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## iCommandant

*Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen*

Showing newest 33 of 35 posts from May 2009. [Show older posts](#)

Sunday, May 31, 2009

### Commandant visit with ADM Eric Olsen, Special Operations Command, in

Shipmates

We finished a productive trip on Friday . The trip included a stop in San Antonio to speak to our financial managers at the Annual American Society of Military Comptroller (ASMC) Professional Development Institute (PDI). We had a good discussion regarding financial transformation and our collective efforts to remediate materials weaknesses identified in our financial audits.



[Commandant visit with ADM Eric Olsen, Special Operations Command, in Tampa](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

We then spent two days in Tampa where I met with General Dave Petraeus, US Central Command, and Admiral Eric Olsen, US Special Operations Command.

General Petraeus and I discussed the future of maritime security operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf and we had further discussions with his staff regarding long term requirements for Coast Guard support to CENTCOM. Admiral Olsen and I discussed our participation in the SEAL program, the evolving concept of Security Forces Assistance, and the Coast Guard Advanced Interdiction Concept of Operations.

I also participated in the National Harbor Safety Conference where I met with industry and interagency leaders to discuss cargo security, held media briefings with Sector Commander, CAPT Tim Close, and delivered closing remarks. This is a terrific event that gets better every year. Our thanks to team in Tampa. St. Pete, and Port of Manatee for their efforts to putting on this event.

ADM A

Posted at [5/31/2009 08:17:00 AM](#) [1 comments](#)



Friday, May 29, 2009

### 29 May 1979 ... A Rememberance

Shipmates,

I returned today from a trip that took me to San Antonio on Wednesday to address our Coast Guard financial management team at the annual conference for the American Society of Military Comptrollers. Driving through San Antonio we passed the Judge John H. Wood Jr. Federal Court House. This post is a personal retrospective of an event that occurred thirty years ago today, 29 May 1979.

## My involvement

In the spring of 1975 I was transferred from USCGC GALLATIN where I was the Ops Boss to the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC). At that time EPIC was just starting up and I was part of the first group of Guardians that was assigned to help build out the maritime capability at EPIC. The Center was run by the Department of Justice and the two main agencies represented were the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Coast Guard officers were assigned to the EPIC 24-hour watch where we answered inquiries and conducted background checks for field offices throughout the federal government, as well as state and local law enforcement agencies.

Because of our maritime expertise we often assisted the EPIC analytical section with maritime cases. It was in this role that I became involved in analytical work in support of an investigation into a drug trafficking organization (DTO) centered on several brothers from a family in El Paso, the Chagra Family. My involvement was related to the DTO's maritime movement of marijuana from South America to the United States. Ultimately, members of the family were indicted and prosecuted in federal court.

In the spring of 1979, I was preparing to relocate to Atlantic City, NJ, as the Group Commander. On May 29, 1979, I along with the rest of the country was shocked to learn that the federal judge who was trying the Chagra case had been murdered.

## What happened?

Thirty years ago today, United States Federal Judge John Wood was slain in the driveway of his town house in San Antonio, Texas, struck by a bullet fired from a high-powered rifle. The assassination came at the height of a Justice Department campaign to slow the flow of illicit drugs across the Mexican border.

Less than a year before Judge Wood was slain, Jamiel "Jimmy" Chagra, a key member of their family's criminal enterprise, was arrested for drug trafficking. As described in numerous media reports and several books on the event, he and his associates lived brazen lifestyles of "greed and fear", importing hundreds of tons of marijuana and cocaine, maintained an "office like a fortress", employed corrupt lawyers, had private jets on standby, stashed millions of dollars in foreign bank accounts, and wagered huge gambling stakes in Las Vegas.

Jimmy Chagra faced indictments on several narcotics charges at the time of the judge's assassination. The Chagras were convinced that Judge Wood, who was scheduled to preside over Jimmy's case, had a bias against them. Judge Wood denied any impropriety and refused to remove himself from the case; he also reportedly refused a \$10 million dollar bribe from Jimmy's brother Joe Chagra. Jimmy's trial was to commence on the day the Judge died.

Judge Wood's murder, the first assassination of a Federal Judge in a century, sent shock waves throughout South Texas and the criminal justice system. The federal government's response to the assassination, described at the time as "the crime of the century" was quick and overwhelming, and resulted in the biggest FBI investigation (lasting over 3 years and costing \$5 million dollars) until the 1995 Oklahoma City Federal Building bombing.

Judge Wood's assassin, Charles Harrelson, father of Actor Woody Harrelson, was arrested, charged, and convicted of murdering a Federal Judge for \$250,000 dollars. He was sentenced to two life sentences without parole. Charles Harrelson died in prison of a heart attack on March 15, 2007.

Jimmy Chagra's brother Joe was sentenced to prison for his role in the assassination as was Jimmy's wife Elizabeth. Elizabeth died in prison of cancer. Joe died in an automobile accident after serving his sentence. Jimmy passed away of cancer in 2006.

## Today

While I had not thought about this event for some years, recent events on the southwest border brought it to mind and seeing the courthouse in San Antonio was another reminder.

Thirty years later, I view what happened in 1979 from my position as Commandant of the Coast Guard and Chairman of The Interdiction Committee (TIC), an interagency body that provides recommendations to Director Gil Kerlikowske, Office of National Drug Control Policy, on federal drug interdiction operations.

The recent levels of violence on the southwest border are a stark reminder of the corrosive, devastating effect of drug trafficking and associated illegal activities. We must remain committed to our international partners and effectively deal with criminal enterprises that traffic drugs, other contraband, and human beings across our air, land, and sea borders. We must also focus on the movement of weapons and money that flows south.

Secretary Napolitano is providing strong leadership and the Department of Homeland Security is completely engaged in this effort. Our partners in DHS, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) are leading the effort on the land border.

The Interdiction Committee will meet next week for the first time under the leadership of Director Kerlikowske. The commitment of Director Kerlikowske and our interagency partners in The Department of Justice, Department of Defense, Department of State, and the Intelligence Community is strong. Better intelligence sharing, collaboration, and coordination have produced record cocaine seizures and have forced the DTOs to adapt to our success. Recent legislation that makes operation of a self-propelled semi-submersible in international waters a violation of U.S. law is an example of the progress we have made.

As we remember the events of thirty years ago we will continue to improve interagency cooperation to create a whole of government approach, not only on the Southwest Border, but the air and maritime domains as well.

ADM A

Posted at [5/29/2009 05:01:00 PM @comments](#) 



## BERTHOLF Granted Authority to Operate -- Ready for Ops

Guest Post from CAPT Joseph M. Vojvodich (CG-933), C4ISR Acquisition Program Manager and CAPT Drew Rambo (CG-62), Office of Communications Policy

The Coast Guard Designated Approving Authority (DAA) granted the Authority to Operate (ATO) yesterday for USCGC Bertholf's classified systems. The ATO is the formal accreditation decision issued by the official with the authority to assume responsibility for operating a system at an acceptable level of risk. Bertholf is now allowed to process, store, and transmit classified information until re-authorization is required in three years. An ATO indicates the information system has adequately implemented all assigned Information Assurance safeguards to a point that is acceptable to the DAA. USCGC Bertholf is operationally ready right now to conduct Coast Guard missions.

The ATO considers a number of Information Assurance aspects, including TEMPEST, to ensure a sound security posture for the cutter's information systems. We met a critical milestone by performing the Instrumented TEMPEST Survey (ITS) as planned. In April, the U.S. Navy's Space & Naval War Systems Command (SPAWAR) completed the ITS on Bertholf. Besides leveraging the expertise of our Navy partner, the Coast Guard called upon industry capability as well. Throughout the past months the Acquisition Project Manager (PM), under the guidance of the CTTA (Certified TEMPEST Technical Authority), employed the service of a National Security Agency certified TEMPEST test services facility to prepare for the ITS. Using an exacting "test, fix, test" methodology for high-risk areas, all known TEMPEST discrepancies were resolved prior to the final instrumented SPAWAR evaluation.

The Coast Guard received a classified assessment from SPAWAR in mid-May, which was an important artifact to obtain the ATO. While national security concerns prevent the public release of the assessment, the Coast Guard's CTTA reviewed the document, considered the results of Visual TEMPEST Inspections and discrepancy resolutions, and recommended TEMPEST certification for the Bertholf.

The Coast Guard's role as the Lead Systems Integrator for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) was largely facilitated through an integrated effort of the technical authority, sponsor, and acquisition PM. For example, the Coast Guard's CTTA monitored the TEMPEST testing to ensure a thorough evaluation of all systems was properly completed and documented. The PM managed cost-schedule-performance parameters of the effort and the sponsor ensured the PM and technical authority were accountable for capability and technical requirements.

The Coast Guard also analyzed and audited software and hardware devices and their configurations for known threats and adherence to applicable security guidelines and policies. SPAWAR, as an independent validation and verification agent, completed the final software and network scan of the classified system on board Bertholf for vulnerabilities. The most recent updated software load was deployed and tested in mid-May. The recent software load, among other things, contained necessary adjustments that addressed IA risks while maintaining the operating capability of the system. Like previous versions, the most recent version of software has IA incorporated into its development and testing and is a product of best practices and findings of the past.

An enhancement called a Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF), which is an enclosed area that is used to process Sensitive Compartmented Information will be completed during the Bertholf Post Shakedown Availability (PSA) scheduled for September 2009 through February 2010. After events of September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard recognized the need to include a SCIF on its National Security Cutters (NSC), starting with Bertholf. Beginning in 2003, the Coast Guard implemented a phased approach to design and build the space, procure the equipment, and install the SCIF equipment aboard the NSCs. The C4ISR equipment installation to support the SCIF capability has been planned for the post-delivery phases outside of the NSC production contract. At the end of PSA, the Bertholf will go through another TEMPEST testing and Information Assurance verification, again working with technical authority and the SPAWAR to gain appropriate certification and accreditation before requesting the authority to process classified information with its enhanced SCIF capability.

