.1. Strengthen Reliability of C5I Enterprise Systems

Our increasingly digital world requires a balance between reliable access to Coast Guard information systems for our people and assets and the ability to capably defend our networks against cyber threats. To leverage the massive benefits of information technology, connectivity, and data, we will:

- Ensure information is readily and securely available to operators and mission support personnel in a full, degraded, or disconnected environment;
- Deliver reliable mobile capabilities and improved remote access for frontline operators;
- Prioritize resources and recapitalization efforts to ensure the reliability and effectiveness of C5I systems;
- Treat the C5I enterprise mission platform as a mission enabler like other operational assets, grounded in capability requirements; and
- Accelerate the adoption of cloud computing offerings.

1.2.2. Maintain Momentum on Current Acquisition Efforts

The Coast Guard is realizing unprecedented investments in our acquisition program that will enable us to better execute the full range of our missions. To continue on our current trajectory toward a modernized asset portfolio, we will:

- Continue the major acquisition program and operationalize key assets to include the Offshore Patrol Cutter, Polar Security Cutter, and Waterways Commerce Cutter;
- Make essential risk decisions regarding the practical service life of our aging rotary wing aviation fleet and plan for future aviation asset acquisition;
- Invest in and employ shore- and cutter-based unmanned aerial systems;
- Invest in and employ C5I Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C5ISR); and
- Sustain service life extension and improvement projects for our critical aviation and surface fleet.

1.2.3. Modernize Shore Infrastructure Support Programs and Mature Long-Term Homeporting Process

Resilient shore infrastructure is directly connected to operational readiness and successful mission execution. To ensure our shore infrastructure fully supports our operational needs, we will:

- Prioritize and execute the repair or replacement of degraded shore infrastructure that negatively impacts steady state operations or hinders workforce readiness;
- Develop and employ a shore infrastructure management system that anticipates future readiness needs; and
- Build a comprehensive, long-term homeporting plan.

1.2.4. Examine and Employ the Right Combination of Technologies and Information Sciences to Meet Future Readiness Needs

The rapid advancement in technology across our personal and professional lives presents game-changing opportunities for the Coast Guard, if properly harnessed. To fully understand the potential impacts of emerging technologies on Coast Guard operations, we will:

- Evaluate emerging technologies, such as unmanned platforms, data analytics, block chain encryption, artificial intelligence, machine learning, network protocols, information storage, and human-machine collaboration for possible use in mission execution;
- Capitalize on DHS and DOD research and development efforts, national labs research, and academic partnerships;
- Seek opportunities to leap from existing technologies and competencies to new capabilities; and
- Assess the Coast Guard total force laydown and capability mix across all mission areas.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 ADDRESS THE NATION'S COMPLEX MARITIME CHALLENGES

As the Nation's unique instrument across the full spectrum of maritime operations, the Coast Guard cooperates and builds capacity to police, detect, deter, and counter maritime threats. From education, coordination, and regulation, to enforcement and lethal force, the Coast Guard has a range of capabilities to influence behavior. Through DHS integration and DOD interoperability, the Coast Guard acts with unity of effort and partners with Federal, State, local, tribal, private, and international stakeholders across the increasingly complex maritime domain.

STRENGTHEN

MARITIME GOVERNANCE

Objective 2.1. | Our ability to address challenges in the maritime domain spans the full range of activity from education and partnerships to regulation and enforcement to high-end, specialized operations. Full spectrum maritime governance provides the foundation for an adaptive and stabilizing framework that is essential to resilience. Nefarious activities destabilize and threaten vulnerable regions. To address these sources of maritime disorder, we will employ our singular capabilities, authorities, and established partnerships to maintain law and order and uphold accepted behaviors.



2.1.1. Enhance Situational Awareness to Secure our Maritime Borders

As the Nation's premier maritime agency, the Coast Guard must integrate information, intelligence, and operations to create actionable knowledge that informs decision-making. To protect our MTS and maritime borders, we will:

- Acquire and integrate a networked system of platforms, sensors, mission integration systems, communications equipment, and analytical tools across the Service;
- Leverage C5 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities from military, law enforcement, and commercial sources to improve the processing, exploitation, and dissemination of critical and actionable intelligence; and
- Employ data-driven methodologies to optimize planning for the deployment of Coast Guard resources.

2.1.2. Promote Acceptable Behavior in the Maritime Domain

The Coast Guard is a recognized leader in maritime communities, from local ports to international regulatory bodies. Our position enables us to influence maritime operations around the world. To shape safe, secure, and environmentally-responsible maritime activities, we will:

- Preserve maritime norms and influence acceptable behavior to facilitate the unimpeded flow of lawful maritime commerce;
- Create opportunities and build avenues for regional information sharing;
- Ensure a common-sense domestic regulatory approach that strikes the right balance between facilitating and safeguarding commerce; and
- Lead America in international maritime affairs and promote a free and open international order in support of the National Security Strategy.

