



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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WebWatch

Division 8, 5NR

July 2010

A. Seventy-First Anniversary Of The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

1. On June 23, 2010, the Coast Guard Auxiliary celebrates seventy-one years of faithful and dedicated service. Our Auxiliary shipmates have once again given generously of themselves to support Coast Guard personnel and missions, and to make our nations waterways safer for the more than 83 million recreational boaters who sail them. Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers have literally taught generations of boaters how to properly equip and operate their vessels. Through their dedication to boating safety and their lifesaving activities thousands of mariners are saved or assisted every year. The Coast Guard Auxiliary has honored our profession and advanced the outstanding service we provide our nation.
2. Over the past year, the Auxiliary has set the standard for organizational resilience and continuous improvement. By modernizing its national organization, the Auxiliary positioned itself to parallel the Coast Guard in its conduct of operations, training, policy development, and mission support. At the same time, it broadened its capabilities through a major expansion of its Trident program to provide greater support for the Coast Guard's marine safety mission, the innovative application of social media and language interpretation skills to support rescue operations following the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, and the formalization of the Auxiliary's Chef program to better support Coast Guard food service personnel. More recently, Auxiliarists have served in a range of capacities in support of Deepwater Horizon spill response operations, including over 5,000 hours checking the readiness of vessels participating in clean-up operations, monitoring deployed booms, supporting the area command center, and assisting with public affairs.
3. Our shipmates, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, have performed superbly, always standing a taut watch and exemplifying our core values. Please join me in recognizing their superb dedication by celebrating their seventy-first anniversary with your local Auxiliarists.



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B. Commandants Independence Day Message - Standing the Watch

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

1. Shipmates, Independence Day is an opportunity to celebrate our nation's birthday, reflect upon those who have gone before, and thank those currently standing the watch around the world protecting our freedom. Their tireless and selfless service makes our celebration of the Fourth of July possible, and even more meaningful.
2. Today Coast Guard men and women are deployed protecting the Gulf coast from oil, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, combating piracy off the coast of Africa, conducting counter-drug patrols in the Caribbean, and at Coast Guard units keeping our citizens, ports and waterways safe and secure.
3. I am especially proud of our Reserve and Auxiliary members who are standing the watch. You have been our bench strength in our back to back responses in Haiti and the Gulf of Mexico.
4. On the Fourth, my family, along with Master Chief Leavitt's family will have the honor of representing our service at the White House Salute To Heroes. At this event, men and women from the Armed Forces, including 200 Coast Guardsmen and their families, will be recognized by President Obama for their outstanding service.
5. If you are fortunate enough to spend the holiday with friends and family, take a moment to remember your shipmates on watch, and please celebrate in a safe and responsible manner—respect your shipmates by looking out for them.
6. I encourage you to visit the Coast Guard Homepage and view my Independence Day video message at: www.uscg.mil.

C. Honor our Profession- Deepwater Horizon Response

Admiral Bob Papp, Commandant

Shipmates, once again we find our service answering the call "All Hands on Deck." What started out on April 20, 2010 as a search and rescue operation, resulting in the tragic loss of eleven lives aboard the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig, has evolved into the largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history. While a partial cap is recovering some oil, the spill continues in record quantities. The Coast Guard has the lead for this response. The people of the Gulf, indeed the entire Nation, are depending on our Service. They are depending on you.

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This response is our number one service priority. We are all in this together. That is why I want every Coast Guardsman to understand that it is their duty to support and sustain this monumental effort. Sustainability will require both flexibility to deploy personnel and resources to the Deepwater Horizon response when called upon, and at the same time continuing to perform our many other vital missions across our area of operations. We have a proud history of doing exactly that; you need look no further than the recent examples of our Hurricane Katrina and Haitian Earthquake response. The urgency of this response is no different and will require no less effort.

