



U.S. Coast Guard Oral History Program

Attack on America: September 11, 2001 and the U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. COAST GUARD ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
Operation Noble Eagle Documentation Project

Interviewee: Lieutenant Leona Roszkowski, USCGR
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Port Security Unit 305 (PSU-305)

Interviewer: Staff Sergeant Joseph Gluckert, 126th Military History Detachment
Massachusetts National Guard
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New York City

Q: I just want to go over this access agreement with you. This is an access agreement for Oral History materials and basically I'll read it to you. "You understand that the tapes and transcripts resulting from this oral history will belong to the U.S. Government to be used in any manner deemed in the best interests of the U.S. Army as determined by the Chief of Military History or his representative. You also understand that subject to security classification restrictions you will be given an opportunity to edit the resulting transcript in order to clarify and expand your original thoughts. The Army will provide you with a copy of the edited transcript for your own use subject to classification restrictions". Basically it's asking if you have any caveats that you want to list before we begin the interview. I need to ask that you accept this and you are willing for it to be an open access agreement and if you could just state that for the tape.

LT Roszkowski: I'm willing to go ahead and do the interview.

Q: That you granted it open access.

LT Roszkowski: I grant open access for the tape.

Q: Thank you very much. If you could just sign your name, initial here at None and then sign your name here and print it down here with your rank. Where are you guys originally stationed out of?

LT Roszkowski: Fort Eustis, down at the Army base down in Virginia.

Q: So do you guys get deployed like, a lot?

LT Roszkowski: Some. I know that in the past we recently had a PSU overseas after the [USS] *Cole* [DDG-67] incident protecting U.S. assets in foreign ports. That's basically what we're designed to do. This unit deployed for a real world operation back in November of '99. It was the onload after the multi-exercise "Bright Star" in Port Dukhayla, Egypt. We provided protection for one of the Military Sealift railroad vessels as they unloaded all the equipment that was used in the exercise.

Q: So all of your equipment's air-mobile?

LT Roszkowski: We're airmobile. What we advertise is that from the time you give us a call we can be on the tarmac, fully loaded and ready to go anywhere in the world in 96 hours. We're self-supporting for the first 30 days, only receiving petroleum products and potable water from the host nation. Other than that we're self-sustaining for food, messing and lodging. As you can see we live in a tent city here, and pretty ingenious little things that our engineers will do for us.

Q: Sure. How long have the PSU units been in existence?

LT Roszkowski: This unit was stood up or commissioned in 1994/'95. Prior to that during the Gulf War there was PSU 301, 302, and 303, which have the same basic mission. They were, I guess, sort of put together for that. Basically it's an outgrowth of the Coast Guard. We monitor commercial traffic, so we do provide guidance and enforcement of rules and regulations in commercial ports as regards to loading hazard materials and all that sort of stuff - basically merchant shipping - so it's kind of an outgrowth from that. Our involvement there, we were onboard at the major ports for the onload of a lot of the equipment that went over to the Gulf and then on the other side of the pond in the Gulf we provided security for things like the hospital ship that was there and the harbor areas.

Q: Right. I saw you guys over there with the [USNS] *Comfort* [T-AH 20]. That ship's pretty incredible.

LT Roszkowski: Yeah.

Q: Now have you been staying here since you came?

LT Roszkowski: We've been staying here. We're coming up on our third week here. Today is Tuesday. By Thursday we'll have spent three weeks here camping out in Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island in support of the World Trade Center.

Q: You set your own tents up?

LT Roszkowski: We set our own tents up. We came up by truck. We first got the call Tuesday evening - the word at probably about 1935 - that we going to be deployed for this. So we started making calls to our people.

Q: Friday the . . . ?

LT Roszkowski: Tuesday.

Q: Oh, Tuesday.

LT Roszkowski: The Tuesday after it happened.

Q: Okay.

LT Roszkowski: That evening at 1935 I believe the watch said that we received the word from our superiors that we were going to be recalled for this. So at that point we started calling our people. By Thursday morning we had everyone mustered at the unit except for one person who was down in Florida who was making her way up with, actually, the PSU that went to Boston to protect the Boston Harbor. They dropped her off here.

Q: So she just reported to a PSU down there?

LT Roszkowski: Right. So by Thursday evening we were here at Fort Wadsworth and ready to begin setting up our operations. By Friday we were in the water with our boats escorting the *Comfort* up to her pier.

Q: Wow. So how long does it take you to set up the Tent City?

LT Roszkowski: We're constantly making improvements. They're always building walkways. We've got the MWR tent built. The engineers are just constantly, almost like busy little beavers; they're out there.

Q: Do you have your own engineering . . . ?

LT Roszkowski: We do. We have an Engineering Support Department. They do the maintenance on the boats, the electronic support on the boats, the radar, the radios, all the electronics like depth finders . . .