2.1.3. Employ Effective Presence to Deter and Disrupt Maritime Threats to the Nation

Driven by intelligence, our operational capabilities enable us to put the right asset in the right place at the right time. To maximize operational impact, we will:

- Incorporate strategically relevant technologies to harness real-time data and effectively direct assets for end-game intervention;
- Treat every operational asset as a sensor to collect and disseminate information and intelligence; and
- Harness the creativity and innovation of our workforce to challenge established operational approaches, apply new technology, and increase effectiveness in countering maritime threats.



ENHANCE

UNIFIED EFFORT

Objective 2.2. | The Coast Guard partners at every level, from individual mariners to local police departments, to the world's top navies and coast guards. We act in coordination with our government partners, private stakeholders, and international allies to safeguard our national interests and protect against threats to the homeland. Our aim is to integrate whenever possible and deliver output greater than the sum of its parts. Only with commitment to "all-in" collaboration can we produce the "all-out" effort necessary to achieve our collective goals.



2.2.1. Strengthen Integration with DHS

The Coast Guard employs both distinct and complementary capabilities to help DHS and its components meet their strategic objectives. To maximize our value to the Department, we will:

- Enhance integration with DHS at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels;
- Implement DHS best practices across the Service including joint requirements management, acquisition processes, research and development, and IT solutions; and
- Connect our capabilities with other DHS components to further DHS strategic priorities.

2.2.2. Leverage Joint Capabilities and Authorities to Complement DOD

Our unique authorities, specialized capabilities, and established relationships will complement DOD to provide an agile response to contingencies, address sources of maritime discord, and deter threats to our national interests. To better integrate capabilities for national defense, we will:

- Employ our authorities to support National Defense Strategy (NDS) objectives;
- Synchronize engagement, operations, and capacity-building efforts to strengthen maritime governance around the world;
- Leverage DOD to field interoperable equipment and reduce redundancies in the acquisition of new capabilities; and
- Target interoperability with the U.S. Navy and other maritime services to include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD).

2.2.3. Enhance Partnerships with Maritime Stakeholders

The MTS is critical to our economic prosperity and national security. By cultivating relationships across the maritime community, we bolster our credibility, recognize industry trends, and understand emerging technologies. To safeguard the MTS, we will:

- Foster productive relationships with the maritime industry to build our own expertise and enable effective oversight;
- Continue to lead a community of Federal, State, and local partners to ensure all elements of the MTS are efficient, effective, and responsive; and
- Share universal best practices to strengthen maritime cybersecurity preparedness, response, and recovery.

2.2.4. Align International Engagement with National and Departmental Priorities

Our strong international standing and proven track record in partner-nation capacity building is directly linked to our national and economic security. To further our international impact, we will:

- Use our position within the international maritime community to shape and promote universal standards and regimes;
- Strategically orient time and resources toward international activities that maximize return on investment to national and Coast Guard priorities; and
- Foster international capacity-building efforts in regions that are both critical to U.S. interests and in alignment with DOD and U.S. Department of State (DOS).



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

DELIVER MISSION EXCELLENCE ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

We are an agile, adaptive force whose greatest value to the Nation resides in our ability to rapidly shift among our missions to meet national priorities during steady state and crisis. Our empowered workforce, with a bias for action and propensity to exercise on-scene initiative, enables the Coast Guard to provide immediate and reliable response to any maritime incident. Rapid advancements in technology and the evolving operating environment demand mature enterprise-wide preparedness, resiliency, and responsiveness. The functions that enable operations, mission support, and organizational structure must evolve alongside the external environment, partner and stakeholder capabilities, and innovative adversaries. To promote national security and build resiliency, we will align all of our Service's initiatives to promote organizational efficiency, agility, and effectiveness – delivering excellence anytime, anywhere.

STRENGTHEN

RESILIENCE THROUGH CRISIS LEADERSHIP, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, AND SURGE RESPONSE

Objective 3.1. | We are the Nation's premier maritime first responder. Large-scale, catastrophic events will continue to impact the maritime domain and our Nation's citizens. Crisis management and response are critical functions that span all Coast Guard missions and directly support DHS. A ready and organized response force, with integrated and executable plans, enables the Coast Guard to respond and recover during times of crisis. To improve our capability in managing increasingly complex disasters, we will continue to hone our crisis leadership and emergency planning skills, with a focus on the rapid and proactive mobilization of our resources.



3.1.1. Lead in Crisis

Whether a maritime disaster or catastrophic event, the Coast Guard is a leader of the integrated response. Drawing on our vast organizational experience, we will:

- Cultivate crisis leadership as a core competency;
- Be the Nation's premier incident management experts for complex maritime disasters; and
- Enhance the management of surge capabilities and the mobilization of adaptive force packages.