Our present mission is clear: make every effort to tackle this spill at the source, on the sea, and as a last resort, when it comes ashore. Time tested Coast Guard Pub One principles of operations still apply: particularly clear objective, effective presence, unity of effort, on scene initiative, and flexibility. We will continue to direct the flow of additional equipment and personnel to sustain this response and maintain the offensive.

This is the most challenging environmental response our Service has ever faced. We will lean hard into it and meet it head on. We will make every effort to protect the precious natural resource that is the Gulf of Mexico and our citizens who live along it and depend upon it for their livelihoods.

Stand a taut watch... Semper Paratus

D. Solicitation For Auxiliary Support In Response To The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

RADM B.M. Salerno, Deputy Commandant for Operations

1. The largest oil spill in history that has resulted from the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion, fire and sinking, and it called for an all hands on deck response as our number one priority for the Coast Guard. The breadth and scope of the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill have significantly expanded and require long-term, coordinated action by the Coast Guard through the remainder of CY2010. Further inclusion of Auxiliary resources into response operations and sustainment plans is necessary.
2. Our present mission requires use of every available resource to tackle this spill at the source, on the sea, and as a last resort, when it comes ashore. This has become a mission of unparalleled proportion. As time has passed, the breadth and scope of spill impacts have significantly expanded and require long-term, coordinated action that is expected to last through the remainder of CY2010. It is therefore vital to the principles of effective presence and unity of effort to further incorporate Auxiliary resources into response operations and associated sustainment plans.

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3. Auxiliarists will be incorporated into The Coast Guard long-term Deepwater Horizon response strategy. However, there is currently an immediate need for auxiliary skill sets in support of this mission, as follows:
 - a.. Auxiliarists who possess Auxiliary Trident qualifications as set forth in the ALCOAST are needed now. Field response and investigation along coastal regions are a priority. Thus, Auxiliarists are needed who possess Auxiliary Trident Program qualifications, with emphasis on Assistant Pollution Response Specialists, Assistant Pollution Investigators, Prevention Outreach Specialists (formerly Marine Environmental Education Specialists), and Marine Safety Watchstanders.
 - b. Incident Command System (ICS) familiarity at least at the ICS-100 level is a pre-requisite for all applicants. All assignments require strong interpersonal skills
 - c. Auxiliarists who possess Incident Command System (ICS) course completions at all levels including those above ICS-210. Auxiliary Watchstanding and Operational Qualifications are preferred
 - d. Auxiliarists are also needed to augment/backfill at Coast Guard Sectors And Sector Units as active duty personnel are assigned elsewhere.
 - c. There is also an immediate need for 30 Auxiliarists who possess any of the following specific ICS course completions: ICS-346, ICS-347, ICS-351, and ICS-440. No substitutions/alternatives of these four specific ICS courses can be accepted. Auxiliarists who contact the Central Staging Area in response to this specific need must mention which ICS course(s) they have completed.
4. Assignments will require an on-scene commitment of at least 30 days. Normal work days will be maintained to the fullest extent possible, but additional or emergent work requirements may arise while on-scene. Due to hot and humid outdoor weather conditions, field assignments may be arduous. Auxiliarists must consider this in determining their willingness and ability to participate, and are encouraged to get a medical evaluation to confirm such prior to application.
5. Auxiliarists who volunteer for this mission must apply for approval through their regional chain of leadership. This means gaining the approval of the District Commodore (DCO) and Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) prior to any contact of the order issuing authority, central staging area, or surge staffing offices.



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6. Auxiliarists who volunteer for these assignments will be placed in a TAD status and will be authorized full Per Diem and travel. Once processed through the Central Staging Area, Auxiliarists will be assigned to one of the four Incident Command Posts (ICP) in Pensacola, FL; Houma, LA; Mobile, AL; or Miami Beach, FL.
7. Additional details about future Auxiliary resource needs and scheduling will be promulgated as developed. Coast Guard Auxiliarists have answered the call for 71 years, but none have been as uniquely challenging as this assignment. Your consideration and concerted effort as shipmates in answering this bell are already appreciated and admired. *Semper Paratus.*