The Coast Guard considers the security of its information systems to be of the highest priority and is confident about

its processes, due to its oversight program and relationships with industry and SPAWAR. The second NSC, Waesche, has already benefited from the lessons learned aboard Bertholf as these lessons are incorporated earlier in the construction phase, resulting in a much improved TEMPEST posture.

Captain Joseph M. Vojvodich  
C4ISR Acquisition Program Manager  
Coast Guard Acquisition Directorate (CG-933)

Captain Drew A. Rambo  
Office of Cyber Security & Telecommunication  
Coast Guard C4&IT Directorate (CG-62)

Posted at 5/29/2009 01:50:00 PM 1 comments 



Thursday, May 28, 2009

## Coast Guard Report from Federal Human Capital Survey

As part of the Annual Employee Survey program, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducts the [Federal Human Capital Survey](#) on the off years of the DHS-wide Employee Survey (e.g., 2010). This survey contains questions mandated by OPM and DHS-specific questions designed to further explore issues identified in past surveys, as well as demographic information.

The survey findings are used to:

- \* Learn employee attitudes;
- \* Guide human capital management strategies and practices;
- \* Provide human capital metrics within the Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF) in the following four indices:
  - Leadership and Knowledge Management
  - Results-Oriented Performance Culture
  - Talent Management
  - Job Satisfaction

The report [/US%20Coast%20Guard%20FHCS%20Summary.pdf](#) indicates that the Coast Guard has an overall positive, safe and empowering work environment for our civilian employees. While the results are encouraging, we should understand that we have challenges and can do better. OPM's website provides some general guidance on [how to use the results](#).

ADM A

NOTE: This survey only covers Civilian employees. We will discuss the results of the Coast Guard's Organizational Assessment Survey, which covers the entire workforce, in the near future.

Posted at 5/28/2009 02:03:00 PM 0 comments 



Wednesday, May 27, 2009

## Official Service Blog of the U.S. Coast Guard Now Live

[Coast Guard Compass](#)-- the official blog of the U.S. Coast Guard: its people and missions -- is now live on [DoDLive!](#)

From its introductory "[Welcome Aboard](#)"

*Welcome to The Coast Guard Compass, official service blog of the U.S. Coast Guard.*

*Anyone who has been following the Coast Guard's efforts in the blogosphere knows that this blog is not the first for the Coast Guard by far. The Commandant has been running a blog for some time as has the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard. There are also various district and unit blogs. (A list of these can be found on the blogroll that is linked at the top of the page.)*

*So what makes this blog different? Well, while all of our blogs are telling some part of the Coast Guard story, think of it like different pieces of a machine that works together to show you a very diverse and busy service. The Commandant's blog will remain very active talking about leadership and policy issues, the Master Chief's blog will continue to take on deckplate level issues, and the districts and units will continue to share the stories of their specific areas. The CG Compass is unique because it is the central blog that will cover the entire service, the men and women that make up the Coast Guard, the missions they do and the challenges they face.*

*Check out this video of a conversation I had [with public recently](#).*

*It is important that the public knows us, knows what we are doing, knows why we are doing it. We are*

not the Coast Guard, we are your Coast Guard.

Let's be frank, the Coast Guard does some pretty amazing stuff and we have a little something for everyone. Are you interested in efforts being made to protect the environment, the whales and the sea turtles? [We do that](#). You like ships and boats both old and new? [We have at least few of those for you](#). You are interested in what is going on with piracy? [We deal with that!](#) You like to swim? [No one swims quite like a Coast Guardsman swims!](#) Really this list could go on for a very long time, but I am pretty sure you get the point.

The Coast Guard doesn't stop at saving lives, or even at maritime security, we are a truly multimission service to our core and that is what this blog is intended to show. We are not perfect, and the challenges we face will be addressed here as well, in the hopes that we can engage you in open conversation.

Please make sure you look at the About link as you will find the comment policy. There is also a blogroll where you can find the other Coast Guard blogs, as well as a list of blogs that talk about the Coast Guard or other maritime issues.

Welcome aboard The Coast Guard Compass.

We encourage you to visit the site, subscribe to the RSS feed, and most importantly...contribute to the conversation.

Posted at [5/27/2009 01:18:00 PM](#) [3 comments](#) 



Tuesday, May 26, 2009

## RADM Bennett S. Sparks

Shipmates,

We were saddened last week with news of the passing of RADM Bennett S. "Bud" Sparks. Bud was a friend and mentor whose impact on the Active and Reserve Components of the Coast Guard was immense. Beginning with service in World War II, Bud rose from Seaman to Rear Admiral and distinguished himself on active duty and as a Reservist. The Reserve Officer's Association presents two awards annually named after Bud. The description for each from the ROA website are provided below.

RADM Bennett S. "Bud" Sparks Unit Award

Selected by: Headquarters, U.S. Coast Guard

Criteria: Awarded annually to the Coast Guard unit judged to be the most supportive of a totally integrated coast guard force, demonstrated by its effective use of Coast Guard Reservists. Presentation is made at ROA's National Convention.

RADM Bennett S. "Bud" Sparks Coast Guard Reserve Outstanding Junior Officer Award

Selected by: Headquarters, U.S. Coast Guard

Criteria: Must be a drilling Coast Guard Reserve Junior Officer (O-3 or below) or warrant officer and is selected in accordance with criteria contained in Coast Guard directives. ROA provides and presents the award annually at the Mid-Winter Conference.

I am asking that our Active and Reserve colleagues post any personal comments and memories they have about Bud Sparks on this post.

RADM Sparks' obituary: [/RADM\\_SPARKS\\_OBITUARY.pdf](#)

ADM A

Posted at [5/26/2009 03:55:00 PM](#) [6 comments](#) 



## Understanding Civilian Recruiting Opportunities

Shipmates,

Below is a guest blog by Cindy Nelson-Possinger (CG-121), Chief, Office of Civilian Personnel. I was briefed by the USCG Civilian Recruiting Team today. We discussed the diversity of the civilian workforce and the need for greater awareness by our field commanders and better focus in our recruiting effort.

ADM A

The [FY 2008 Management Directive 715 Report](#), a mandated yearly Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Report, shows a declining trend of diversity in the civilian workforce. The [Civilian Recruiting Team](#) in CG-121 can assist program managers and supervisors in finding qualified and diverse applicants. The team markets the Coast Guard as an "employer of choice" by building broad public awareness of the attributes of becoming a Civilian Guardian. The recruiters use national and regional outreach events, electronic recruiting sources, and publications to build diverse high quality applicant pools to meet current and future workforce needs. The civilian recruiters participate

in more than 70 diversity career fairs and conferences per year. In addition, the team fosters partnerships with professionals associations and organizations supporting the employment of: Hispanics, African Americans, American Indians, Women, Asian/Pacific Islander, Persons With Disabilities (PWD), and Veterans

In partnership with Command Staff Advisors and Human Resource Specialists, the recruiters have developed and implemented specific marketing strategies for Marine Inspectors, Medical Occupations, Criminal Investigators, Contract Specialists, Engineers, Naval Architects, Senior Executive Service Members, and Economists. These strategies utilize electronic recruiting sources, university/college alumni networks, and diversity publications.

The recruiters also manage special programs that have strong ties to affinity groups and diversity associations and universities. These programs include: Career-Entry Level Opportunity (CEO) Program, Minority Serving Institution Internship Program (MSIIP), Operation WarFighter Program (OWF), Persons With Disabilities (PWD) and Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP).

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Senior leaders and hiring officials should identify a certain percentage of their workforce vacancies as entry level/career ladder positions starting at GS-5 through GS-9. Identifying entry level positions creates a stronger linkage to the diversity programs listed above. Entry level positions also provide opportunities for professional growth and may provide some personnel stability as employees progress to the journeyman grade. Senior leaders, program managers, and individual supervisors can work directly with servicing CSA/HR Specialists and the civilian recruiters to fill journeyman positions as an entry level/career ladder hire or to designate a group of positions to be filled as entry level/career ladder positions.

For additional information please visit [our web-site](#).

Posted at [5/26/2009 03:45:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#)



Monday, May 25, 2009

### USCG's finest in formation at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Shipmates,

This morning Pam and I, along with Master Chief Skip and Jan Bowen, had breakfast at the White House with our veterans and the incredibly dedicated joint team that takes care of our Fallen Heroes arriving at Dover AFB. Later we joined the other service chiefs as President Obama laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Our Honor Guard was part of the honor company and looked terrific. They work very hard with considerably fewer personnel than the other services. We are very proud of them.

ADM A



[USCG's finest in formation at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [5/25/2009 02:05:00 PM](#) [0 comment](#)



Sunday, May 24, 2009

### Marine Safety Blog

[Rear Admiral Jim Watson, Director of Prevention Policy](#), has truly embraced social media and understands how it improves his ability to communicate with his stakeholders/customers. I am posting an e-mail I received from him recently to improve awareness of this communication channel:

*Please visit the [Coast Guard Marine Safety blog](#). It's all video material right now, because I started on YouTube. I have posted a weekly commentary on Coast Guard marine safety activities once a week since early March and hope to continue doing so until I transfer next month. Fortunately my successor, Rear Admiral Kevin Cook, has agreed to continue on after I leave. Also, [Proceedings of the Marine Safety and Security Council](#) and their contributors may begin blogging on this site. Please spread the link and send suggestions/comments. Thanks.*

I will join RDML Watson later this week at the [11th Annual Harbor Safety Committee Conference](#) in Tampa, Fl. We will blog/tweet on those discussions.

Posted at [5/24/2009 01:25:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Friday, May 22, 2009

## Updated with News Clip: Station Gulfport Ribbon Cutting

Here is some great [news coverage of the ceremony](#).