Q: So your trucks and all your vehicles and all your equipment, that's in your MTOW? You don't need any support there?

LT Roszkowski: The support that we did require was flatbed trucks to transport our equipment from Fort Eustis, Virginia up to New York and then a crane to unload some of the trucks and to launch the boats.

Q: Okay. Who helped you with that?

LT Roszkowski: We just went through our SKs - our shopkeepers - to go ahead and contract that out. In the past we've also used Army trucks to transport us depending upon availability, where we can get, you know, any situation quickest we went with.

Q: Okay. I'm trying to get the timeline straight in my head. You got word that night, the 11th.

LT Roszkowski: Right. Tuesday evening we got the word we were being recalled. We started making calls that night. Some of the people that live local to the unit, within in an hour or two, showed up Wednesday morning to help with the pack-up.

Q: Were people just showing up when they saw it, thinking that they were coming?

LT Roszkowski: People were calling in to see what the status was. When we first saw it happen on TV and received word of the news, we just went through our phone list just to make a call and make sure we had a good contact number for everybody for that day and that evening and the upcoming days. Then that Tuesday evening we got the official call up. We started calling our people. Wednesday morning the local people started coming in, basically within commuting distance, to load out equipment. The folks that live a few hours away, they were packing up their stuff and driving down that day.

We're located in Fort Eustis, Virginia, which is in the Tidewater area near Williamsburg and we have folks that range all the way down from the Carolinas up to Boston. We have a BM3, an E-4, who is finishing up his Master's degree at MIT; had to drop that and come down.

Q: I mean, to be in this unit that you're in you must know that you could, like you said, what 96 hours?

LT Roszkowski: Exactly.

Q: So do you have a lot of the mobilization paperwork, like already prepared and it's a lot easier for you guys to ramp up than an average Reserve component unit?

LT Roszkowski: Well like all Coast Guard units, I mean we try to keep all of our stuff like emergency data information, SGLI and the admin stuff up to date. I guess everybody should constantly have that up to date anyway. What we do is we send our folks to the Air Force Load Planners School because our main emphasis is that we would deploy by plane, normally we think of it being OCONUS - outside the U.S. - protecting a U.S. asset - a High Value Asset or HVA as we call it. So it's kind of odd to be doing that here in the U.S. That's kind of what I think is really hitting home. Like I said, we were over in Egypt and it was . . . the first time it really hit me was we were coming up by bus here Thursday afternoon and I was sitting with one of my chiefs and we were talking about, you know, not really sure at that point what our mission would be or what we would be protecting. But we were talking about the guns, what our arming orders would be for the guns on the boats - we have a 25-foot Boston Whaler Guardian Hull, an open center console boat. Two 175-horsepower outboards on the back and the boats are armed with a 50-caliber machine gun forward and two M-60s aft; port and starboard sides - and we were talking about arranging fields to fire and if we had to open fire on a hostile force. We're saying ball and tracer or armor piercing. What would be the best defense against what we might face, not knowing what we would face. Who would have thought that commercial airliners would crash into the World Trade Center three weeks ago?

Q: I know.

LT Roszkowski: So we're trying to best guess what we would be coming up against and I remember discussing will we use ball and tracer or armor piercing, and our XO said, you know, chimed in with, "Well, if you use ball and tracer and it gets away you can hit anybody in Manhattan. If you use armor piercing you'll probably hit somebody in Queens", and that kind of hit home. I have an aunt that lives in Queens. I have cousins that work in Manhattan.

Q: Right. Your OPORDER, did you get an OPORDER for the mission? Who sent your orders out for the mission, the Coast Guard?

LT Roszkowski: I know our Ops boss; he's an O-4, lieutenant commander. He was working on our OPORDER as we got here. We've been receiving tasking from Coast Guard District One through Activities New York. They're the Coast Guard unit that controls basically search and rescue, law enforcement and marine safety, which is merchant and commercial traffic in this area, in the New York Harbor area in New York City. So they're the ones that are actually running the show and we work for them.

Q: So then you got your orders to leave Virginia, correct?

LT Roszkowski: We did.

Q: Did you know what you were going to be doing when you got here or did you find that out once you got here?

LT Roszkowski: We found that out once we got here. I was preparing our SORTS message, our Status of Operational Readiness and Training message, which tells CINCLANT or the CINC where we are in our training, our readiness, what we're doing at this time and I remember typing it.

Q: Who gave you this position here? Is that from the Coast Guard? I'm just trying to follow the chain of command. So you didn't know where you were going to be staying when you were heading up here?

LT Roszkowski: We had an idea we would either be staying here. We thought maybe here or over at Marine Ocean Terminal Bayonne where we launch our boats from. We thought that at first we were going to be co-located with the PSU 307 from Florida but they ended up being sent on to Boston to do harbor protection up there.

