



## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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**WebWatch**  
**Division 8, 5NR**  
**February, 2013**

### **A. 33RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF USCGC BLACKTHORN**

ADM Bob Papp, Commandant, United States Coast Guard

1. On January 28, 1980, the Coast Guard suffered our worst peacetime loss when the *USCGC BLACKTHORN* (WLB 391) collided with another ship, capsized and sank at night in Tampa Bay, Florida. Twenty-three Coast Guardsmen perished in the tragedy.
2. Many of you know the story of Seaman Apprentice (SA) William "Billy" Flores, a crew member aboard *CGC BLACKTHORN* who had recently reported from recruit training. Instead of abandoning ship and swimming to safety after the collision, SA Flores remained aboard to assist other crewmembers who were injured or trapped. He went to his station at the lifejacket locker and used his belt to secure the door open so lifejackets would float to the surface for his shipmates as the vessel sank. When *CGC BLACKTHORN* slipped beneath the surface, SA Flores went down with her. SA Flores made the ultimate sacrifice so other Coast Guardsmen could live to serve. We honor his heroism and memory with our newest Fast Response Cutter, the *USCGC WILLIAM FLORES* (WPC 1103).
3. The loss of *CGC BLACKTHORN*, along with the earlier sinking of *CGC CUYAHOGA* (WIX 157) and loss of 11 Coast Guardsmen on October 20, 1978, compelled the Service to make needed improvements to cutter policy, doctrine, training and standardization. We created the Prospective CO/XO Afloat Course, mandated that all CO/XO/OODs pass the Deck Watch Officer Examination, required prospective CO/OINCs to conduct underway familiarization rides, and promulgated Commandant Cutter Navigation Standards. We took deliberate steps to improve proficiency and safety in our afloat operations that are reflected in higher levels of cutter and crew readiness today.
4. We honor the Coast Guardsmen lost aboard *CGC BLACKTHORN* by remembering them on this anniversary, and honor them each day by focusing on proficiency and safety of operations.
5. *Semper Paratus*. Stand a taut watch.



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### **B. FINAL ACTION ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION INTO THE COLLISION BETWEEN CG-33118 AND A RECREATIONAL VESSEL IN SAN DIEGO HARBOR ON 20 DECEMBER 2009**

VADM J. P. Currier, Vice Commandant

1. The Final Action Memorandum (FAM) for the administrative investigation into the collision between Coast Guard small boat CG-33118 and a recreational vessel has been approved. On the evening of 20 December 2009, the CG-33118 collided with a 24-foot Sea Ray carrying 13 persons in San Diego Harbor, California. This collision occurred during the San Diego Bay Parade of Lights marine event. CG-33118 overran the Sea Rays stern, causing fatal injuries to an eight-year-old boy, serious injuries to four, and minor injuries to six others, all of whom were on board the Sea Ray. No one on the CG-33118 was injured.
2. This FAM is available in the Coast Guard FOIA reading room at: [http://www.uscg.mil/foia/foia\\_library.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/foia/foia_library.asp).
3. The lessons learned from this mishap must be applied to all operational missions executed by the Coast Guard. All Commanding Officers and Officers in Charge of operational units shall review this FAM and employ its lessons learned to improve operational safety and effectiveness across our mission lines. Commanding Officers and Officers in Charge of boat units shall personally review this FAM with their boat crews within 30 days of the release of this message.
4. These findings reinforce the concepts raised in the FAM for the CG-6017 mishap discussed in Shipmates 21, and the Commandants focus on proficiency introduced in Shipmates 23. This mishap further reminds us that there is no substitute for sound leadership. There were lapses in oversight at many levels creating a climate that failed to recognize departures from doctrine, policy and regulations. An error chain developed that enabled the crew to assume unwarranted risk, resulting in tragic consequences. Following standard risk management practices would likely have guided this crew to a different result. Proper mission planning would have ensured designation of crew responsibilities, identification of hazards present in the crowded harbor, and appropriate evaluation of mission urgency.
5. The vast majority of Coast Guard operations are carried out safely and effectively. This mishap, although an anomaly, demonstrates that we still have work to do. The time for good leadership and mission planning is before a mishap occurs. Risk management must be part of our culture for the safety and welfare of our crews and those we serve. Proper operational risk management techniques involve more than a pre-mission green-amber-red model. Risk management must be accomplished anytime tasking or conditions