E. Boat Operations Safety Review Survey For All Small Boat Operators/Crew RADM T. S. Sullivan, Commander, Force Readiness Command

1. This ALCOAST announces the release and provides a link to an on-line survey for all small boat operators and crew.
2. The Boat Operations Safety Review (BOSR) workgroup was established to conduct a comprehensive systematic and systemic review of small boat training, operational doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures.
3. To support this effort, a survey was developed to best capture and define the current world of work for the small boat community. The survey will remain active for six weeks. All small boat operators/crew should complete the survey to ensure data collected accurately and fairly represents the current small boat community.
4. The BOSR survey was developed by a collection of boat forces subject matter experts in conjunction with FORCECOM Performance Technology Center (PTC) staff. Data collected from the survey will undergo analyses and be incorporated into the BOSR workgroups final report in an effort to better identify and ultimately reduce small boat mishaps.
5. Commands are requested to ensure ample opportunity is given to their members for completion of this important survey. All small boat operators/crew are highly encouraged to participate in the on-line BOSR survey.
6. The survey will be available on both the intranet and internet so that it may be completed using either a cg or home computer system. The average completion time is 15-20 minutes. The survey is required to be completed in one session. Your candid input will contribute to the professional development and readiness of the boat forces community. On-line survey link at:
[HTTP://WWW.USCG.MIL/TCYORKTOWN/SURVEY.ASP](http://www.uscg.mil/tcyorktown/survey.asp)

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7. Point of contact for questions about the BOSR survey are TRACEN Yorktown (TCY) representative Lt. Jason Ingram at (757) 856-2923.

F. Force Health Protection - Deepwater Horizon Sitrep 1-Heat Injury Prevention RADM M. J. Tedesco, Director of Health, Safety And Work-Life

1. Heat stress is an ongoing daily concern for Deepwater Horizon responders. Safety officers continue to monitor for heat stress conditions while managing personnel work/rest schedules and water intake to prevent dehydration. In the coming weeks, rising temperatures and high humidity will increase heat injury risk. Activity level and use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as chemical protective coveralls, also compound heat injury risk. It is very important that all Coast Guard personnel maintain a heightened level of awareness for potential serious illness or death due to prolonged heat exposure for themselves, their shipmates, and other responders. Command personnel and supervisors should refer to the work/rest schedule tables posted on the Health, Safety, And Work-Life website at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/cg11> under hot topics, as well as to the preventive measures noted below, to establish a safer working environment. Additional information is available on the Occupational Safety And Health Administration (OSHA) website at <http://www.osha.gov/oilspills/index.html>
2. Incident job safety analyses and site specific safety plans have been established for the responders and can be found in the incident action plan or can be obtained by contacting your Cognizant Safety Officer. The Job Safety Analysis (JSA) is a matrix of the work to be done, its hazards, and the controls that can be used to control the hazards such as the levels and types of PPE to be used while performing tasks. It is imperative for the responders, though, to communicate back to the Safety Officer, their Site Safety Observer or their Supervisor if the PPE is not available, sufficient, or appropriate for the job at hand as unnecessary PPE will add to heat stress and fatigue. Supervisors of responders must work in concert with their Site Safety Officer to ensure the job safety analysis and the corresponding PPE determinations are current, correct, and in line with the site safety plan. This applies to supervisors/monitors of non-Coast Guard personnel as well.
3. The categories of heat injury, symptoms, prevention and treatment are noted below:
 - a. Heat stroke.

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(1) Heat Stroke is considered a medical emergency which is caused by the shutdown of the body's thermo-regulatory system. This results in a significant rise in the core body temperature and begins to adversely affect the major organ systems. If untreated, heat stroke may result in death. Signs of heat stroke include the following: altered mental status, hot dry skin due to the body's inability to produce sweat, deep and rapid breathing, rapid pulse, and high body temperature.