Q: Okay. How many PSU units are there?

LT Roszkowski: There's six right now. There's also one in Cleveland, Ohio; us out of Fort Eustis, Virginia; 307 out of Tampa/St. Pete in Florida; 308 out of Gulfport, Mississippi, and then there's two on the West Coast; 311 down south and 313 up north.

Q: Okay. So you had your boats in the water by, Saturday did you say?

LT Roszkowski: On Thursday.

Q: Thursday.

LT Roszkowski: I'm sorry, Friday. Belay that, Friday.

Q: So that's like the first . . .

LT Roszkowski: We arrived here Thursday evening probably about 2300 and actually we slept in the gym the first night because we wanted to kind of SLRP out and see where we would actually be placing the tents and so we slept in the gym. We got up Friday morning and pretty much hit the ground running. We started putting up tents. We went over to Marine Ocean Terminal Bayonne - or MOT-B - to launch our boats and we got underway and by the time we were underway the *Comfort* was coming up.

Originally I guess her tasking was to be a, her purpose as a hospital ship was to assist survivors but apparently there weren't enough to need that so they ended up being berthing for the rescue workers.

Q: Correct. Who gave you the orders to provide the security for the *Comfort*? Was that the [USCGC] *Tahoma* [WMEC-908]?

LT Roszkowski: That came out of Coast Guard District one through Activities New York.

Q: Okay, and then when the *Tahoma* came on did they take over here in command?

LT Roszkowski: The *Tahoma* was the On-scene Commander or Commander Task Unit for the northern part of the bay. Initially they had split the bay just north of the VZ Bridge - the Verrazano Bridge - with tasking. *Tahoma* had about 15 to 18 assets that she was controlling in the northern part of the bay, the Hudson River, North River and to the East River by the UN and various high value assets. Some of them would be, obviously like the UN - some of them were maybe not critical to National Defense, but like the Statue of Liberty; still something very important to the country and if something were to happen to the Statue of Liberty like the World Trade Center, I mean that would still be dramatic and upsetting to the country as a whole.

Q: True. So the *Tahoma* controlled the northern part of the bay?

LT Roszkowski: Right.

Q: Who's in control of the south?

LT Roszkowski: The Coast Guard cutter *Campbell* [WMEC-909] also a 270-foot cutter, WMEC, or medium endurance cutter. Both of those cutters are home ported out of New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Q: Okay. Are you working with both of them?

LT Roszkowski: We are. We have two boats that were chopped to the south bay - change of operational tasking - and they were patrolling the 'Kills' - Kill Van Kull in the Newark Bay protecting refineries and I think power plants. Again, those could be a prime target for a . . .

Q: Is this a typical mission for you? I guess it's not typical for anybody.

LT Roszkowski: Right.

Q: But does it fit into a lot of your tasks that you train for anyway?

LT Roszkowski: It fits into what we train for. I mean the ship that we protected in Egypt, the railroad ship was, you know, again a Sealift ship just like the *Comfort*. The only difference, you know, there it is, it's in a foreign country and then they're in a world in the Middle East which is often volatile politically. You wouldn't think of that happening here in New York Harbor.

Q: No. Do you guys train, is it like the National Guard, you guys, one weekend a month?

LT Roszkowski: We do one weekend a month, two weeks a year, and actually we've been stuck with the 48 drills. We get a couple extra weekends worth in our training which bring us up to 60 drills..

Q: Do you think that's enough to keep you guys sharp and, I mean what works good in (INAUDIBLE - RADIO NOISE) and what doesn't work good?

LT Roszkowski: I think it's efficient. I mean you can always train more, but you can never be too well prepared I guess is what I'm saying. I mean even if we were an active duty unit, you know, can you ever be too well prepared?

Q: Do you get a lot of time on the boats?

LT Roszkowski: We try to get our boat crews underway every weekend unless the weathers basically prohibitive: lightning or just seas that are . . . and winds and . . .

Q: Where can you do, like gunnery? Do you do it at a range somewhere and then . . . ?

LT Roszkowski: We do. Normally we go down to Hobucken, North Carolina at the Cherry Point Range which is part of, I guess, the Marine Corps range out of, I think it's out of Camp LeJeune, Cherry Point and we'll fire our crew-served weapons and we'll drop grenades as anti-swimmer protection. We practice doing that.

Q: Nuclear, biological, chemical?

LT Roszkowski: We do that. We send, actually right now that's being handled mostly by our engineering department, our DCs. onboard a ship - on a Coast Guard cutter - it's generally the DCs and the engineers that would take that over. So we brought that to the Engineering Department here and they actually attend the Army's NBC or I guess its CBR School.

Q: So you have the chem suits and the masks?