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change. I expect the support of all Coast Guard men and women in learning the lessons from this tragedy and making improvement in operational safety and effectiveness. We often operate in high risk situations, assessing those risk factors and planning mitigation strategies are essential to safe and effective operations.

### **C. RETIREMENT OF COAST GUARD MAGAZINE**

RDML Steven D. Poulin, Director of Governmental and Public Affairs

1. For decades Coast Guard Magazine, in several forms, has been our flagship publication providing news and feature stories about Coast Guard missions, policies and the achievements of our Coast Guard family. Coast Guard Magazine discussed issues of concern to the workforce and shared iconic imagery from across our Service, providing information and entertainment.
2. The continued growth of our Coast Guard social media program provides us the opportunity to embrace advancements in real-time, two-way communication to better share information and receive feedback from the American people, those whom we regulate and, most importantly, the Coast Guard family. Our award-winning Compass blog, along with our YouTube channel, Facebook page, and Twitter and Flickr accounts, add viewership and followers each month as we expand features and content. Compass blog stories have been viewed almost 14 million times since its launch less than four years ago. More than 56,000 people view our content on Facebook each day and the Coast Guard enjoys the third most-viewed public sector YouTube channel, only behind NASA and the White House.
3. As part of our ongoing commitment to integrate technology into our communication with the Coast Guard family, we are retiring Coast Guard Magazine as we continue the transition to a more comprehensive social media program. Our social media content already extends to more diverse and wider audiences far exceeding the capabilities and reach of Coast Guard Magazine. Part of our transition will include two new online tools called the Coast Guard All Hands blog and Coast Guard Maritime Commons blog. Coast Guard All Hands will facilitate online communication with the Coast Guard family and Maritime Commons will include content of interest to maritime industry.
4. Coast Guard All Hands will allow us to provide more stories as well as more timely and interactive content. Coast Guard All Hands will give us the ability to communicate with the Coast Guard family through Internet browsers on computers, tablets and smart phones wherever they may be and whenever they wish to access the information. Furthermore, this two-way communication tool will allow senior leadership to listen to what you have



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to say and consider your feedback on how we do business as part of a larger organizational growth process and commitment to serve the Coast Guard family.

5. We appreciate that some members continue to have limited access to digital media. We are working with the Area staffs to implement mechanisms to periodically transmit blog entries to cutters underway for extended periods and units in remote locations that can then be made available locally for crews.
6. The Fall 2012 issue currently being distributed will be the last regular edition of Coast Guard Magazine published. Coast Guard Magazine has been the premier magazine for generations of Coast Guard men and women, tracing its roots back to the United States Lighthouse Service. It served us well and stood a taut watch. It deserves an honorable retirement. Therefore, we intend to publish a final commemorative edition of Coast Guard Magazine this summer.

### **D. SEVENTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE**

ADM Bob Papp, Commandant

1. On 19 February 2013, we celebrate the 72nd anniversary of the Coast Guard Reserve. The Reserve continues to be a vital force multiplier for the Coast Guard and our Nation. Reservists bring a unique blend of civilian and military experience and proficiency to the Coast Guard. On any given day you will find members of this dedicated force supporting a variety of Coast Guard missions across the country and overseas. They train locally for Coast Guard-specific requirements, and as we have seen during surge events like Deepwater Horizon and Hurricane Sandy, this investment in time and training provides the Nation with greater operational capacity and capability.
2. Coast Guard Reserve Force Master Chief Mark Allen and I extend our sincere appreciation and admiration for the Coast Guard Reserve and the work reservists do in support of Coast Guard missions. To view our message, please click the following link: <http://cgvi.uscg.mil>. From the main page click on Coast Guard highlight videos then select the 72nd anniversary Coast Guard Reserve Force video.
3. *Semper Paratus.*