(2) Prevention. Acclimatization to the environment is important for all personnel and is critical for those with prior history of heat related injuries. Gradually acclimate personnel from colder regions as able, allowing them to adapt physiologically to the increased heat and humidity over a period of at least a week. This may be done by having personnel conduct physical work under heat-stress conditions for a few hours a day for the first few days, progressively increasing time and work requirements in that environment. Likewise, implement an appropriate work/rest schedule and drink adequate amounts of water throughout the work period. Per the Institute Of Medicine, adequate intake of water or other non-caffeinated beverages is approximately 10 cups (80 ounces) for women and 13 cups (100 ounces) for men per day. The need for fluids varies depending on activity level, radiant heat load (sun), ambient temperature and humidity. PPE use, such as coveralls, can also significantly add to heat load. Drink adequate amounts of fluids the day before a planned work period where physical activity is expected under heat stress conditions. Alcohol consumption should be avoided as it exacerbates dehydration. Eat well-balanced meals before and during the work cycle and get a minimum of seven to eight hours of sleep the night before.

(3) Treatment. Seek immediate emergency medical assistance and move the victim to a cool environment. Remove any constricted clothing to cool the skin. Apply cool (not cold) water on the victim by immersing in a tub, placing in a shower, or spraying/ sponging of water, and fanning him/her until emergency medical personnel arrive.



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b. Heat Exhaustion

- (1) Heat Exhaustion is attributed to dehydration and excessive physical activity under certain heat stress conditions. Heat exhaustion is characterized by an inability of the body to give off adequate heat due to heat overload, however, the body's cooling mechanisms are functioning. Signs of heat exhaustion include the following: profuse sweating, headache, tingling sensations in the extremities, shortness of breath, pale, moist skin, weak but rapid pulse, nausea, and dizziness.
- (2) Prevention: same methods for preventing heat stroke.
- (3) Treatment: Seek immediate medical attention. Rest casualties in a cool and/or shaded environment until seen by an emergency medical team. Individuals should follow the rehydration instructions (3.a(2)) above. After recovery, affected individuals should not return to full physical work activity until medically evaluated.

c. Heat Cramps (Muscle Cramps).

- (1) Heat cramps are muscular spasms caused by an electrolyte imbalance resulting from significant water loss and inadequate water replacement (e.g., not drinking enough water). Insufficient diet or irregular meals during the day also contribute to inefficient electrolyte replacement. Symptoms often include moist, cool skin and painful cramping or strain in the muscles.
- (2) Prevention methods: Eat three well-balanced meals a day and drink water as the primary fluid replacement. Commercial sports-type drinks should not be substituted for water but may be used in conjunction with water as excessive sugar may cause cramping and/or diarrhea.
- (3) Treatment. Cease physical activities and sit in a cool and/or shaded area. Individuals should follow the rehydration instructions (3.a(2)) above. If meals were skipped, take a meal break.



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d. Heat Rash (Prickly Heat).

(1) Heat Rash is characterized by red bumps, usually in areas where clothing is restrictive, and gives rise to a prickling pain or irritation. As sweat increases, irritation increases. Heat Rash is caused by the blockage and inflammation of sweat ducts. Heat rash interferes with sleep, resulting in decreased efficiency and cumulative fatigue. In addition, Heat Rash impairs sweating, resulting in a decreased evaporative cooling process.

(2) Prevention methods: Wear less restrictive clothing and keep the skin dry and clean, as much as possible. Keep berthing area cool with fans. Take frequent showers to clean skin.

(3) Treatment: The best treatment for heat rash is to provide a cooler, less humid environment and keep the affected area dry.