Shipmates,  
After several years of planning and construction, including setbacks caused by Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, today we cut the ribbon on our new station at Gulfport, Mississippi which was lost in Hurricane Katrina. We were proud to have Congressmen Gene Taylor join us. Rep Taylor hails from Bay St Louis and lost his home during Hurricane Katrina. Included in the construction were facilities and moorings for ANT Gulfport, CGC RAZORBILL, and CGC POMPANO. Kudos to FDCC LANT and CEU Miami for their effort in making this day happen. My thanks also to CWO (BOSN) Martin and the crew for making this a very special day for the Coast Guard and the local community.



[Station Gulfport Ribbon Cutting](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at [5/22/2009 08:42:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Thursday, May 21, 2009

## Amver Awards Today in Washington

From the [Amver blog](#):

Are you coming to the U.S. Amver Awards Ceremony in Washington, DC today? Information on the ceremony can be found [here](#). Besides U.S. Amver award recipients guests such as United States [Coast Guard Rear Admiral Brian Salerno](#) and United States [Coast Guard Vice Commandant Vivien Crea](#) will be attending. Stop by to pay tribute to the many U.S. shipping companies participating in the [Amver system](#) dedicated to safety at sea.

The Vice Commandant will be keynoting.

Posted at [5/21/2009 02:48:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Wednesday, May 20, 2009

## Coast Guard Pub 1 -- Video Statement

Today at the Coast Guard Academy Graduation Secretary Napolitano announced the release of our [revised Pub 1](#).

This video explains a little more about what Pub 1 is about and how you can use it. You can view it on [CGV!](#) or via YouTube below.

I sent the following All Hands e-mail on Pub 1 Today:

*To the Men and Women of the United States Coast Guard:*

*I am pleased to announce the first revision to our capstone doctrine, Coast Guard Publication 1 (Pub 1). Secretary Napolitano officially announced the revision at today's Coast Guard Academy graduation ceremony. She stressed its importance for our Service and its applicability for the entire Department of Homeland Security.*

*I expect all Coast Guard members to read Pub 1 and discuss it with your shipmates. Hard copies will be widely distributed and it is also posted on our website available at [www.uscg.mil/comdt](http://www.uscg.mil/comdt).*

*As a capstone doctrine, Pub 1 explains our principles of operation: clear objective, presence, unity of effort, on-scene initiative, flexibility, managed risk, and restraint. These traits can be traced back to Alexander Hamilton's Letter of Instruction to the Commanding Officers of the first 10 revenue marine cutters and are even more relevant today. This guidance will help every member of the Coast Guard - active duty, reserve, civilian and auxilliary - understand who we are, what we do, and why we do it.*

*Pub 1 maps our organizational DNA and reveals the evolution of our Guardian Ethos. Looking forward, Pub 1 provides a solid foundation so we can adapt our operational activities to meet the maritime challenges of the 21st century. Use it as a fundamental building block to educate our newest Coast Guard members and to guide your professional judgment as you address emerging mission demands in your area of responsibility.*

*Thank you for your dedicated efforts to the Coast Guard and the Nation.*

Admiral Thad Allen  
Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard

Posted at [5/20/2009 05:45:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



## Coast Guard Academy Class of 2009 graduating and divesting themselves of cadet life

Shipmates,  
I was on hand today as Secretary Napolitano handed commissions to the Coast Guard Academy Class of 2009. Under perfect conditions with

blue skies and unseasonably warm New England weather, the Class of 2009 became Ensigns and began the transition from cadet to deck watch officer, engineering watch officer, marine inspector, SAR controller or pilot. Family and friends gathered to witness the rite of passage and Secretary Napolitano provided perfect remarks. The Secretary announced the publication of the first revision of Coast Guard Publication One, our basic organizational doctrine. You will hear more about the ceremony and the revision to "Pub One" in subsequent posts.



[Coast Guard Academy Class of 2009 graduating and divesting themselves of cadet life](#)

ADM A

Posted at [5/20/2009 05:25:00 PM](#) [1 comment](#)

Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)



## Notice to Readers -- Comment Policy Change

Guest Post from RDML Mary Landry, Director of Governmental and Public Affairs.

Fellow Guardians,

Very soon we will launch the new Coast Guard Service blog, The Coast Guard Compass. This step forward is a direct result of the benefits we have seen in our short entry into social media and the organizational benefits for our service by institutionalizing social media into our organizational culture.

As we roll out the Compass, we will be revising the comment policy for official Coast Guard blogs (see the new comment policy below). The main difference between the new policy and the old is that the anonymous comment feature will be disabled. We want to have a conversation that encourages the open and honest discourse that is elevated when relationships are built among readers. Encouraging people to use their name, or at least a consistent user name (pseudonym), is one way to do this.

When posting comments, I hope that all of our readers take time to think about the [Guardian Ethos](#) and our core values. This is not to say that comments that disagree with the Coast Guard, or that have a contrary opinion will not be posted. We want you to be honest. We want you to help us be the best Coast Guard we can be for you, but we must achieve this in a polite, professional and constructive manner.

As we move forward in social media, I hope you will continue to read and continue to comment. Your conversation with us is important; we are your Coast Guard...what you say matters.

The policy reads as follows:

We welcome your comments on postings at all Coast Guard sites/journals. These are sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard to provide a forum to talk about our work providing maritime safety, security and stewardship for the American people to secure the homeland, save lives and property, protect the environment, and promote economic prosperity. Please note: Anonymous comments have been disabled for this journal. It is preferred that you use your real name when posting a comment. **WE WILL POST THE NAME YOU ENTER WHEN YOU SUBMIT YOUR COMMENT.** Also, you are welcome to use Open ID or other user technologies that may be available.

All comments submitted are moderated and will be reviewed before posting. The Coast Guard retains the discretion to determine which comments it will post and which it will not. We expect all contributors to be respectful. We will not post comments that contain personal attacks of any kind; refer to Coast Guard or other employees by name; contain offensive terms that target specific ethnic or racial groups, or contain vulgar language. We will also not post comments that are spam, are clearly off topic or that promote services or products.

We will make our best effort to promptly post those comments that are consistent with the Comment Policy, but given the need to manage federal resources, moderating and posting of comments will usually occur only during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. Comments submitted outside of business hours will be read and posted as quickly as possible.

For anyone who isn't aware, OpenID it is a decentralized standard for user authentication and access. It allows users to log onto multiple services with the same login name (digital id). So, it replaces the common login process and lets a user log in once and gain access to a plethora of online resources while maintaining a secure identification process. OpenID is a great way for our readers who want to share with us their sites and their social media efforts to do so with their comments.

Posted at [5/20/2009 05:00:00 PM](#) [7 comments](#)



Tuesday, May 19, 2009

## Trans-Atlantic Guest Post -- Howth Coast Guard Unit, Ireland

In April when Admiral Allen and MCPO Bowen visited the Irish Coast Guard station in [Howth](#) they were visiting a service with its origins in smuggling patrols of the 1700's and which has survived through rebellion, world wars, a civil war and the turbulent formation of the Irish State. Up to 1922 when Ireland was ruled by Britain the service was part of HM Coast Guard. HM Coast Guard itself was formed out of the Preventative Water Guard service in 1822 taking responsibility for saving lives, protecting shipwrecks from looters and preventing illegal trade. To achieve these roles a series of stations were strategically built around the coast of Ireland many of which are still standing today. By 1856 smuggling levels were dropping so the lifesaving role and a Naval reserve role became more significant to the Coast Guard.

On the formation of the Irish Free State, Saorstát Éireann, in 1922 the Coast Life Saving Service was established taking over the life saving duties previously performed by HM Coast Guard. Volunteers used the original equipment left behind by the British. Many stationhouses and living quarters were destroyed by rebels in the struggle for Irish freedom and during the subsequent Civil War as they were seen as symbols of authority. The rescue teams made up of local people were left to use boat houses and rocket cart houses as stations, many of which are still in use today. The service continued unbroken by politics, economics and often the lack of support from an emerging new state. Through many guises the service was subsequently renamed the Coast and Cliff Rescue Service, and later became the Irish Marine Emergency Service before being renamed the Irish Coast Guard in 2001.



[Howth Coast Guard Ireland](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

The [Irish Coast Guard\(IRCG\)](#) is a vastly different service today. It is responsible for Search and Rescue, pollution and salvage response in the marine environment, the marine communications network and marine safety awareness. The IRCG co-ordinates Search and Rescue(SAR) through its Maritime Rescue Co-Ordination Centre (MRCC) in Dublin and Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSC) at Malin Head, Co. Donegal and Valentia Island, Co. Kerry. With it's full time staff each MRCC or MRSC is responsible for SAR operations and the day to day running of its allocated Division. The IRCG now contains many declared SAR resources such as the Coast Guard volunteer coastal units capable of search, cliff and coast rescue, lifeboats provided by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution(RNLI) and Community Inshore Rescue Organisations and four SAR medium lift helicopters strategically placed around the coast.

Howth Coast Guard was formed in 1999 after a break of seventy seven years of no Coast Guard service based in Howth. It is one of the network of 55 teams with 1000 volunteers based on the coast and inland waterways of Ireland. Each unit is manned by local crews and has a rescue and equipment capability based on it's surrounding response area and other resources which are based locally. We in Howth have 26 volunteers on a pager callout system and are part of the '999'(911) first response emergency service. As volunteers we are from all walks of life with full time jobs from which we have to leave when required for Coast Guard emergency duties and are on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a ten minute response time. We are a search, cliff rescue and patrol boat station and have become one of the busiest units in the country due to our location in Dublin and our proximity to a busy commercial and leisure marine area. We exercise on average once a week and have about 50 callouts a year. We also undertake foot and boat pro-active safety patrols at weekends and busy times. Howth is a popular visitor area during the summer so we have plenty to keep us busy. Callouts range from investigating simple flare sightings to missing person searches and the recovery of bodies.

On station at our disposal we have a 4x4 vehicle, equipment and crew van, an all terrain quad bike and trailer, a 22ft twin engine Rib, full cliff rescue gear and all medical kit needed to assist casualties on the cliff and coast.