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### E. TIDE TURNING FOR U.S. BOATING INDUSTRY

National Marine Manufacturers Association

Recreational boating industry reports ten percent increase in new power boat sales in 2012, sees first signs of healthy growth since recession; Small, versatile boats leading the recovery. The U.S. recreational boating industry began to see the tide turn for new power boat sales with an estimated ten percent increase in 2012, according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). Early projections indicate the industry will see additional increases in 2013 by as much as 5-10 percent. This level of growth in 2013 will depend on a number of factors including continued improvement in economic conditions that impact recreational boating—namely consumer confidence and the housing market—and sustained increases in Americans' participation in outdoor recreation.

“Improving economic conditions and what seems to be a resurgence in Americans' love for the outdoors, helped fuel steady growth in new power boat sales in 2012,” notes Thom Dammrich, president of NMMA. “A ten percent boost at retail in 2012 is significant as this is the first time since the recession we saw healthy growth across the powerboat market, which will create momentum in 2013.”

Another factor, and new trend, that's contributing to new boat sales is the creation of innovative, more versatile and accessible boats that appeal to a variety of interests and budgets and fall within the 15-26 foot range. It's these smaller boats, those less than 27 feet, which make up 96 percent of the 12.4 million registered boats in the U.S. and are leading the industry out of the recession. Boats that fall into this category include aluminum all-purpose boats and pontoons, fiberglass bowriders, fish and ski boats, and jet boats.

“One of the most significant trends we're seeing in boat manufacturing is the versatile boat—one that can pull tubers or wakeboarders, can be used for fishing outings, relaxing with family or entertaining friends,” said Dammrich. “After a decade of decline, Americans are participating in outdoor recreation in growing numbers, and as they look for ways to spend time outdoors, boat manufacturers are taking cue, producing innovative boats that offer an all-encompassing entry to the boating lifestyle at a variety of price points.”

In 2011, boating participation increased ten percent to 83 million – the largest proportion of adults (34.8 percent) who went boating since 1997(35.8 percent). It's not just boating participation that is growing. The Outdoor Industry Association reports that more than 140 million Americans make outdoor recreation a priority in their daily lives – and they prove it with their wallets. The outdoor recreation economy generates \$646 billion in direct consumer spending annually. What's more, a recent study by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service reports that participation in fishing is up eleven percent in the past five years, and hunting participation is up nine percent in the past five years.



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To further attract this growing number of outdoor recreation enthusiasts and showcase what the boating lifestyle has to offer, the recreational boating industry will unveil its latest innovations at annual boat shows across the country in January and February. Boat shows, which attract more than one million people annually, are where manufacturers launch new boats and marine gear for purchase, unlike auto shows which are for viewing. The shows are a primary sales venue for the industry and barometer for things to come for recreational boating, as they provide a glimpse of buyer sentiment and sales for the year ahead. A complete list of boat shows around the U.S. can be found at [www.boatshows.com](http://www.boatshows.com)

### **F. NOT ALL E15 SELLERS ARE PROPERLY LABELING THEIR PUMPS**

National Marine Manufacturers Association

A recent survey found that 35 percent of the registered sellers of E15 are not labeling the higher-ethanol gas at the pump. Six of the 17 registered sellers of E15 (the sellers of E15 are in Iowa, Kansas and South Dakota) had not labeled the pump accordingly, according to Cindy Squires, Chief Counsel of Public Affairs and Director of Regulatory Affairs for the National Marine Manufacturers Association. The survey also found that several service stations selling the fuel blended with 15 percent ethanol were not registered, as required by the Renewable Fuel Standard, the Environmental Protection Agency mandate that calls for an overall reduction in the fuel supply through the use of biofuels.