G. Operations Organizational Changes For 2010

RADM B.M. Salerno, Deputy Commandant for Operations

1. For 2010, Version 2.0 is the fourth in a series of DCO reorganizations and refinements conducted under modernization, starting in 2006 with the merger of the Assistant Commandants For Operations And Marine Safety (G-O AND G-M) into a new CG numbered staff organization. We have adjusted and improved that organization each year since 2006. Today's DCO organization formally aligns headquarters operations, policy, planning, international affairs and capabilities under a single Deputy Commandant and provides a horizontal integration across the Coast Guards eleven operational missions.
2. Changes: DCO Version 2.0 builds on that structure and makes several resource neutral changes that will improve our resource management processes, enhance our ability to identify and evaluate emerging policy issues, reemphasize our marine transportation management responsibilities and expand our specialized operations requirements development capabilities. The following link provides a DCO Version 2.0 organizational diagram and current staff contact information.
<https://cgportal.uscg.mil/lotus/myquickr/coast-guard-modernization/dco>



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Specific improvements include:

- a. An SES Director Of Marine Transportation System Management (CG-55). COMDT (CG-55) will manage the CG portfolio of waterways management programs and assets and will coordinate Coast Guard activities to promote development of national and international consensus on waterways management policies, goals, objectives, and strategies.
- b. An SES led Global Maritime Operational Threat Response (MOTR) Coordination Center (CG-5G). COMDT (CG-5G) will maintain and implement MOTR protocols that provide a national-level interagency consultation process designed to achieve consistent, coordinated action and outcomes that directly support presidential national and homeland security directives (NSPD-41/NSPD-13). COMDT (CG-5G) will work under the general direction and supervision of COMDT (CG-5) for matters of operational mission coordination and execution, and will take direction from the Judge Advocate General, U.S. Coast Guard, for matters of interpretation and implementation of operational law.
- c. A realigned and expanded Resource Management Directorate (DCO-8) will formally align the sequence of management, budget formulation and budget execution through consecutively numbered staffs that better link DCO budget requests to risk based assessments and performance plans and strategies. DCO-8 will also be the location for DCO future organizational development and transformation efforts.
- d. A new emerging Policy Staff (CG-5X) will link strategically and politically to identify, evaluate and integrate emerging high priority national operations policy issues. COMDT (CG-5X) will also coordinate DCO participation in National Security Staff (NSS) interagency policy committees and enterprise-wide strategy development, including Evergreen.
- e. A new Office Of Specialized Capabilities (CG-721) will develop and provide specialized capability and capacity requirements relative to LANTAREA (future operations command), DOD, and interagency missions supported by Force Readiness Command and Deployable Operations Group.



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4. As with all previous versions of the DCO organization, Version 2.0 changes were created by reprogramming existing DCO resources. This realignment also continues the transfer of DCO personnel resources in support of other modernization efforts. While version 2.0 represents a fairly mature and stable DCO organization, we will remain prepared to make further adjustments as necessary to respond to national priorities and to align with our Coast Guard organizational counterparts in support the Commandants vision of steadying the service.

H. Force Health Protection - Deepwater Horizon Sitrep 2 - Crew Endurance Mgmt. RADM Mark J. Tedesco, Director of Health, Safety And Work-Life.

1. Coast Guard response workers are exposed to numerous crew endurance risk factors, chief among them is the length of workday. Studies show that humans can perform well for 12 hours if they get 7-8 hours of sleep. Performance will degrade if sleep is less than 6 hours, the work period is at night, physical/mental demands are high, or environmental conditions are extreme (e.g., heat, noise, vibration, stress, etc.). While the Coast Guard is typically *SEMPER PARATUS* under any condition, the reality is that erratic work schedules, long work hours, insufficient sleep, and exposure to extreme environmental conditions do not allow the human body to replenish vital physical and mental resources, and leave even the most experienced and dedicated personnel ill prepared to meet operational challenges and maintain personal health and well-being. Though laudable, the *SEMPER PARATUS* attitude can compromise long term sustainability of operations if personnel disregard/sacrifice personal physiological needs to meet operational demands. Members must be reminded of their responsibility to maintain personal endurance levels by adhering to work/rest policies to successfully accomplish response operations.
2. Incident commanders/supervisors should consider the following:
 - a. Keep workday lengths below 12 hours.
 - b. If commute times are greater than 1 hour, consider either decreasing the workday or reducing the commute.
 - c. Early workday start times (e.g., 0600) will produce biological clock disruption for personnel who are either late risers or responding from areas in other time zones. It can take members from the west coast up to 1 week to align their Physiology with local time if they are required to support the work Schedule immediately upon arrival. During that time these members are Highly susceptible to alertness and performance decrements that can Compromise

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operations. Alternately, if members are afforded 2 days (either having the days off or beginning the work day after 0900) to Begin adjusting to the new time zone before beginning the 0600 work Schedule the adaptation will occur quicker and with less performance And alertness decrements.