It was an honour to have Admiral Allen and MCPO Bowen visit us in Howth and for us to give them an insight to the capabilities and dedication of volunteer crews in the service of local communities. In this short passage I can only give a very brief glimpse of what we do in the Irish Coast Guard service but I hope it sparks your curiosity to investigate further. Check out our [unit website](#) at where you'll find lots of information on what we do along with plenty of images of the team in action. If you do make it to Howth come along and visit us and you'll be made very welcome. Thanks to Admiral Allen for this opportunity to guest on his iCommandant.

Colin Murray  
Officer in Charge  
Howth Coast Guard Unit,  
Howth,  
Co Dublin,  
Ireland.

Posted at [5/19/2009 08:41:00 PM](#) [2](#) comments



Monday, May 18, 2009

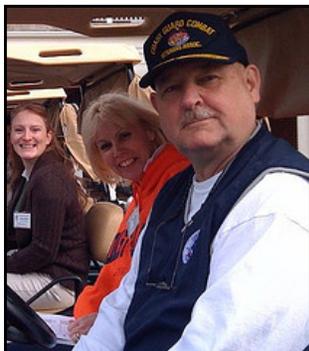
### CG Foundation Golf Tournament

Shipmates,  
Today I took some time out and thanked the many folks who participated in the Annual Coast Guard Foundation Golf Tournament. This annual

event raises funds for scholarships for Coast Guard dependents. RADM (ret) Ed Gilbert has worked tirelessly to make this event a success, year after year. Yes, he is the "Gilbert" of the Gilbert I and II studies. But ... his real love in life is golf. He has tried for years to convert a particular former middle linebacker to an accomplished golfer and has failed miserably (plus I'm left handed). Luckily for the Coast Guard, his efforts to raise funds for education have been extraordinarily successful. So, I ventured out to the links at the Army Navy Country Club in Fairfax, Va and they even let me drive the cart (shown in photo). The weather was terrific. Our great thanks to CAPT Williams USCG (ret) and his family for their support. Also, we thank Anne Brengle and Patti Gross from the Coast Guard Foundation. Bob Petko put in a great effort as well. I will ask Ed Gilbert to make a comment or guest post to recognize anyone I may have forgotten.

BZ to all who were involved.

ADM A



[Golf Day CG Foundation](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [5/18/2009 07:30:00 PM](#) [2](#) comments



## Modernization Update -- Sensing and Adapting

Guest Post from [RDML Tom Ostebo, CG-4](#)

In response to numerous changes in Coast Guard senior management requirements and driven by several external factors such as the financial crisis, priorities of the new administration, efficiency reviews and the continuously evolving modernization efforts, DCMS is implementing a number of personnel changes to ensure that the Coast Guard remains on target with the [modernization](#) and [LTPIO initiatives](#). In addition to these personnel changes CG-4 is responding with a few key structural changes to the planned modernized organization. These key changes include closing out the CG-4b (legacy Deepwater Naval Engineering shop) and replacing it with an official Ship Design Manager who will work within CG-9 on behalf of the Technical Authority to ensure that requirements, ship specifications and designs meet the needs of the Coast Guard. Furthermore, we will be reducing the number of Product Lines at the [SFLC](#) from 7 to either 5 or 6, depending on final review. These two efforts will allow the Coast Guard to more efficiently use existing resources and at the same time ensure that we properly support out surface fleet and do not lose technical oversight of key acquisition projects like OPC and FRC.

Because of these changes and in order to fill other key assignments that remained vacant after this years assignment process I have asked Captain Dennis Blackall to fill the Ship Design Manager's position and he has accepted. This position will provide direct technical authority input to our surface forces acquisition projects (NSC, OPC, FRC-B, RB-M). This critical position demands a great breadth of naval engineering knowledge and technical acumen. As the senior O-6 in the naval engineering community, I am counting on Captain Blackall's outstanding technical competence and career experience to fill this critical assignment.

The Personnel Service Center has solicited for the position of Commanding Officer, SFLC and as a result DCMS has approved the selection of Capt Mark Butt to assume command of the SFLC. Capt Butt is the current CO of the Asset Project Office and is a previous Executive Officer of the Aviation Logistics Center. He possesses the experience and knowledge to continue Captain Blackall's work in realigning business practices and processes for naval engineering.

These changes will strengthen the link between the technical authority and the acquisition program manager. Our ability to adjust and fine tune our capabilities and competencies to optimize our performance is an indication that we are learning to better sense and adapt to our internal and external environments. It also speaks to the tremendous flexibility and dedication of our people to step up for the needs of the Service. Given the magnitude of the assignments managed this past year and given the myriad of unforeseen changes effecting the Coast Guard, revisiting our initial assumptions and design was inevitable.

I am supremely confident that [Modernization](#) will enable us to maximize our effectiveness as an organization. Naturally, a change of this magnitude will not be without challenges. I call on each and every one of you to embrace our new business practices, exercise patience, and provide leadership at every level. These changes are a small piece of a broader initiative to leverage the skills and expertise that reside in our workforce to the maximum benefit of the Coast Guard and ultimately to the public.

Semper Paratus,  
RDML Tom Ostebo  
Chief Engineer

Posted at [5/18/2009 09:32:00 AM](#) [0](#) comments



Sunday, May 17, 2009

## Updated -- Budget Hearing Summary

A [video from the hearing](#) is now available, as well as opening statements from [Chairman Oberstar](#) and [Chairman Cummings](#).

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For those not on Twitter, here is the collection of tweets from our [hearing today](#). Written testimony is available on [Commandant's Corner](#). You are also strongly encouraged to review the online [Posture Statement](#) for detailed information on the Coast Guard's performance and budget request.

NOTE: These are in reverse chronology

#CoastGuard Rep. Coble: would reauth of PPV be an important first step for improving qual of life? MCPOCG: affirmative

#CoastGuard Rep. Lobiondo: Need to know what we can fix this year to improve member/family support parity with DOD. USCG will provide.

#CoastGuard the way to control costs in acquisition is through 1. Open competiton, 2. Fixed price 3. Remove risk from govt.

#CoastGuard Floor-level funding for shore-infrastructure ought to be \$100mil annually. Rcvd shore AC&I funds in ARRA and \$270+ mil in CSDACAA funding.

#CoastGuard PPV potential for housing program is more about authorization than appropriation.

#CoastGuard MCPOCG talking about CG housing problems and potential of PPV program as a solutions

#CoastGuard Critical to controlling NSC costs is to not allow a break in the production line between hulls 4 & 5

#CoastGuard Rep Fazio concerned about MMC medical backlog. Comdt: Fix is in place and backlog being reduced. NMC will benefit Merchant Marine in long run.

#CoastGuard NSC Project costs are under control. NSC #4 and beyond will be fixed-price contracts, signif reduce cost variability and risk.

#CoastGuard good discussion on security requirements and LNG facilities and vessels and who bares that cost? Mandated CG security erodes op flexibility.

#CoastGuard Congress concerned with CG's \$1Bill shore infrastructure backlog.

#CoastGuard Marine Transportation System is lifeblood of our national economy. Carries 78% of intl trade and activity trends on increase.

#CoastGuard FY10 Funding request will provide an additional 74 marine safety positions. <http://ow.ly/6Eo2>

#CoastGuard Met yesterday with MARAD, TRANSCOM, 5th Fleet & US shippers yest to discuss new MSD for operating off HOA.

#CoastGuard Signing of Arctic NSPD sets interagency policy. National efforts would be enhanced with UNCLOS ratification. <http://ow.ly/6Es9>

#CoastGuard We can no longer do more with less. Instead we will allocate our resources to buy down risk in the most vulnerable areas.

#CoastGuard Modernization remains Job #1 <http://ow.ly/6Em4>

#CoastGuard Written statement available <http://ow.ly/6EmQ>

#Coast Guard Subject matter for today's hearing available online <http://ow.ly/6Fk2> You may be able to watch live from this site at 2 p.m.

Posted at 5/17/2009 03:15:00 PM [0 comments](#) 



Friday, May 15, 2009

## Bike To Work Day 2009 - in front of Coast Guard Headquarters

Shipmates,  
We took our forces ashore today and stormed Washington DC for Bike To Work Day. About thirty five "bikers" rode from home to Freedom Plaza near the White House. After some festivities and remarks we gathered forces and rode to Headquarters as a team. My thanks to those who participated, and a special thanks for our security detail that guided us safely across town.  
ADM A

Posted at 5/15/2009 06:47:00 PM @comments



Bike to Work Day 2009 - in front of Coast Guard Headquarters  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

## Tweets from the Product Line Managers Academy

Shipmates,

This week Product Line Managers (PLMs) came together from all of the logistics/service centers for a [modernization](#) workshop. The primary objectives of the workshop were to:

- Provide intro to training & tools required for PLMs.
- Establish cultural foundation for PLMs & Support Div Chiefs.
- Gain understanding of Roles & Responsibilities of new logistics centers.

Many Coast Guard senior leaders took the opportunity to speak to the PLMs. I came across one of the participant's "tweets," which I thought very succinctly, in 140 characters or less, captured the key messages. These were provided by CDR Dan Taylor (or "Simplydan") who is the CG-LIMS project manager in the acquisitions directorate.

In reverse chronology:

- VADM Pearson: If you think everything is smooth & comfortable, you're not going fast enough. #logmod
- DCMS: 3 priorities: connection to operator, integration across msn spt org'n, process discipline / examination. #logmod
- CG-8: Nothing more fundamental to modern'n of CG than getting logistics transformation right. #logmod
- CG-4: Everyone in room (LC/SC leaders) has opportunity to change the CG forever. #logmod
- "All we've done so far is take first step on very long march." #logmod
- CG-4: units giving up \$ and autonomy, get predictable reliability from system in return. #logmod
- CG-4: Logistics Centers need to be as demanding on system as operator is on LC #logmod
- CG-4: IT (info tech) is going to be biggest rock in PLM's pack. Biggest thing we can do is help define reqts.#logmod
- CG-4: knowing cost structure and work structure is critical for product line. Must know cost per x metrics#logmod
- SFCL concerns from breakout: supporting deployed assets, supporting NTNO. #logmod
- Heard clearly that robust warranty tracking process must be supported by new logistics system.#logmod
- Heard loud and clear from every LC/SC that CG-LIMS must be system that is robust to limited connectivity.#logmod

I couldn't have said it better myself.