LT Roszkowski: We have the chem suits, the masks, and the full MOPP gear. Once a year - one of our weekends - we usually - in the winter time because it's more comfortable to be wearing the suits and doing the run and what not and also it's generally not good boat weather - we'll go to the gas chamber there on the Army base and we do the whole drill; putting it on, donning the MOPP gear and changing out the MOPP gear.

Q: It's no fun, but it's necessary. It seems more so all the time.

LT Roszkowski: Yeah. It'd be less fun if it were for real.

Q: Oh, you're not kidding. I saw that people were buying gas masks and buying, going to, you know, Army/Navy's stores. It's so sad. I guess I wanted to talk a little bit about your Rules of Engagement out here in the bay and what kind of orders have you gotten in terms of that.

LT Roszkowski: Well right now in the U.S. here we're using the Commandant's Use of Force Policy, which is the same policy that our boarding officers use when they're enforcing recreational boating safety or any of the other law enforcement things that we'll do like drug interdiction or what have you. So basically it's a layered or tiered level. The first step is officer presence and for the presence of an officer, you know, Coast Guard law enforcement personnel, it will escalate to, like say, a verbal command and finally ending with deadly force.

Q: Give me just a few examples of the certain types of missions that you've been performing since you've been up here besides the *Comfort*.

LT Roszkowski: Well besides patrolling around the *Comfort* - and actually it's the Office of Emergency Management is based on the pier right there that was alongside the *Comfort* - we've been patrolling, we ran a riverine patrol down in the 'Kills' just watching out for any possible attacks on any of the refineries or power plants, that sort of thing.

Q: Are you working closely with the police boats?

LT Roszkowski: Our boats on scene have been.

Q: Are they in contact with them or do you have any kind of communications set up?

LT Roszkowski: Most of their contact on the water has been visual. Initially when everybody was out there, when they were close enough they would just be able to flag each other down. One of the glitches so to speak is that the New York Police boats used Maritime Channel 17 on the VHF-FM and that's one we don't normally use. We don't have it programmed into our radios. So it's a small enough area and they've been close enough where they can pretty much just wave each alongside to make contact.

Q: Sure.

LT Roszkowski: Onboard the pier for the *Comfort* and I guess the *Comfort* herself was a Marine FAST Team - Fleet Anti-terrorism Team.

Q: Right, I saw them down there.

LT Roszkowski: We gave them a radio so we could have comms with them just because we wanted to make sure our fields of fires are coordinated.

Q: Oh that's good. That's interesting. Have you ever worked with the FAST Teams before?

LT Roszkowski: We did an exercise, I guess about two summers ago at Cheatham Annex on the York River with one of the Marine FAST Teams from the Norfolk area.

Q: Do you work with the boarding teams at all?

LT Roszkowski: We have. One of our boats, while patrolling, doing a riverine patrol in the 'Kills', came across a boater who was violating the security zone and also happened to be boating while intoxicated. So we called out one of the local - the Blue Suit Coast Guard as they call them, you know, the ones that you think of everyday - to come over and do the Coast Guard 4100 Warning, which is the name of the form. It's a basic recreational boating safety form when we check your boat and make sure it's in compliance with all the state and federal regulations.

Q: But you were the ones that originally stopped the vessel?

LT Roszkowski: We stopped them and we detained them and we let the "Blue Suits" do that because we don't emphasize that training because we don't have trained boarding officers. Technically in the Coast Guard everyone E-4 and above is a law enforcement officer, a customs officer, just by the way that we're set up.

Q: Because you're Department of Transportation?

LT Roszkowski: Right, and it's . . . I forget what the exact number of the U.S. Code. It escapes me right now. But any E-4 in the Coast Guard on active duty or Reserve on active duty or Reserve on duty, any inactive duty for training; a drill weekend, performing that mission, is a Federal Customs Officer.

Q: I didn't know that. How closely are you working with the police? Is there a certain area that you're patrolling and they're patrolling? I'm trying to get a feel if everybody has their own area and that's what they're working on, and if you can't get to someplace they're filling a gap and if they can't get somewhere, and of course everybody's backing each other up.

LT Roszkowski: Yeah, that's pretty much what we're doing. We've been tasked with, again, doing the riverine patrol in the 'Kills' and the zone there by the *Comfort* and the OEM pier. Alongside us for the first week or so was one of the Navy police boats. They were sitting out there. It was Don was the guy who drove the boat and I forget the crewmember's name. But our crews got to know them pretty well. They were patrolling that same area right alongside us.

Over the weekend the weather deteriorated pretty badly and we had to pull our boats in. So we had to pull our boats in so they supplemented that, they replaced our boats with the 41-footer. She's a larger boat. It's got an enclosed wheelhouse - a little more amiable in inclement weather . . .

Q: Sure.

LT Roszkowski: . . . when we happened to hit some gales and stuff.

Q: Are you running 24-hour operations?

LT Roszkowski: Twenty-Four/Seven.