- d. It is highly recommended that members have 1 day off after 4 consecutive 12 hour work days. Members should be monitored to ensure they are taking the days off.

I. Operation Dry Water

RDML Kevin Cook, Director of Prevention Policy

1. Operation Dry Water will be conducted the weekend of 25-27 June, the last weekend before the Fourth of July holiday. This is the second year for this national multi-agency Boating Under The Influence (BUI) education, detection and enforcement event. The national goal is to significantly reduce the number of alcohol-related accidents, injuries, and deaths among recreational boaters.
2. Last year, 49 of the 56 states and territories participated in the first Operation Dry Water. Maritime Law Enforcement Officers nationwide made contact with 35,471 boaters on 17,454 recreational vessels. Federal, state, and local marine law enforcement officers issued 5,205 BUI warnings 280 BUI citations, and 1,031 citations for other recreational boating related safety violations during the three-day weekend.
3. Media coverage was extensive for the inaugural event. Coast Guard Sector Hampton Roads led the way conducting an innovative and highly successful media outreach campaign that included filming a staged vessel boarding for the local media to air. The National Association Of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) was extremely impressed with this initiative and is recommending that all operation dry water participants consider this approach as a best practice for 2010. An analysis of media statistics following last years effort indicated that operation dry water was highlighted in 563 television news stories, 228 newspaper or magazine articles, 273 online news articles, and 11 international news stories.
4. This year, NASBLA, in partnership with the Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety COMDT (CG-542), and many other boating safety partners, will once again coordinate this nationwide event. Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies throughout the 56 states and territories will intensify BUI awareness and enforcement through increased patrols and established sobriety checkpoints.

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5. Alcohol continues to be a leading cause in recreational boating related accidents, injuries and deaths. Alcohol was a contributing factor in twenty-one percent of all recreational boating deaths in 2008. Operation Dry Water directly supports a variety of objectives identified in the National Recreational Boating Safety Strategic Plan that is focused on reducing deaths and injuries nationally.
6. NASBLA and COMDT (CG-542) have created a special Operation Dry Water website which has information on this initiative including national media press releases, public service announcements, posters, and brochures that can be used to promote this nationwide effort. The web address is <http://operationdrywater.org>.
7. Coast Guard units are encouraged to partner with local boating law administrators and local law enforcement agencies to make this year's Operation Dry Water even more successful. Operations permitting, unit commanding officers and officers in charge are strongly encouraged to support and participate in this second national BUI enforcement effort and awareness campaign. Units are reminded that BUI enforcement is to be conducted in conjunction with normal law enforcement operations. Thus, blockades or other checkpoints designed to specifically detect intoxicated operators shall not be conducted. However that does not preclude Coast Guard units from assisting and participating alongside our law enforcement partners. Units are reminded to ensure compliance with current Coast Guard policy.
8. To ensure that participation by Coast Guard field units is captured, it is requested that units participating provide the following information at the conclusion of Operation Dry Water: number of hours dedicated, total number of Boardings, number of BUI NOVS issued, number of BUI arrests, and number of recreational vessel voyage terminations (BUI). Reports can be made via e-mail to michael.j.baron@uscg.mil.
9. Units having additional questions or wishing to participate in this operation are urged to contact their respective District Recreational Boating Safety Specialist for guidance in coordinating efforts in this unique pulse op.