Next week, CDR Taylor will share an update on the CG-LIMS project.

ADM A

Posted at 5/15/2009 03:13:00 PM @comments



Thursday, May 14, 2009

## Affinity Group Participation -- "Not just a check in the box"

Guest Post by CDR Gary Thomas, Commanding Officer, LSU Wildwood

As the result of input from the [Diversity Advisory Council](#), late last summer Admiral Allen directed in [ALCOAST 391/08](#) that all Commanding Officers in the rank of LCDR and above attend an affinity group's national-level meeting (eg. - [National Naval Officers Association](#), [Association of Naval Services Officers](#), [Coast Guard Women's Leadership Association](#), [Blacks in Government](#), etc.) during their command tour.



[ANSO Conference](#)  
Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

Recently I had the opportunity to fulfill that obligation by attending the Association of Naval Service Officers (ANSO) national conference in San Diego, CA. Having gone there to "meet the requirement," I can say without hesitation that I left there feeling I had just attended one of the most educational and informative conferences I've attended in my career. From exceptional presentations to practical workshops, ANSO put together a spectacular event that provided exceptional training and mentoring opportunities.

While ANSO was founded to assist officer recruitment and retention efforts in the Hispanic community, the conference

was filled with men and women, officer and enlisted, from the USCG, USN and USMC who were Hispanic, African-America, Pacific Islander, and yes, white males like me. This allowed for a breadth of personal and professional view points and discussions that few people in the Coast Guard encounter on a regular basis at their own units. And no matter how good a leader you are, no matter how informed you think you are on issues of diversity or how inclusive your command is, there is simply nothing that has the same impact as discussing the issues with those directly impacted. It is one thing to listen or read reports that indicate white males will no longer be the majority in a few decades and it is quite another to discuss the implications of that fact with the young men and women who will help shape the sea services between now and then.

My original plans had been to attend with my PXO, LCDR Rene X Casarez, and one of my shipmates. When the unit's schedule changed and the member of our crew couldn't attend with us, I released our travel order number to ISC San Pedro who had inquired if there was any additional funding (CG Headquarters sponsored nearly 60 individuals). As a result, four additional CG members received funding to attend various events over the four day conference. As useful as my attendance was to me, let me relate what some of these members gained from the conference:

"I thought every single military member I approached throughout the day had useful and important information to pass on my way in terms of officer promotions, leadership, integrity, etc." AET3 Michael Sarniak, Sector San Diego

"I wasn't able to stay for all of the events...but the other seminars and group sessions were very useful in utilizing my leadership skills and experiences to build a more unified and diverse Coast Guard." DC2 Brian Lee, Sector San Diego

"I have to say that the information I got was invaluable and the opportunity to associate with officers in general in a non-formal way [was] definitely worth the trip. It all gave me a good sense of what to expect in and after OCS. ...networking was the most beneficial aspect of the symposium for me. I would recommend it to anyone who wants to become an officer." MST2 Christopher Smith, Sector San Diego

"This provided an optimal opportunity for JOs to gain the senior enlisted leadership perspective on leadership expectations, pitfalls, and successes for both JOs and those enlisted members who are considering accession into the officer ranks." LT Monica Anderson, ISC San Pedro

The Commandant's direction to attend one of the affinity group's national-level meetings is spot on, but don't think of it as check box to be marked off. Whether it is having the opportunity to listen to and ask questions of people like General James F. Amos, Assistant Commandant of the Marines, who described the six most important things he's learned in his career, both in peace and war; listening to Sgt. Maj. Steven J. Lara, USMC -- a veteran of multiple tours to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom - discuss the things that make junior officers successful or cause them to fail; or have lunch with the USN CDR wearing the purple heart ("a minor disagreement with an IED"), think of these conferences as an excellent opportunity to learn, grow and better understand. I know you'll return to your command better for having attended

Posted at [5/14/2009 03:15:00 PM](#) @[comments](#) 



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## Photo Follow-Up on Bernie Webber Memorial

These great photos from this [weekend's memorial service](#) are courtesy of PA2 Etta Smith:



WELLFLEET, Mass.- Miriam Webber, the wife of Bernard Webber for 59 years, accepts a ceremonial flag from Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen in honor of her deceased husband during a graveside ceremony in Wellfleet, Mass., Saturday, May 9, 2009. Webber began his 20 year career in the Coast Guard in 1946 and was the coxswain of a 36-foot motorized, wooden lifeboat during the historic rescue of the crew of the Pendleton, a 520-foot tanker, off the coast of Chatham, Mass., Feb. 18, 1952, where 32 lives were saved in the midst of 60-foot seas and winds exceeding 50 miles per hour. (U.S. Coast Guard photo/Petty Officer 2nd Class Etta Smith)



WELLFLEET, Mass.- Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen looks on as the family of Bernard Webber leaves a memorial service held in Webber's honor at the Wellfleet United Methodist Church in Wellfleet, Mass., Saturday, May 9, 2009. Webber began his 20 year career in the Coast Guard in 1946 and was the coxswain of a 36-foot motorized, wooden lifeboat during the historic rescue of the crew of the Pendleton, a 520-foot tanker, off the coast of Chatham, Mass., Feb. 18, 1952, where 32 lives were saved in the midst of 60-foot seas and winds exceeding 50 miles per hour. (U.S. Coast Guard photo/Petty Officer 2nd Class Etta Smith)



WELLFLEET, Mass.- A life ring marks the headstone of Bernard Webber during a graveside ceremony for Bernard Webber in Wellfleet, Mass., Saturday, May 9, 2009. . Webber began his 20 year career in the Coast Guard in 1946 and was the coxswain of a 36-foot motorized, wooden lifeboat during the historic rescue of the crew of the Pendleton, a 520-foot tanker, off the coast of Chatham, Mass., Feb. 18, 1952, where 32 lives were saved in the midst of 60-foot seas and winds exceeding 50 miles per hour. (U.S. Coast Guard photo/Petty Officer 2nd Class Etta Smith)

Posted at [5/14/2009 10:38:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#)



Wednesday, May 13, 2009

## Fairwinds, Bernie Webber

Shipmates,  
On Saturday (9 May) Pam and I were enormously proud and touched to be with the family of Bernie Webber at his memorial service and internment at Wellfleet, MA. Following the retirement of the CG 44301 on Friday, we paid tribute to Bernie and his legacy near Chatham, MA where he carved his named in Coast Guard history when he rescued 32 survivors from the Tanker PENDLETON that was broken in half in 1952. He and his crew earned the Gold Life Saving Medal that day. We thank Miriam Webber and the entire family for letting us be part of the day. A special thanks to the Chief Petty Officers on Cape Cod and the Food Service Specialists who donated their time to provide a superior reception afterward.



[Former Coast Guard Station, Nauset, Cape Cod National Seashore](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Bernie,  
Pam and I drove out to Coast Guard Beach at Nauset and thought of you when we took this picture. See you some day on the other side.

ADM A

WELLFLEET -- With full military honors, the Coast Guard memorialized one of its most storied heroes Saturday. Former Station Chatham commanding officer Bernie Webber, who orchestrated the greatest small boat rescue in Coast Guard history in 1952, was laid to rest in a family plot in Wellfleet.

Among those who paid tribute to Webber was Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Thad Allen, who attended the service in the Wellfleet Methodist Church, surrounded by an entourage of aides and secret service members. Small boat operations are "the DNA of the Coast Guard," Allen said, and Webber earned his reputation by taking on an impossible mission that saved 32 men from a stricken tanker off Chatham. "Bernie Webber knew how to create the 'art of possible,' where none existed," the commandant said. Webber died at his home in Florida on Jan. 24 at the age of 80.

Together with Andrew Fitzgerald, Irving Maske and Richard Livesey, Webber braved mountainous seas and driving snow and located the stern section of the Pendleton, rescuing all but one of the castaways and bringing them miraculously back over the Chatham Bar in the wooden rescue boat CG36500. The rescue gained Webber national

fame, and forever changed his career and his life. Webber's son-in-law, Lt. Col Bruce Hamilton, said his father-in-law once gave him some advice on being a hero.

"He said, 'Don't ever let them pin that name on you. It'll ruin your life,'" Hamilton recalled. Notoriety followed Webber every day of his life, and it was only his love of the Coast Guard that compelled him to share his story time and time again, he said.

Webber was eulogized not only as a dedicated serviceman, but as a man who loved his family above all else. He met his wife, Miriam, on a blind date, and the two were married five months later. In his retirement, Webber's focus was on family, which was "much more important to him than anything else," best friend George Rongner wrote in his eulogy. Webber was also a lifelong animal lover, and in his retirement worked for the National Audubon Society and Outward Bound; prior to that, he was also a tugboat captain.

A portion of Webber's ashes were buried in a family plot in Wellfleet; the rest were scattered by the Coast Guard in the waters of Chatham Harbor in a private ceremony.

Posted at [5/13/2009 08:56:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Tuesday, May 12, 2009

## iCommandant on Twitter

We are going to try tweeting on the FY-2010 budget hearing with the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation. The hearing starts at 2 p.m. You can follow user [iCommandantUSCG](#).

Posted at [5/12/2009 03:30:00 PM](#) [3 comments](#) 



Monday, May 11, 2009

## Sea Power and America's Security: Sea Services Chiefs Panel -- Video Available

Last week I again had the pleasure of joining my colleagues to discuss the nation's maritime security challenges. This time at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space Expo 2009. The panel included the [CNO](#), [Commandant of the Marine Corps](#), and the acting [Maritime Administrator](#). The topic was "Sea Power and America's Security."