3.1.2. Intensify Integrated Emergency Management Planning and Execution

Cultivating resilient maritime communities requires deliberate and coordinated crisis and surge incident planning. To deliberately prepare for today's risks while proactively anticipating tomorrow's threats, we will:

- Act on lessons learned and best practices from previous events for integrated emergency management;
- Enhance planning and evaluation to support the maritime community's emergency preparedness at all levels of government; and
- Implement realistic interagency emergency management exercises that incorporate future and emerging challenges.

3.1.3. Advance Resilient Information Technology and Command and Control in Crisis

The global reach of information and the speed that it flows can enhance both advanced readiness and mission effectiveness during disasters. To leverage technology solutions during crises, we will:

- Seek innovative, interoperable, and mobile solutions for rapid integration of information and resources across the broad spectrum of responders;
- Identify and employ a broad range of tools such as asset tracking and common operating picture technologies to enhance situational awareness; and
- Harness the power of social media applications in disaster response.



INNOVATE

FOR BETTER ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Objective 3.2. | Our bias for action and propensity to exercise on-scene initiative are ingrained in our Service's character, extending into our mission support enterprise. We will shape our Service based on a logical understanding of operational commitments, current and predictive budget realities, and potential long-term mission demands. We will strengthen our capability to assess enterprise risk in fulfilling our statutory missions during steady-state operations and when responding to crises. We will strive to lower the barriers to innovation, including programmatic stovepipes, and recognize that smart failures in low-risk venues in the short term often yield lessons-learned that lead to long-term organizational success.



3.2.1. Deliver Mission Support at the Speed of Need

The mission support enterprise is the backbone of effective mission execution. Mission support personnel must be armed with the appropriate structure, policy, procedures, and information to support frontline operators. In order to remain a nimble and adaptable force, we must continue to evaluate how we deliver mission support and seek to bring our operational and mission support efforts closer together. To deliver support at the speed of need, we will:

- Encourage and reward our workforce for developing innovative ways to increase delivery speed and efficiency of mission support functions;
- Strengthen our expedited acquisition process to adopt new technologies that will greatly enhance frontline operations; and
- Capitalize on relationships with DOD and DHS to identify shared solutions that augment internal Coast Guard logistics capabilities.

3.2.2. Strengthen Enterprise Risk Management

Innovation requires smart risk taking. The Coast Guard must establish clear risk tolerance levels across the full spectrum of operational and support missions with an understanding of the trade-offs between today's tactical crisis and tomorrow's strategic imperative. At the same time, the workforce structure must be needs-driven, based on operational and support requirements that are objectively determined and continually assessed. Balancing the demand for Coast Guard services in a constrained budget environment, we will:

- Establish analytical tools to model organizational capacity and force structure for steady-state and major emergency response and contingency operations;
- Refine workforce and capital asset management and budget processes to maximize operational results and manage risk through a repeatable process; and
- Shape our decisions based on a logical understanding of operational commitments, current and predictive budget realities, and potential long-term Service demands.

3.2.3. Enhance Organizational Agility and Decision-Making

To be successful in a dynamic and unpredictable strategic environment, the Coast Guard must have a lean, agile, and effective command and control structure. To optimize the organization, we will:

- Eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy to bolster organizational agility;
- Enhance information-sharing and decision-making frameworks to integrate operations and support; and
- Mature our organizational processes to ensure local actions are aligned with Service priorities.

3.2.4. Reinforce a Culture of Continuous Innovation

The Coast Guard brings enduring value to the Nation and must adapt to the changing character of maritime operations. To remain at the cutting edge, we will:

- Foster a culture of experimentation and encourage acceptance of warranted risk to affect change;
- Challenge our workforce to evolve and improve long-standing processes and operational constructs; and
- Strengthen Service innovation initiatives and accelerate the process of moving the best ideas to Service-wide implementation.



THE WAY AHEAD

The strategic context in which the Coast Guard operates will undoubtedly remain dynamic, demanding the best of our highly-capable and adaptable workforce. Grounded in our Core Values and guided by the Commandant's Guiding Principles – *Ready, Relevant, and Responsive* – we will safeguard the trust and confidence of the American people. These tenets ensure our Service remains best positioned to serve a Nation whose economic prosperity, national security, and global influence are inextricably linked to the maritime domain.

Strategy is fundamentally about choices. To implement this Strategic Plan, we will have to make difficult choices in critical mission areas. As we carefully balance our limited resources against a growing demand for our services, every level of the Coast Guard must tie their actions to these strategic priorities so we remain *Semper Paratus* to answer the call.



MAXIMIZE
READINESS TODAY
AND TOMORROW



ADDRESS
THE NATION'S COMPLEX
MARITIME CHALLENGES



DELIVER
MISSION EXCELLENCE
ANYTIME, ANYWHERE



With honor and integrity, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values.



Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty.

COAST GUARD STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2018–2022



**WE ARE AMERICA'S READY,
RELEVANT, AND RESPONSIVE
U.S. COAST GUARD.**

SEMPER PARATUS



*With honor and integrity, we will safeguard the
American people, our homeland, and our values.*



*Honor, Respect, and
Devotion to Duty.*