Q: On the water?

LT Roszkowski: On the water. We go around the clock on the water protecting the high value assets, both assets, and also providing security for the camp. We provide our own perimeter security and we're providing security for our people down at Marine Ocean Terminal Bayonne.

Q: It seems like you, I mean this is what you do in a lot of ways and in a lot of ways it's easy for you to move your shop from place to place.

LT Roszkowski: Right. Well we're sort of designed for it. Just pick us up; put us anywhere and we go to work.

Q: I guess I wanted to know how long you think you're going to be up here?

LT Roszkowski: It's my personal opinion based on the scuttlebutt and rumors that I hear that we'll probably be heading home in a couple of weeks. Initially we were given 30-day orders and then I guess we were recalled to active duty for two years and now I understand it's been scaled back to one year. We're still trying to get our orders. There's been kind of a, I guess a little glitch in the system getting orders cut and then they've had amendments come out and amendments come out.

I've been calling my place of work just checking in to let people know how I'm doing, and yeah, they're all very supportive. However, it's been three weeks now and the HR Department's kind of looking for the correct orders, something in writing.

Q: Where do you work in your civilian job?

LT Roszkowski: I work for Boat U.S. I sell marine insurance.

Q: Oh sure. So they must be frantic that they can't tell if you're gone for two years or you're gone for 30-days. How are they dealing with that?

LT Roszkowski: I think it's pretty much okay. I mean I'm just one of the underwriters, I sit in a cubicle like every other underwriter, so it's, you know.

Q: But when you told them you had to go they just said good luck?

LT Roszkowski: Well actually I had left . . .

Q: I mean they must know, you've been in the unit for a while now, right?

LT Roszkowski: Right. I'm coming up on my third year here. Actually that day when I left, that Tuesday, I was heading down to the unit anyway that morning. We were planning to spend it doing some of our extra drills, take a long weekend and go down to Hobucken to do our gun shooter, our annual underway gun shoot. So that was our plan, was Tuesday was our get things ready day. Wednesday morning everybody was to arrive and the boats were in transit down through the Inter-Coastal Waterway to Hobucken and set up and then do the gun shoot Thursday and Friday and transit back Saturday over drill weekend and then Sunday clean up and go home. So we got a little bit of a head start because we had a handful of people at the unit already. But it wasn't that many. It was probably, I think about ten people extra that got us kicked off and got us started.

Q: Is there a facility for that? Do you full timers?

LT Roszkowski: We do. We have an active duty cadre; a lieutenant logistics officer, an O-3 billet, and E-6s. We have a boatswain's mate first class for the Boats Division; a machinery technician first class, an E-6 for Engineering; a gunner's mate first class, an E-6 for the Weapons and a storekeeper first class. Right now we have a yeoman chief whose on extended active duty who works part-time two to three days a week to help out with admin and she's an E-7.

Q: What was your duty position again?

LT Roszkowski: My job here?

Q: Yeah.

LT Roszkowski: I'm standing watch as the Tactical Action Officer and my billet right now at the unit is Boats Division Officer, Boats Officer, so I have 44 people working for me.

Q: To bring it down in Infantry terms, is it like a platoon? Do you put boats in squadrons?

LT Roszkowski: We do. Actually we have three squads of boats. Generally we like to have four boat crews per squad - four-man, or four-person boat crews per squad. I say four-man but, you know, we're integrated.

Actually right now in our tents with the Boats Division we're berthing by squads. We have men in women living in the same tent. We've been separated out before like in Egypt where we broke the Navy and they were very segregated. They were like, you know, enlisted; E-5 and below, your First Class tent, your Chief's tent and then officers. We have, I'd say probably about maybe ten-percent women and we found out that we were kind of getting left off on what was going on. They'd forget to wake up the women for watch or they wouldn't want to go into the tents. So right now we're berthing by tents.

Q: Do you set up the tent city the same everywhere you go?

LT Roszkowski: No, it depends on where it is and what the layout it. We try to keep it pretty compact. We're not hiking miles and miles between tent to tent.

Q: How's the equipment holding up? Do you have to do certain maintenance after so many hours on the boats, and if you're running 24-hours ops is that starting to be a problem?

LT Roszkowski: It is. We have a couple issues with the equipment on the boats. We have the Evinrude FICHT engines; the 175-horsepower. The 200-horsepower and the 225-horsepower have been recalled because they've been bursting into flame and stuff. Ours haven't been doing that but we're going through power heads pretty quickly; between like 200 and 400 hours we've been losing power heads. They've been wearing out, throwing rods. Usually you can expect like 2,500 hours off an engine and we're getting 200 to 400. So that's kind of an issue. We've had the reps from Bombardier down, the company that now owns Evinrude in fact.

Q: Recently?

LT Roszkowski: They were down last week.

Q: Oh really?