This was a great session, about 90 minutes long, with some really frank and candid conversation on some of the more serious issues and challenges we are dealing with now and trying to prepare for in the future. Half of the time was dedicated to Q&A from the audience. A video of the entire session is available below.

For my part, in the introduction I briefly covered the following topics:

- \* [Current performance](#).
- \* Operations on the Southwest Border, and more specifically, the importance of [counter-drug operations](#) off Mexico's southern border.
- \* The [Cooperative Maritime Strategy](#) and its importance especially considering how the Coast Guard, Navy and Marines all now "meet in the littorals".
- \* The status of [operations off Iraq](#).
- \* The status and our role in the QDR & NOC.
- \* Coast Guard force [capacity challenges](#).
- \* Coast Guard in [theater security cooperation](#).
- \* Acquisition update, including status of [NSC](#) and [FRC](#) platforms.
- \* Importance of [modernization](#).

It was a great round of Q&A. This was clearly an informed audience with real interest in these critical topics. The discussion specific to the Coast Guard covered:

- \* [Countering piracy](#), specifically questions about the possibility of arming vessels or employing convoys, legal frameworks, etc.
- \* [Arctic policy](#), specifically the status/condition of our polar icebreaking fleet and the revised National Security Policy Directive issued in January as well as the need to [ratify UNCLOS](#).
- \* Coast Guard impressions of the LCS platform and future plans for the leased PC-179's being operated by the Coast Guard.
- \* [Maritime Domain Awareness](#) and the thread of continuity between the vehicles used in the more significant maritime security threats. Specifically, small unregulated and/or unregistered vessels including [self-propelled semi-submersibles](#), the [maritime conveyance for the Mumbai attack](#) and vessels involved in piracy.

Posted at [5/11/2009 08:40:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

Labels: ["Defense Operations"](#), [acquisition](#), [cooperative strategy](#), [Maritime Security](#), [MDA](#), [piracy](#)



Sunday, May 10, 2009

## Coast Guard Photos: 44-foot motor-life boat decommissioning ceremony

Shipmates,

It was a bittersweet day on Friday, 8 May, 2009. Motor Life Boat CG-44301, the last remaining 44-footer in service was relieved at Station Chatham on Cape Cod. We were honored to have a great friend of the Coast Guard with us, Representative William Delahunt, one of our Guardians in Congress. Master Chief Jack Downey provided his unique oral history and was the highlight of the event. Our Ancient Keeper CWO(BOSN) Kevin Galvin was in attendance. Master Chief Bowen and RADM Dale Gabel (D1) represented the Coast Guard as well. The 44' will be replaced by the very capable 42-foot near shore lifes boat. As I have said, we must honor the past, not operate in it. Farewell good and faithful servant, CG 44301.



[Coast Guard Photos: 44-foot motor-life boat decommissioning ceremony](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

ADM A

Posted at [5/10/2009 11:11:00 AM](#) [@comments](#)



Friday, May 8, 2009

## Two Cutters at a Crossroads and the HEC/NSC-type Mission Demand

Today we formally [accepted U.S. Coast Guard Cutter BERTHOLF](#) into the operating fleet. This is a historic juncture in Coast Guard history with the intersection of the proud legacy of the [Hamilton-Class High Endurance Cutter \(HEC\)](#) and promising future of the [National Security Cutter \(NSC\)](#). This is a time that has been long in coming and one that has taken tireless effort from literally thousands of members of Team Coast Guard.



[WMSL meets the WHEC](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

While we acknowledge this significant milestone, we still have [years of work ahead](#) to transition from the venerable HEC -- with 40+ years of noble service; to the NSC -- the most capable platform the Coast Guard has ever built. All the while, we expect the demand for HEC/NSC-type missions to increase. These missions call for a globally deployable offshore platform that is simultaneously interoperable with U.S. and allied navies; and independently operable, with the range and endurance to maintain an offshore presence. Recent examples of this mission demand include:

- \* Counter-drug operations, like those that reduce the flow across Mexico's southern border and ultimately into the United States, as shown by [USCGC SHERMAN](#).
- \* Counter-piracy operations like those being conducted by CTF-151, including [USCGC BOUTWELL](#).
- \* [Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported](#) fishing activity that threatens the sustainability of global fish stocks, like those disrupted by [USCGC RUSH working with the Republic of Kiribati](#).
- \* Search and Rescue operations offshore and in high-latitudes, like those by the [USCGC MUNRO](#) that saved 42 crew members of the F/V Alaska Ranger.
- \* Defense operations and international engagement like those conducted routinely in support of U.S. Combatant Commanders, including [PACOM](#), [CENTCOM](#), [AFRICOM](#), [EUCOM](#) and [SOUTHCOM](#).
- \* Marine Environmental Protection offshore and in high-latitudes, like [USCGC RUSH](#) in the case of the M/V Cougar Ace.

In many cases, the Coast Guard is the sole U.S. Government entity with legal authority, operational competencies and resource capability to conduct these missions. Over the next few years the replacement, or more accurately the enhancement, from the HEC to the NSC will ensure our ability to execute these critical missions for continued safety, security and prosperity of our Nation.

ADM A

Posted at [5/08/2009 11:40:00 PM](#) [@comments](#)



## Coast Guard Recapitalization Milestone -- Formal Acceptance of USCGC BERTHOLF

Guest post by [RADM Gary Blore](#), Assistant Commandant for Acquisition (CG-9):

Today, May 8, 2009, is an important milestone for our Coast Guard Recapitalization efforts: the Final Acceptance of our first [National Security Cutter, Bertholf \(WMSL 750\)](#). Final acceptance marks the completion of the acquisition warranty period for Bertholf and the cutter's readiness to transition from an acquisition project to the operations and sustainment phase of its service life. [Preliminary Acceptance](#) occurred on May 8, 2008.



BertEagle.jpg

Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

Final acceptance is a major project milestone in our deliberative acquisition process. As part of that process, our contracting officer has reviewed and adjudicated all contractual requirements to ensure compliance with the contract. That process also included review and recommendations by Bertholf's commanding officer (CAPT Stadt); a Final Acceptance Team led by the operational sponsor and comprised of experts from my directorate and our technical authorities (CG- 1, 4, and 6); and, the Coast Guard's Executive Acceptance Board comprised of senior leaders from Acquisition, our technical authorities and operations. Based on recommendations from these individuals and groups, the Vice Commandant, who also serves as the Component Acquisition Executive, recommended proceeding to final acceptance.

Since Bertholf's preliminary acceptance a year ago, her crew has successfully achieved numerous post-delivery and operational evaluation milestones. All of the eight identified pre-delivery deficiencies (or "starred" trial cards) which would have significantly degraded the ship's capability or safety have been [addressed and closed](#), as well as the overwhelming majority of the less serious identified issues.

Other significant accomplishments include a ready for sea evaluation; homeport transit through the Panama Canal; commissioning; [flight deck certification and aircraft dynamic interface trials](#); unmanned aerial systems testing; [combat systems qualifications](#); and, information assurance and TEMPEST testing.

As Bertholf now moves into further Coast Guard operation, it will continue following the previously approved and scheduled post-delivery plan, including mission systems and weapons testing; follow on manpower and training analysis; and installation of additional communications and sensor capabilities.

This final acceptance is the result of the hard work and dedication of numerous internal and external stakeholders, but I would like to specifically recognize the crew of Bertholf. They have done so much to make this possible, and it gives me great pleasure to see the National Security Cutter project achieve this milestone, and the Bertholf come to life.

Posted at [5/08/2009 04:59:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



## HEC Sustainment Update

Shipmates,

I last updated you on our [HEC sustainment efforts](#) in December and thought it was time for another update.

This week both the GALLATIN and DALLAS were drydocked. Last week, [RADM Justice \(CG-7\)](#) and [RDML Ostebo \(CG-4\)](#) went down to inspect the progress of their repairs. Below are their observations:

*RADM Justice: I visited GALLATIN and DALLAS at Detyens Shipyard in North Charleston yesterday, along with RDML Ostebo, CG-4. We got a first hand look at the extensive renewal work going on both ships, both by the yard workers and the ship's crews. Both ships have comprehensive work lists informed by the new SFLC's modernized business rules that are being aggressively executed. I was particularly impressed by the crew's efforts and results of their projects, and by the scope of difficulty of some of the work items the Yard was tackling. Both ships came out of the water this week for hull work below the water line. I completed my engineering and hull inspections with renewed confidence and high expectations of both cutters returning to Coast Guard operations on schedule.*

*RDML Ostebo: Having walked through both DALLAS and GALLATIN last fall, I was quite impressed and excited last Tuesday to observe the progress that is already apparent in the material condition of these cutters. The hard work of the crews and the SFLC's shoreside support personnel has already yielded significant improvements. There is still much work to be done, and having witnessed the progress to date I am confident that the hard work of our personnel will be optimized within the modernized business practices of the SFLC.*

*DALLAS and GALLATIN were drydocked this week and we will now focus on the structural and watertight integrity of each cutter. These efforts will return these critical assets to an operational status, however it is abundantly clear to me that continued sustainment of these ships will require all those involved to embrace and work together to fully implement the modernized business rules of the surface forces support community.*

We continue to focus the new organizational strength of our [SFLC](#) on HEC Sustainment. I am mindful of the

challenges we face across the fleet. It was my privilege to visit with the crew of the [Coast Guard Cutter BOUTWELL](#) last week during my trip to Djibouti and the 5th Fleet AOR. BOUTWELL, like [DALLAS before her](#), is doing a fantastic job on her [out-of-hemisphere deployment in support of DOD](#). However, she is having her share of maintenance challenges, including a major casualty to a turbine requiring a 3-week maintenance period to replace the turbine. I spent some time talking to them specifically about this, and how we are going to sustain the HEC as we phase in the NSC, while improving our support to all of our cutter assets through [modernization](#) and [logistics transformation](#). We were able capture portions of the discussion as I walked through the engineroom with LCDR Ben Fleming, the Engineering Officer, and his "main prop" gang. You can watch this discussion on [CGVI](#), or below:

I recently [testified](#) to the homeland security subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee and much of the discussion revolved around the condition of the 378's. You can see the posters we displayed at the hearing here / [HECposter.pdf](#), and a resulting story in the [Navy Times](#).