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2. This response is our number one service priority. We are all in this together. That is why I want every Coast Guardsman to understand that it is their duty to support and sustain this monumental effort. Sustainability will require flexibility to deploy personnel and resources to the Deepwater Horizon response when called upon, while at the same time continuing to perform our many other vital missions across our area of operations. We have a proud history of doing exactly that; you need look no further than the recent examples of our Hurricane Katrina and Haitian earthquake response. The urgency of this response is no different and will require no less effort.
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5. Stand a taut watch... *SEMPER PARATUS*



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K. FORCECOM First Year Anniversary

ADM Bob Papp, Commandant

1. I want to wish the Force Readiness Command a happy anniversary. Our newest National Command turned one on 01 June 2010. I would like to extend my gratitude to RADM Tim Sullivan, field units, and staff members, many of whom simultaneously performed FORCECOM and PACAREA missions during the stand up and operations of this national command. Our service is already garnering the benefits of a National, CG-Wide training and readiness system by ensuring our shipmates continue to be well trained and assessed to ensure the safe and effective execution of our unique 11 missions.
2. One year ago FORCECOM entered into a contract with our workforce to add value with 6 first year goals by:
 - a. Consolidating assessment visits
 - b. Capturing field innovation in tactics and procedures
 - c. Reducing mandatory training time for every Coast Guard employee
 - d. Developing a readiness dashboard
 - e. Developing a doctrine/ttp structure
 - f. Allocating forces CG-wide
3. In each of these goals (except force allocation, which remains with area commanders), FORCECOM has met the goal and proven tremendous value to our workforce. In addition to these achievements, FORCECOM has unified the Coast Guard's training, performance, and exercise support systems; managed reserve readiness recalls and captured lessons learned during Haiti and Deepwater Horizon operations; and launched a detailed analysis of recent mishaps.
4. I have stated that honoring our profession requires inspired leadership to develop knowledge, skills, pride, and experience in a nurturing environment, built from a foundation of clear doctrine and training. FORCECOM is building that foundation. I look forward to the accomplishments FORCECOM will achieve for our service in the coming year. *BRAVO ZULU* FORCECOM.



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L. History: COAST GUARD Cutter *Minnetonka* in Vietnam

Christopher Lagan



U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Minnetonka anchored off the coast of Vietnam during its deployment in 1968. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

For this month's history post, we bring you a personal account of a wartime deployment from the perspective of a Coast Guard deck officer.

From December 1967 to October 1968, the *Coast Guard Cutter Minnetonka* was deployed in support of military operations off the coast of South Vietnam. The Minnie's primary mission was to stop the flow of enemy combatants, arms and supplies into South Vietnam. This blockade often meant boarding suspicious vessels, but sometimes meant taking and returning fire from the enemy. And, that is where Lieutenant junior grade Keith Barker and the gun crew of *CGC Minnetonka* enter the story.

Barker, who would retire from the Coast Guard as a full commander, was a deck watch officer aboard the Minnie but also served as the gunnery officer (or gun boss) aboard the cutter. Over the course of his deployment to Vietnam, Barker and his men would not only



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attack enemy vessels but also conduct gunnery support missions protecting American and allied forces and directly engage the enemy along the coastlines of South Vietnam.

In total, the Minnie would engage in 51 gunfire support missions, fire 4,684 rounds of ammunition and steam some 59,685 miles in support of combat operations.

Over the course of the 305 days Barker was deployed to Vietnam, he wrote regularly and often to his wife Kay back in the States.



LTJG Keith Barker and his wife Kay, on the pier when the *Minnetonka* returned to Long Beach on 17 October 1968. (Photo courtesy of Keith Barker)

Excerpts from those letters make up what Barker has collected as '[The Barker Chronicles of the Minnetonka's Deployment to Vietnam \(17 December 1967 to 17 October 1968\): Excerpts From My Letters to Kay.](#)'

'The Barker Chronicles' are a rare ringside seat to the critical role the Coast Guard played in support of American military operations during the Vietnam War. The letters are at times entertaining – Barker's first letter recounts his almost missing the deployment altogether; insightful – in one letter, Barker compares the view of combat from offshore to a Hollywood war film; gritty – this was a war after all and Barker recounts missions engaging the enemy; and endearing – it will come as no surprise to many that the Coasties from the Minnie spent downtime performing service projects.