LT Roszkowski: Yeah.

Q: So this is a real test for their equipment in a way.

LT Roszkowski: Right.

Q: So they're probably just as interested to know as you are to getting it fixed?

LT Roszkowski: Yeah, and I think ours is like one of the first generation too of that type technology, that technology which is their fuel injection and . . .

Q: But you have your own mechanics?

LT Roszkowski: We do our own engineering support. We've sent people to their schools. It was OMC at that time. OMC owned Evinrude and they've since gone out of business and Bombardier brought them out. But our engineers have gone to their outboard school for maintenance.

We have electricians and electronic technicians onboard to help us out with things like navigation lights. The nav lights we have on our boats seem to not be - the running lights, you know, the red and green, port and starboard front running lights - don't seem to be holding up all that well. They burn rather hot and the lenses will tend to crack and get water in there and the bulb breaks, and we've been replacing those pretty quickly.

Q: How are your people doing?

LT Roszkowski: The people are doing pretty good. When we first got here we were running one and three. The boat crews have been spending seven hours on watch. What kind of drags us down right now is the commute too and from watch. When we were in Egypt we had our OPCENT tent and our boats tent right there on the pier and then the high value asset was right in the harbor with us, which was on another pier in the harbor. Here we're standing watch now at Fort Wadsworth. The boat crews have to drive to Bayonne to launch their boats and then from there they have to run through the harbor up the Hudson River to probably about, I guess the 44th Street area where Pier 90 and 92 are.

Q: So is that your primary area of responsibility right now?

LT Roszkowski: That and then running down the 'Kills'. So basically for a crew, to say to relieve the watch at 1230, they begin two hours earlier in here with their pre-underway brief. If we have any Intel to pass we'll pass it to them: if there's been any changes in the tasking, or for a while there, there were no recreational vessels allowed to transit. Then recreational vessels were allowed to transit between these hours. Then they cut that back and they re-instituted it. So we pass that sort of information. We'll do a briefing with the on-scene weather, what to expect out there. Then kind of a safety brief. Basically it's all driven by the boat crews and we ask what they're planning; what do they feel about the supervision of the mission, the planning, the crew selection, the crew fitness and the environment.

Q: Is it black and white for them out there or are they making judgment calls on a daily basis?

LT Roszkowski: They make judgment calls on a daily basis and our coxswains are E-4 to E-7.

Q: Really? What kind of school do they go through to become a coxswain?

LT Roszkowski: A lot of it's on the job training. Not all of our coxswains are boatswain's mates. We have Kim Luther; she's a shopkeeper [SK3]. Boatswain's mates get some teasing. On a ship the deck force, some of them are referred to as deck apes and stuff and the traditional kind of . . . but they're great guys and they're terrific. Like I said, I have a BM3 who set aside his Master's thesis at MIT in Naval Engineering to come down and be a boat crewmember. So it's a pretty high-powered group of folks down here.

Q: Young men and women, sure.

LT Roszkowski: Yeah. But like I was saying, I have an SK3. She left the active duty Coast Guard and came to the PSU. She'd done the small boat station thing as a Seaman and a crewmember and now she's a coxswain. She qualified while we were down here. So with her qualifying and a couple of Port Security Specialists that have transferred to Boats Division who have also qualified as coxswains, boat drivers. So we were able to go from a one and three watch to a one and four watch which give the crews a little more time off. So initially we will get seven hours underway plus two hours on each end of that transit. So they will be on watch for seven hours, off for 21, but cutting into that 21 hours is probably about four hours of commute time and briefing and debriefing. So as our watch rotation went to one and four it got a little better. Then we went from having 14 hours off, which is really ten hours, to having 21 hours off, which is really, once you subtract the debrief time and the commute time, like I said, about 17 hours off. But for that first week until we got the other people qualified they would come back in from their watch and they would be, you know, do I want to sleep, shower or eat? Well, I know when I'm on-scene I can get food - there were a lot of donations. That was great, that outpouring of support from the city and the community. The McDonald's at the Intrepid Museum was offering free meals to rescue workers so they would team up with the police boat and send somebody in and bring back shopping bags full of McDonald's food for everybody on the boat. So they were kind of saying, well I can eat on watch. I can bring MREs. But actually we haven't had to do much MREs here because the support's been great from the Activities. They've got the galley open 24-hours a day, 7 days a week for a hot meal, so somebody's not trying to figure out - boat crew relief - when are you going get back, can you get a hot meal? We have a shower tent hooked up here with a generator and hit the showers. Also the MWR gym is letting us use their showers and the locker rooms for any off-times. So that's been great because a lot of times when you deploy - we went to Egypt and one crew and one and four and folks had the 4-8 and then the 16-20s never sat down to a hot meal. They always had a hot meal waiting for them. So by the time they got back it was a reheated hot meal. The way the shower schedule worked they got a shower maybe every second or third day. Now once we've gone to the one and four we've got a little more time off in between, they have time to eat, take a shower, and now we're getting some liberty. We're doing pretty well here.