“After the gas stations were surveyed, it turned out six of those sites had not even put a basic warning label on the pump,” Squires told Soundings Trade Only. “That’s very concerning to us. Even with all the scrutiny on E15 these sellers didn’t bother to even label the pump.” One of the conditions stations must adhere to in order to sell E15 is to sign up to have a survey of their operations performed. “It’s part of the EPA’s effort to make sure they’re fulfilling the mandates they’ve put forward,” Squires said. “Now there are 18 registered program sites, and we’ve just heard that there may be some sites that aren’t registered, so they may not be complying with anything,” Squires said. “This is from the firm that they are required to hire to check on their compliance, so it’s troubling something that simple can’t be complied with.”



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### G. SEN. MURKOWSKI BACKS CALLS TO REEVALUATE BIOFUEL MANDATE

Zack Colman - NMMA

The Senate Energy Committee's top Republican said Monday that she is "in good company" with congressional calls to reevaluate a biofuel-blending mandate. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), the ranking member on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, joined a growing group of lawmakers Monday in saying Congress should change the renewable fuel standard (RFS). "Let's have the ability to pull back and say, 'Maybe this one just didn't work the way that we had hoped it would,'" Murkowski said during a Capitol Hill news conference detailing an energy road map she released Monday. "Let's not be afraid to admit that we might need to reform it."

Congress enacted the biofuel-blending standard for corn ethanol in 2005 and updated it in 2007 to include "advanced" biofuels made from non-edible feedstock. In all, it calls for mixing 36 billion gallons of renewable fuel into traditional petroleum by 2022. The policy has faced attacks from lawmakers and outside groups, with many pushing for tweaks and others gunning for an outright repeal.

Much of the congressional conversation has occurred in the House, with the Energy and Commerce committee pledging to hold hearings on the fuel rule. Murkowski's comments on Monday underscored the attention the rule is now receiving in the upper chamber. "I think I'm in good company in asking for that critical review," she said.

A handful of environmental, spending, food security and petroleum organizations that oppose the standard are hosting separate House and Senate briefings Tuesday. Those groups are concerned about the mandate's effect on corn prices, agricultural land use and the ability of refiners to meet accelerating blending targets. "There's a broad spectrum of organizations who have concerns," Steve Ellis, vice president with Taxpayers for Common Sense, said Monday in a joint press call with the Environmental Working Group, American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM), ActionAid and other groups.

Jim Currie, Director of Federal Legislative Affairs with the National Marine Manufacturers Association, said during the call that his organization is circulating draft legislation on the standard. He said the bill would take care of the policy's "unintended consequences," echoing a term Murkowski used. "We don't anticipate having a problem finding supporters," Currie said.



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Charlie Drevna, president of AFPM, said the rule hits refiners by requiring them to buy credits to meet targets for fuel that is not currently produced at commercial scale. He said lawmakers should admit the forward-looking blending goals they set back in 2007 are no longer attainable. “They should be outraged that this thing is still on the books,” Drevna said of Congress.

The biofuel industry is looking to shore up its congressional allies, as are many trade associations playing defense on various legislative and legal challenges to the mandate. Those groups have colored the attacks on the mandate as an attempt by the oil industry to retain its market share. The biofuel industry says oil firms are pushing back because the blending shrinks their profit margins. Fuels America, a coordinated lobbying effort for biofuel companies, estimated Monday that the oil industry “lost” more than \$46 billion in 2011 because of ethanol.

On the food front, the biofuel associations have said that links between ethanol production and corn price increases are tenuous and that land use claims are exaggerated. The Renewable Fuels Association (RFA), an industry trade group, on Monday sent around a November Energy Department study on those topics. The Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) study noted the fuel rule had “minimal food price effects” — though it did say corn ethanol had a larger impact on food markets than advanced biofuels. It also said the rule’s economic effects on the rest of the world “are largely neutral.” That study also concluded the effects on agricultural land use are minimal.