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Authorized by Congress in 1939

Above all of these things, the letters are a part of Coast Guard history and we are pleased to be able to share them with you on this 234th American Independence Day.

When asked why he collected the letters and chose to share them with us, CDR Barker replied, "this is a tribute to all the Coasties who served in Vietnam and all of the conflicts since the end of the Vietnam War."

Below are selected sections from LTjg Keith Barker's letters to Kay during CGC Minnetonka's deployment to Vietnam ...

The Barker Chronicles of the Minnetonka's Deployment to Vietnam

17 December 1967 to 17 December 1968

Excerpts From My Letters to Kay

Friday, January 5

Well, as you can see, I made it O.K. The old man, as well as the rest of the crew thought it was really funny. The Capt didn't say a word to me, but I don't think I had better be late again. I got on about a mile outside Pearl Harbor, the Minnie was moving real slow so as to give me time to catch up. ...



Minnetonka vs VC: The gunnery crew keeps track of their mission success. (Photo courtesy of Keith Barker)

CGC Minnetonka's gun crew engaging the enemy during one of the 51 gunfire support missions of their Vietnam deployment. (Photo courtesy of Keith Barker)

Saturday, February 3

Dedicated to promoting recreational boating safety



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... I found out that our main job here is a deterrent!! We are here to keep the VC [Viet Cong] from coming by sea ... it is just our presence that keeps them away.

Friday, February 9

Well, I suppose you have heard all about this new wave of attacks the VC are making. We all have a ringside seat 15 miles from it. It is really scary seeing bomb raids and hearing the guns as well as all the flares. It is not the same as actually being in combat here, it is like watching a movie – John Wayne or Robert Mitchum type of war movie. ...

Friday, May 31

... Box Score – Minnetonka vs VC as of June 1: 24 VC killed, 30 VC wounded, 12 structures destroyed, 34 structures damaged, 4 sampans destroyed, 8 sampans damaged, 1 secondary explosion, 1 fire started, 3 bunkers destroyed/damaged, and 1 rice cache destroyed.

Friday, July 12

... Two weeks ago, I spent the day in Qui Nhon doing a service project. 12 of us went to a hospital and worked all day. Some of the guys helped put barbed wire around the hospital, while the rest of us helped them move into a new pharmacy. I hefted pills around all day. It was really a lot of work. ...

Tuesday, August 20

Today we were in a big operation. ... we shot 437 rounds (of 5-in 38 rounds) over a period of about 5 hours. It was really bad staying that long at G.Q. Our results were 45 structures damaged, 7 destroyed, 19 sampans destroyed, 4 trench lines destroyed and 1 large secondary explosion. This was one of our best shoots so far. ...

Thursday, October 10

My last letter!! ... We are leaving today at about 1:00 and heading for home. ... We will be home at 10:00 AM Thursday, the 17th.



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M. See Something, Say Something

LT Connie Braesch

As the busy holiday weekend kicks off and millions of Americans hit the water, roads and railways, this is a good time to remember that we all play a role in national security.

Today, the Department of Homeland Security launched a nationwide [“See Something, Say Something”](#) campaign.

The campaign has two goals, raising public awareness of the indicators of terrorism, crime and other threats and emphasizing the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper authorities.

The Coast Guard urges you to adopt a heightened sense of sensitivity toward unusual events or individuals you may encounter in or around America’s waterways: your ports, docks, marinas, riversides, beaches, or waterfront communities. If you see something suspicious, say something by calling 877-24-WATCH.

Coastal residents, recreational boaters and regular beach goers know what’s normal and what’s not on their waterfront. [America’s Waterway Watch \(AWW\)](#) enlists the help of those who live, work or play around America’s waterfront areas to help keep their communities and our nation safe.

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