Q: Sure. Would you just name a few things that you think has really gone well in the operation that you would do again, or something you were surprised about that maybe shouldn't have worked out but did and you might add that to the unit SOP now?

LT Roszkowski: Well for a while we had a communications van from our CAMSLANT, the communications center down in Chesapeake, Virginia. They had come up to assist with Activities with processing their message traffic because a lot of the data lines - the phones lines that ran under the World Trade Center - a lot of them to send and receive record message traffic, paper traffic, were destroyed with the bombing, or the event. So the phone lines were gone. So they came up to receive that through the satellite. Then we found them and we started doing comms from their little communications van up at Lookout Point and those were probably the best comms that we've had. This is still pretty good here but they just had everything there and that worked well. But then once we had comms here; we would also stand watch in Tahoma and use their Comms. Activities New York got their message traffic back so that van went back. They loaded her up and she's again in Bravo Six, ready to deploy and it could be this. It could be a hurricane; any place where we need to get a COMCENT or we use to have a COMCENT and now we don't have one. They can fly in or drive up, and there you go, within a few hours you have communications.

Q: What do you think are some the things that you wouldn't do again or the kind of problems that you ran into and changes you would make?

LT Roszkowski: I guess one problem especially - ideally we would be closer to our operating area - that's been kind of a hassle. Again, it's lengthened the amount of time that the crews spend at work but not actually on watch. So crew fatigue becomes an issue. There's a *Commandant's Instruction* on how long a boat group can be underway and what kind of work there they can do, just to help prevent accidents. Of course, if it's urgent - SAR or if it's an operation like this where it's National Defense - that's kind of put aside because you're not going to say in the middle of a war, well I'm sorry I worked

my eight hours, I can get time in the rack now. I mean obviously you have to do what you have to do but it would be nicer to be closer and it would make communications easier.

Q: You don't use tactical communications or, I mean, like a military type radio? Everything looks commercial to me.

LT Roszkowski: It is. What we have here are, we're DES capable so it would be the covered communications like law enforcement use. We also have the capability to use the same covered comms that the Navy uses and like the other Services. But for this operation they choose not to do that so we've been doing everything in the clear. That's kind of distributing to us a little because the whole ops - if somebody really wanted to get at us they could. For awhile there when we got here everybody was calling their Coast Guard boat by the hull number or the cutter name and we're not use to working like that. So our guys at least said, we're Bravo Squad or we're Charlie Squad or Alpha Squad. I have four squads with three boats now, so they're going, well, we'll be B1 or B2. The senior guy will be Bravo One. The next guy would be Bravo Two, and then the river patrol would be River Rat One, Two, Three, or Four depending upon the squad. But we started doing that and the next day, later, one of the tugs that was coming in and out the Comfort area - that we saw on a daily basis and were allowed to flow in and out - were on the radio calling our boats Bravo One and Bravo Two. So that OPSEC was good for what, you know, 15 minutes until the people listening figured it out.

We had some incidents of people getting on the radio and just imitating us. It was upsetting at first. We were kind of like, well who is it. Is it just somebody playing around that's sitting there listening to the radio in the marina tied up across river? They're bored because they can't go out and they want to go out in their boat and now they're just kind of screwing with us or is somebody really trying too . . . ?

Q: Yeah, it'll throw your operation off.

LT Roszkowski: Throw us off, yeah. So that was kind of a rough spot between us and the tasking of why we wouldn't use covered Comms. I'm still not sure why we chose not to do that. In law enforcement, like drug enforcement, we used covered communications all the time. Probably the only time we don't do it is search and rescue because if we're working a case we want people in back to know if we're out there looking for a boater. If everybody knows we're out there looking for a boater, the more eyes looking the better.

Q: Do you do much search and rescue work?

LT Roszkowski: I don't. Before I came to this job I had done search and rescue.

Q: Oh, okay, but the PSU doesn't?

LT Roszkowski: The PSU doesn't, no. Obviously, if we're out there and we're training and somebody's in trouble we'll certainly help them. All of our boat crews go through the Utility Coxswain and the Utility Crewmember, which is what the stations start out with. Then they'll specialize in, like say, a 41-foot utility boat or a 47-foot motor lifeboat and then they'll go ahead and get that qualification on that particular equipment. But our folks do their same basic seamanship qualification on the utility boats and then we'll go with the tactical training. So for a crewmember that's not just knowing the basic seamanship of being a crewmember on a small boat but firing the Crew Serve weapons, dropping the grenades, using the grenades launcher, illumination grenades and what not. For our boat coxswains it'll be the maneuvering skills.