ADM A

Posted at [5/08/2009 10:07:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 



Thursday, May 7, 2009

## USCG Contracting Career Opportunity Program

Guest Post from Ms. Claire Grady, Acquisition Directorate (CG-9)

When it comes to the Federal acquisition workforce, there is good news and there is bad news. The bad news, there is currently a shortfall in qualified acquisition personnel and that shortfall is only dwarfed by the future forecasts. The good news, there has never been a better time to contemplate a career in acquisition! The Acquisition Directorate has been continually identifying strategies to recruit, retain, and incrementally build a multi-disciplined, certified acquisition workforce. As part of our efforts to develop contracting professionals, RADM Gary T. Blore, Assistant Commandant for Acquisition, initiated and championed an innovative approach to develop and grow the acquisition workforce, the Coast Guard Contracting Career Opportunity Program (CCOP).

This program, modeled after successful programs for civilian personnel, is designed to provide retirement eligible Coast Guard military personnel the formal training and work experience necessary for a future career in contracting. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will earn Federal Acquisition Institute Certification in Contracting (FAC-C) Level II and be highly competitive to transition to the Coast Guard's civilian contracting workforce.

As outlined in the [Solicitation Message](#), the CCOP is a two-year training program targeted to active duty personnel with varying degrees of contracting experience, for example, Chief Storekeepers and Finance and Supply Chief Warrant Officers. I strongly encourage other Coast Guard personnel who are currently filling or who have filled business, program management, and/or Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) positions to apply as well.

To qualify for the program, applicants must:

- \* Be completing their current tour of duty in 2010, be eligible for retirement, and have 17 to 27 years of service with the Coast Guard at the time of their application.
- \* Have a command endorsement and be recommended by their area's servicing Chief of Contracting Office (COCO).
- \* Have a bachelor's degree or at least 24 semester hours in one or a combination of the following areas: accounting, business finance, contracts, economics, industrial management, law, organization and management, purchasing, or

quantitative methods.

\* Possess contracting or procurement-related business and technical competencies.

\* Possess strong leadership skills.

To be considered for the program's inaugural class, candidates must submit their application packages to the CCOP Panel Coordinator no later than May 30, 2009. Selected CCOP participants will be assigned and will report to CG-91 at Coast Guard Headquarters in the summer 2010, where they will be expected to submit their retirement letter one year after reporting.

The CCOP complements existing contracting workforce initiatives currently available to the civilian workforce, including the Coast Guard Career Entry-Level Opportunity (CEO) Program, the Department of Homeland Security Acquisition Professional Program, and the Government-wide Acquisition Management Intern Program. Civilians who possess education and experience similar to that required for the CCOP program and who are interested in pursuing a career as a contract professional are encouraged to apply for these professional contracting programs and for vacant Coast Guard procurement and contracting billets.

The Coast Guard has one of the best contracting workforces in the Federal Government. With the kind of forward thinking that resulted in this new program and our very talented military and civilian business professionals, the Coast Guard will be well positioned to meet the acquisition work force challenges of the future.

For questions regarding the CCOP or the civilian programs, please contact Mr. William Yeager at William.Yeager@uscg.mil.

Posted at 5/07/2009 06:08:00 PM @comments 



Tuesday, May 5, 2009

## Piracy Hearing on Twitter

Rear [Admiral Brian Salerno](#), Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship will be testifying before the [Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation's subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure Safety and Security](#).

You can follow the hearing on [twitter](#) and we will use the hash tag "#piracy"

Posted at 5/05/2009 12:58:00 PM @comments 



## Completion of the Marine Protector-Class CPB Project and a look to the Future

Guest post by RADM Gary Blore, Assistant Commandant for Acquisition:

I had the recent opportunity to visit Bollinger Shipyards in Lockport, Louisiana. The reason for my visit was to celebrate the pending delivery of the 75th [Coastal Patrol Boat](#) (CPB), SEA FOX, and the completion of the successful 87-foot Marine Protector-class CPB project.

It was an honor to share the stage with U.S. Senator David Vitter (R-La.), U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (D-La.), Bollinger's CEO and Chairman of the Board Donald "Boysie" Bollinger, Bollinger's Executive Vice President Christopher B. Bollinger, and a representative of their workforce, Mr. L.J. Adams - who has been a shipyard employee for over 40 years.



[Sea Fox Ceremony](#)

Originally uploaded by [icommandant](#)

As I said in my remarks, the CPB has been a proven and essential platform for completing Coast Guard missions through the past decade, and it will continue to be so in the future. Each day, it enables our Coast Guard men and women to successfully interdict illegal drugs and migrants, board and inspect commercial vessels, carry out critical search and rescue operations, and enforce marine and fisheries laws and regulations. Because of their success, several CPBs (like the SEA FOX) have been funded by the U.S. Navy to support important high value naval vessel escort missions.

The success of the CPB is no fluke. It comes as a result of the Coast Guard's commitment to a highly disciplined acquisition culture based on transparent, repeatable processes that deliver the right products to meet operational requirements. This patrol boat acquisition project benefited from a well-written contract with exacting requirements, an efficient shipbuilding company, and one of the finest shipyard workforces in America today.

"We met a good friend, and a good neighbor - the United States Coast Guard," L.J. Adams recalled being told decades ago by company leadership, when the shipyard was awarded the contract to build their first Coast Guard patrol boat.

The spirit of this sentiment has lived on - indeed, the community of Lockport, and all of Louisiana, can be very proud of the Marine Protector Class Project which was completed at cost, on schedule, and delivered a patrol boat that met all

operational requirements.

The Coast Guard Acquisition Directorate followed the same disciplined process to determine the award of the upcoming Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter. In a major step forward for fleet modernization last September, the Coast Guard selected Bollinger's proposal as the most viable solution and best value to the government, and awarded them a contract for the detailed design and construction of the first [Sentinel-class Patrol Boat](#), the successor to [the 110-foot Island-class patrol boats](#).

Patrol boats are the backbone of the Coast Guard and are critically needed. I am proud of the Coast Guard's Project Resident Office's work with Bollinger to bring the Marine-protector class patrol boats into the service. The same core Coast Guard acquisition team that oversaw the CPB project will also oversee the Sentinel-class Patrol Boat.

The Sentinel-class cutters will become the most mission capable patrol boat the Coast Guard has ever operated. Capable of speeds greater than 28 knots, these 154-foot cutters will be crewed by 22 people; armed with one stabilized, remotely operated 25mm chain gun, and multiple .50 caliber machine guns. They will be able to perform independently for at least five days at sea, be underway for 2,500 hours per year, and have C4ISR interoperable with both the DHS and DOD.

Senator David Vitter had nothing but kind words for the Coast Guard. "Day in and day out they serve all of us - they serve our nation extremely well," praised Sen. Vitter. "Thank you, U.S. Coast Guard, for everything you do - and thank you for this great project!"

Posted at [5/05/2009 10:29:00 AM](#) [@comments](#) 



Monday, May 4, 2009

## Coast Guard Modernization Update: Coast Guard Health, Safety and Work-Life Support Activity Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

A guest post from [RDML Daniel Neptun](#), Commander, [CG Personnel Service Center](#)

Shipmates,

Last week the Coast Guard held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new [Health, Safety and Work-Life Support Activity \(HSWL SUPACT\)](#) in Norfolk, VA. Establishment of the HSWL SUPACT marks the first time in Coast Guard history that management of health, safety, and work-life services will be unified into a consolidated service line, allowing for a system that is flexible and responsive to rapidly changing requirements.



[HSWL Establishment](#)

Originally uploaded by [iCommandant](#)

Commanded by Captain Gary Bruce, the HSWL SUPACT is located in the Main Street Tower building, in Norfolk, VA. It is composed of four functional divisions in Norfolk, VA, a West Coast detachment in Oakland, CA and will eventually include 13 subordinate detached units providing services to CG units and personnel world-wide. This organization will include 109 U.S. Public Health Service members, 497 active duty Coast Guard members, 19 Coast Guard Reserve members and 149 civilian employees, stationed from Cape Cod, MA to San Diego, CA and Kodiak, AK to San Juan, PR who will ensure access to health, safety, and work-life services in support of all CG missions.

Some of the primary functions of the HSWL SUPACT will include:

- \* Serving as the virtual Coast Guard "Military Treatment Facility" in the TRICARE system;
- \* Ensuring and coordinating access to and delivery of health, safety, and work-life services;
- \* Implementing Coast Guard and national defense emergency medical, health, and sanitation policies and plans;
- \* Planning, developing, and administering systems and processes for the delivery of comprehensive health, safety, and work-life services at the local level;
- \* Maintaining communication with Headquarters, Operations Command, Force Readiness Command, as well as district staffs and unit commanding officers to ensure the exchange of information relating to program requirements;
- \* Furnishing information and advice to operating units and beneficiaries regarding eligibility and availability of health, safety, and work-life services;
- \* Ensuring professional qualifications of officer, enlisted, and civilian personnel are maintained through routine evaluation, and the identification of training and continuing education requirements;
- \* Serving as the Coast Guard's intermediate service representative for all TRICARE issues; and,
- \* Providing mobilization planning for all phases of health, safety, and work-life services.

The Personnel Service Center, including its HSWL SUPACT and other commands, is one of five new mission support centers brought on-line to support the field through a bi-level, Product Service Line Manager-driven Business Model. This will create an infrastructure that supports a single point of contact for mission support services, consistent standardized service offerings Coast Guard-wide and clear lines of accountability. This will reduce the burden of mission support for our field operators and enable them to focus more directly on mission execution. By [modernizing](#) our business processes and organizational design, we will help to ensure the Coast Guard meets our call to be "Always Ready."