“The facts from the ORNL study are: the RFS is reducing oil prices, decreasing oil imports, and creating jobs and economic benefits without the rumored catastrophic effects on food prices and land use. In fact, as the study shows, the RFS barely affects food and land markets,” RFA CEO Bob Dinneen said Monday in a statement.

### **H. NMMA MAKES CASE TO CONGRESS ON FUEL STANDARD**

National Marine Manufacturers Association

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) made its case with several other groups Tuesday to federal lawmakers on the negative impact of the Renewable Fuel Standard. The briefing brought together more than 70 House members or staff members and more than 50 members of the Senate and their staff as the NMMA highlighted concerns about the introduction of E15 into the marketplace, according to the NMMA’s Washington Wave.

The NMMA was joined by ActionAid, the American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers, the American Frozen Food Institute, the Environmental Working Group, FarmEcon LLC and





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Taxpayers for Common Sense — the groups that participated in a conference call on Monday to discuss the biofuel-blending mandates.

Members of Congress listened as the NMMA shared the results of research that shows the devastating effects that E15 can have on marine engines, including photos of destroyed engines that were damaged by E15 during testing. In addition to the NMMA's concerns about marine engines, testimony from the overall group touched on a variety of important issues affected by the RFS, such as food prices, conservation, emissions and budget implications.

### I. SEQUESTRATION, BOATER IMPACTS STILL POSSIBLE

BoatUS, February 13, 2013

Over the last two years, there have been several budget crises in Washington, each averted by passing a Continuing Resolution that allows the government to keep operating for a set period of time. During the last major budget impasse, Congress and the White House agreed to the Deficit Reduction Act in August of 2011. It called for establishing a “Supercommittee” in Congress charged with cutting at least \$1.2 trillion in spending. If it could not reach consensus, across-the-board cuts would be set in motion, called sequestration.

In October of 2011, that Supercommittee, a bi-partisan group of 12 Senators and Congressmen, failed to agree on a plan and the clock started to wind down toward sequestration. Then, in late December 2012 Congress and the White House passed another Continuing Resolution, only delaying sequestration and the negative impact that it could have for boaters. As things stand now, if all parties do not agree on a budget by March 1, 2013, it will trigger \$110 billion of across-the-board cuts including sequestering – or withholding - \$43 million in Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (SFRBTF) dollars.

That trust fund derives about \$650 million annually from sales and excise taxes boaters and anglers pay on boat fuel and fishing equipment, and while a “user-pay, user-benefit” type of fund is rarely placed on the chopping block, we have been apprised that this time it will be affected. At this point a portion of your federal boating dollars, \$9 million in boating safety funds plus about \$34 million for fisheries conservation, will be frozen until a budget agreement is reached. The trust fund itself will continue to accumulate revenue but the money will not be available until the House and Senate can agree on a budget and the President approves it.

BoatU.S. Government Affairs staff continues to monitor this issue to protect these important boater dollars, so please stay tuned to [www.boatus.com/govaffairs](http://www.boatus.com/govaffairs) for sequestration updates.



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### J. Personal Watercraft, Safety, and You

#### BoatUS

At an average length of around 10 feet, personal watercraft (PWC) may seem small, but they come with some pretty big responsibility. With the horsepower of a large outboard engine and the acceleration of a motorcycle, PWC are not toys. In fact, the U.S. Coast Guard considers personal watercraft Class A vessels, which means all safety equipment and operation laws that apply to boat under 16 feet also apply to a PWC. Most states have operator age and education requirements, too. So before you launch, here are a few things you'll need to know to have a safe and hassle-free day on the water.