Basically when we have our high value asset we like to set up a layered defense. Our first zone would be what we call our Safety Zone where if somebody enters that area we say, sorry this is a restricted area. You're not allowed in here, and most folks would just say, sorry, and go about their way. They didn't realize they had strayed into that. It's not like we can mark it with like, say police tape like we actually have around our camp right now because the base is outboard of the public and we're living

here and it's this tent city. If somebody comes and violates that safety zone intentionally, one of our security boats in the security zone will come alongside and keep themselves between the intruder and the asset to prevent them from getting to the asset. They'll maneuver alongside them trying to, kind of herd them, or lead them out of the area. If it's truly an intruder who means to do damage they'll actually physically try bumping them or throwing a wig to swamp their boat and try to get them out of the area. In the event they get past that boat, the boat enters the reaction zone, you know, live field of fire on them.

Q: Meanwhile you're calling in other assets, maybe.

LT Roszkowski: Maybe. I sit here as the Tactical Action Officer and as we train the new folks we're like, well they're going to ask before they do all of this, right? I'm like, well, if that boat comes in at a high rate of speed going what, 40, 50 or 60 knots, you're not going to have a whole lot of time to be getting on the radio and asking permission. It's kind of going to happen and they're going to tell you - and usually we're located close enough that we might be sitting here. We might hear it and like, if it really happened I don't know what would happen. Not on my watch, so to speak. I don't know if its ever happened in our history that somebody's gotten through and we've had to open fire. I don't think we ever have. We would probably hear it and then we'd kind of wait and see what happened afterwards because it'll happen so quickly, if somebody truly were trying to make a run at the asset.

One of our main threats is a small boat laden with explosives and something kind of like the *Cole* incident, but those guys, they were just able to pull alongside and just stand there and just putz on up to them looking like a regular tender type boat.

Q: If that was an asset assigned to your protection that boat could never even get up there.

LT Roszkowski: It wouldn't have gotten within three zones. Ideally we like our zones to be a thousand yards for each zone or a thousand meters because we look at the range of like a rocket propelled grenade launcher. You know, what could they . . .and that's kind of the way we set our standard. But it'll depend upon the port. In some ports three thousand yards might be in the middle of the city so that's not practical, so we'd scale it back. Of course the more you scale it back it lessens your reaction time, so something can happen. If somebody were really attacking our boat or asset, it could be over in a matter of minutes and we'd just be kind of trying to figure out what happened and let folks know.

Q: There's no PSUs that actually travel with like a Navy task force?

LT Roszkowski: Actually, we frequently do. We're part of the Naval Coastal Warfare community. My unit is under Naval Coastal Warfare Group TWO in Cheatham Annex in the Yorktown Area. When we deployed before we usually worked with the Navy Harbor Defense Command, which is a big support system. They get a lot of Intel for us. They have communications capability between us and the rest of the Navy and the rest of the world. We deployed a lot with the MIUWU, the Mobile Inshore Underwater Warfare Unit. They have a lot of listening and seeing devices. They can deploy sonar buoys to detect swimmers. They have coast watchers.

Q: Really?

LT Roszkowski: Yeah, and they'll use our boats to deploy them if they don't have boats with them. But they'll usually deploy with us and keep a close watch of, let's say, like an observation post or something like that in the Harbor and in the area and they'll use both visual feed into the van and also thermal imaging into the van. Plus they have radar. They have a pretty good radar array too. So that kind of gives you a picture of what's in the harbor. So normally the TAO would stand in their van and be getting all that information and their watch officer would tell us, you know, this is what we have. We have an asset coming here. We have something coming in toward the asset, a contact. A lot of times see, the harbors are so small that our boats are picking up stuff pretty much as soon as they're picking it up just

because we're all just in a small area and our folks are always out there, you know, heads on the swivel looking around seeing what's there.

Q: So if you deploy with a Task Force can they put your whole operation on a vessel and take it with them?

LT Roszkowski: You probably could, yeah.

Q: You've never done it before?

LT Roszkowski: Haven't done it yet, but we could.

Q: It sounds like you guys can do a lot of things.

LT Roszkowski: Yeah.

Q: Do you want say one more word and we'll just wrap it up? Do you want to leave any final thoughts or conclusions?

LT Roszkowski: I mean doing the mission, it's what we train for, so that's not really unusual, but it's just the thing that keeps hitting us is doing it here in the U.S. That's what unthinkable here. It's truly shaking to think that we'd be protecting these assets right here in New York City.

One morning we were standing watch up in the van at the Lookout Point and the security watch stander asked if I could hold his M-16 and kind of watch out while he could use the head and I thought, it's just . . . you know, you might joke about New York City and, you know, a big city and crime and stuff coming from Virginia and all. But really to think of holding a loaded weapon while somebody uses the head to provide security for him right here.

END OF INTERVIEW