Posted at 5/04/2009 02:25:00 PM 0 comments 



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### iCommandant



Web Journal of Admiral Thad Allen

Saturday, May 2, 2009

### Dispatches from the Road - Ireland

Shipmates,

This is the last video report from our trip. We stop to refuel in Ireland and took advantage of the stop to meet with the Irish Coast Guard and the Ministry of Transport. FYI, senior maritime officials in Ireland (and the UK) wear business dress, thus the coat and tie. There are additional photos on FLICKR.

In general the trip underscored our value to our DOD Combatant Commanders, the increasing relevance of Coast Guards and Coast Guard-like agencies around the world, the global issue of unregulated small vessels, the need to coordinate our efforts to combat piracy, and the current and future importance of engagement on the African continent.

ADM A



[Video Report - Ireland](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

Posted at [5/02/2009 10:02:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)



Friday, May 1, 2009

### Leadership Spotlight -- Self Awareness and Learning, Part 5 and Final of a Series

Moderator's Note: Click the following for [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#), [Part 4](#).

#### Mentoring as a Key to Self Awareness and Learning

"You learn more quickly under the guidance of experienced teachers. You waste a lot of time going down blind alleys if you have no one to lead you."  
- W. Somerset Maugham (1874 - 1965), in *The Razor's Edge*, published 1943

Over at Wikipedia, [mentoring is described](#) as "a developmental relationship in which a more experienced person helps a less experienced person ... develop in a specified capacity." At its core, this is mentoring, and, as Somerset Maugham notes, it saves a lot of wasted time if you don't have to go down those blind alleys.

The Coast Guard has a [formal mentoring program](#); while the formal mentoring program is a good place to start, I'd like to spend a little time talking about the mentoring relationship, a place where two people can get together to share ideas and learn.

Mentoring, a relationship between a more senior person with a more junior person, can actually provide feedback, counsel, and assistance to both people involved. The classic example is a mentoring relationship between a twenty-something and a much older person. While the older person can provide counsel to the younger about career issues or education, the younger person can help the older, perhaps, with technology issues.

There are certain keys to successful mentoring. Here are a few:

- \* Remember that mentoring is first, and foremost, about the relationship, and relationships take time to build and grow.
- \* Know that any feedback or counsel you receive is meant to help you, not to hurt you.
- \* Quick informal get-togethers are just as important as more formal, longer sessions.
- \* Mentoring relationships don't have to be spelled out; often in a mentoring relationship we don't call it mentoring. Just because it's not called mentoring, doesn't mean it isn't mentoring.
- \* [Successful mentoring relationships](#) act as vehicles that enable people to develop the new behaviors that are necessary for change.
- \* [The junior partner of the mentoring relationship](#) must take an active role in setting goals and parameters for the mentoring partnership.

A mentoring relationship can be just the thing you need to help gain self awareness and learn.

I hope you've enjoyed these posts and have picked up a thing or two for your own leadership toolkit. Remember, mission excellence is nothing, and short-lived, if you're not looking out for your shipmates. May your toolkit be filled to the brim with useful tools.

Semper paratus,  
 ~ VADM Bob Papp

Posted at [5/01/2009 08:01:00 AM](#) [0 comments](#) 

Labels: [Leadership](#)



Thursday, April 30, 2009

## Coast Guard and Offshore Marine Services Association Partnership

Guest post from [RADM Brian Salerno](#) (CG-5), Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety, Security and Stewardship.

Today I had the pleasure of signing a partnership agreement with Mr. Otto Candies, III, of the [Offshore Marine Services Association](#), which entered the Coast Guard and OMSA into a Partnership Action Team.

The purpose of this partnership is to promote safety and security within the offshore industry and to enhance the protection of the marine environment. The Coast Guard and OMSA seek to achieve this goal through enhanced communication, collaboration, and cooperation. The partnership is intended to complement other industry partnerships and to provide a more efficient means for joint Coast Guard and OMSA interactions.

[Past successes from current partnerships](#) include a joint American Waterways Operators (AWO) and Coast Guard Safe Decks Campaign, "Stay Alert for the Edge," directed to prevent falls overboard and save lives. Since 1995, more than 200 Coast Guard and AWO member volunteers have participated in some two dozen Quality Action Teams at the national and regional levels, tackling such critical safety issues as crew fatalities, tank barge spills, and safe operations during dangerous water conditions.

The USCG expects that this new partnership with OMSA will more effectively bring the Coast Guard and the represented segment of industry together in a cooperative effort to enhance marine safety and environmental protection within the Offshore Support Vessel community.

The Coast Guard has [partnerships with other organizations](#) including the Passenger Vessel Association, the Cruise Lines International Association, the National Marine Manufacturers Association, and the American Boat and Yacht Council to provide industry specific input with a focus on improving safety aboard ships and boats. Other partnerships such as the Baltic and International Maritime Council and the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners Association provide technical and diplomatic support to U.S. proposed safety standards for adoption into the instruments of international treaties. The Coast Guard's National Boating Safety Advisory Council provides essential guidance to the recreational boating program. Open communication, cooperation, and non-regulatory solutions are the hallmarks of these successful partnerships.

Posted at [4/30/2009 01:54:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#) 

Labels: [Marine Safety](#), [Partnership](#)



## Leadership Spotlight -- Self Awareness and Learning, Part 4 of a Series

*Moderator's Note: Click the following for [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#).*

Counseling as a Component in Self Awareness and Learning

"Learning is not compulsory... neither is survival."  
 ~ W. Edwards Deming (1900 - 1993)

Not so long ago, a member of the Atlantic Area staff learned that I wanted to speak with him; immediately, he thought he was headed to the woodshed or, as he put it, to a quick and painless keelhauling. Truth is, I only wanted to dip him

in the water.:-)

In all seriousness, it's time for all of us to consider counseling, performance counseling that is, as something positive rather than something negative, as something that helps rather than something that hurts. As I stated on Tuesday: "... it's one of the toughest jobs a leader can perform..." but it's of great value to you.

[One online resource](#) notes that counseling is "something that provides direction or advice as to a decision or course of action." Another [notes](#), "Counseling may be an informal or formal intervention that consists of a discussion between an employee and his or her supervisor [about] work performance, behavior, and/or conduct." While my staff member, and others, automatically thought the counseling was negative, it's not always. And, the more we can use counseling to accentuate the positive, to provide positive feedback, the more we will really be performance focused.

As Mary Lou Higgerson notes in [Performance Counseling: The Cornerstone of Professional Development](#):

Effective performance counseling is a key ingredient in building an effective organization. When organization members perform at optimal levels in behavior that supports the organization mission and objectives, they contribute to the organization's success. Further, performance counseling serves as a vehicle for leaders to make sure that every individual member understands how their job contributes to the welfare and success of the entire organization. Through performance counseling, leaders can clarify the organization mission and individual job responsibilities.

Dr. Higgerson writes for an academic audience (and I've changed the term department in the above quote to organization), but the substance is exactly the same for those of us in the Coast Guard. Dr. Higgerson reminds us that the "ultimate purpose is to help individuals succeed." To get us to that end, she provides an excellent primer with several noteworthy strategies:

- \* Make performance counseling a year-round (not yearly) activity.
- \* Offer both formal and informal evaluations of job performance.
- \* Make job performance expectations clear.
- \* Make performance goals specific and manageable.
- \* Focus evaluative comments on the person's performance, not personality.
- \* Link evaluative comments to specific examples.
- \* Link self-evaluation and goal setting.
- \* Offer specific suggestions for improvement.
- \* Establish a time frame for achieving goals.
- \* Recognize and reward positive achievement.

As you counsel your subordinates, keep these strategies in mind. And, as you receive counseling, know that it's not about keel hauling but about success for both you and the larger organization.

Tomorrow, I'll close out this series of posts on iCommandant with a brief discussion about mentoring. Until then, take care of your shipmates.  
- VADM Bob Papp

Posted at [4/30/2009 08:37:00 AM](#) [2 comments](#) 

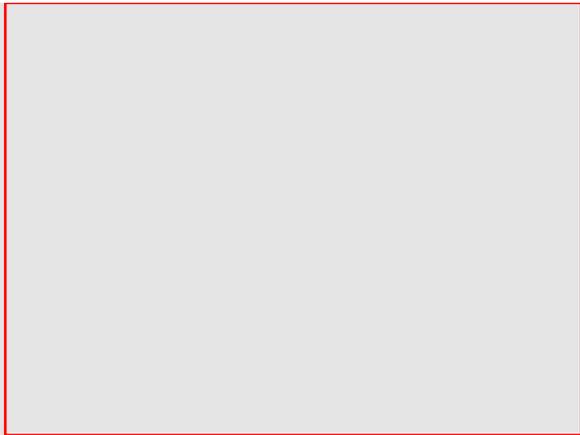
Labels: [Leadership](#)



Wednesday, April 29, 2009

## All hands at sea in the Northern Arabian Gulf

Updated with new shoutouts from [CGC ADAK](#) and [CGC BARANOF](#)



Shipmates,

Updating my earlier post with a quick picture. You can find others at uscgpress on FLICKR.

While I couldn't get to every cutter because of time constraints, the CO's were very resourceful and transferred crew members. I met on ADAK and BARANOFF with Master Chief Bowen. Our main topics were the future of the security mission in the Northern Arabian Gulf, maintenance of their 110 fleet, and the status of the Fast Response Cutter program.

As noted earlier, the senior leaders here in theater couldn't be more pleased with the performance of our Coast Guard units.



[All hands at sea in the Northern Arabian Gulf](#)  
Originally uploaded by [uscgpress](#)

BZ

ADM A

Posted at [4/29/2009 11:10:00 PM](#) [0 comments](#)

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