#### Required Equipment for A PWC

- A life jacket for each operating passenger, and person being towed
- A Coast Guard-approved B-1 fire extinguisher
- An approved sound-signaling device such as a whistle or horn
- An emergency engine cutoff lanyard attached to the operator
- Proper display of registration numbers, letters and validation decals
- Vessel registration, to be displayed when requested
- A functioning backfire flame arrestor and passive ventilation system

#### Recommended Safety Equipment

- Hand-held VHF radio, and a cell phone as a backup
- A basic first-aid kit, sunscreen, and burn cream
- A dewatering device such as a hand operated bilge pump
- An anchor and enough anchor line for your area
- If pulling a skier or other tow-sport participant, a skier-down flag, an observer over a certain age, and rear-view mirrors may also be required.
- Even if they're not required, they're good to have.
- And finally, when operating on inland waters, it's recommended you have a suitable, daytime distress signal such as flares, an orange flag, or signal mirror.

Follow These Rules And Everyone Has Fun. In many states, PWC-operator laws are more stringent than recreational-vessel operator requirements. PWC manufacturers recommend a minimum operator age of 16. However, operator laws vary from state to state, so it's best to check with your local waterway authority before operating or letting a friend operate your PWC. If you loan out your craft, be certain whoever operates it is fully aware of the local and federal boating laws and know how to operate your craft. You're responsible when you loan your PWC. For more state operator requirements, visit [www.BoatUS.org](http://www.BoatUS.org) and click on your state.



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- Wear a life jacket approved for PWC use.
- Take a safe boating course. No excuses.
- Know the laws and don't push the limits.
- Learn the meaning of navigation marks and signs.
- Never ride after consuming drugs or alcohol.
- Carry no more passengers than the vessel's rating allows.
- Check your craft for proper function before riding.
- Respect ecologically sensitive areas and wildlife.
- Large vessels, sailboats under sail, and paddle craft should always be given priority.
- When meeting another craft head-on, steer to the right and pass like cars.
- If overtaking another boat, you may pass on either side, but you must keep clear.
- If you're about to cross paths with another vessel, the craft on the right should be allowed to continue at the same speed and direction, and you must alter your speed and direction to pass safely behind.
- You must take action to avoid collisions and maintain a proper lookout by scanning constantly.
- If you are unsure about the rules of the road, reduce your speed and take early defensive action.

For more on Rules of the Road, take a boating safety course. For online study materials and a safety course or to find a classroom-based class near you, click on the Educational Programs at [www.BoatUS.com/Foundation](http://www.BoatUS.com/Foundation).

### **K. Chesapeake Bay Watershed Plan Would Increase Public Access by over 20% by 2025** BoatUS

Recently, the National Park Service and state partners released the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan. Implementing the plan will expand the number of places for people to get to the water by more than 20 percent by 2025 and reflects the state of public access portions of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Key findings include:

- There are 1,150 documented existing public access sites where people can launch boats, fish, swim, or look out over the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries.
- The highest demand for new public access sites is frequently concentrated in and around urban areas.
- Significant stretches of shoreline have little or no access. For example, there is no public access for nearly 60 miles along the south side of the tidal James River.



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- Multiple studies and plans, including all state outdoor recreation plans, continue to document high public demand for additional access to streams, rivers, and bays.
- Boat launching capacity is the most frequently suggested access type for these sites.
- 320 specific potential new sites have been identified by citizens for providing public access to the water. Over half of these sites are on publicly owned land.

The plan sets out a series of collaborative actions for moving access development forward and serves as a guide for prioritizing and allocating available funding efficiently. Download the entire plan at <http://www.baygateways.net/PublicAccess/>.

### **L. NOAA RELEASES MARINE FISHERIES ALLOCATION REPORT**

National Marine Manufacturers Association

NOAA Fisheries has recently released the first-ever compilation and discussion of fisheries allocation issues which summarizes input received from a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The report is a direct response to stakeholder concerns regarding allocation during the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Summit. The full report is available at [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2013/01/docs/lapointe\\_allocation\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2013/01/docs/lapointe_allocation_report_final.pdf).