An emerging picture of new Reserve training initiatives comes into view
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**Filling in the Future**

An emerging picture of new Reserve training initiatives comes into view.

Cover Photo by Jeffrey D. Smith

Back Cover by PAC Judy L. Silverstein, Seventh District Public Affairs

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**FILLING IN THE FUTURE**
RESERVIST

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SYMONS FAMILY RESPONDS TO SUPPORT FROM COAST GUARD FAMILY

My son, Ensign Christopher Symons, was the subject of the article “Fallen Reservist Inspires Lasting Legacy”, found on pages 30-31 of Issue 2-2012. I want to thank the Reservist for publishing the article written by Lt. Sara McPherson. Sara was very gracious in contacting us for background information and content editing on the article. My family and I are particularly grateful to Captain Farris for the changes he made to the Reserve program at Sector San Diego and the honor he bestowed to Christopher. We are also forever grateful to the Coast Guard family for the compassion and care they provided to us at our time of need.

Semper Paratus,

CDR Dick Symons,
USCGR (Ret.)

QUESTION ABOUT RESERVE ENLISTED PERSON OF THE YEAR PHOTO

I was under the impression that I would not be receiving any more hard copy issues of the Reservist. However, I was glad to get it. Beautiful layout, great articles, et cetera. Then I looked at the REPOY story.

With all the latest photo shop available I find it hard to understand how the photo of Chief Jessica Snyder is shown with chief’s collar devices while still wearing her 1st class patch on her blouse! That could have easily been cropped. As a writer, editor and producer I am acutely aware of things like this. Please be alert to similar situations in the future.

Congratulations from one REPOY to another.

PSC Maxine Cavanaugh
USCGR (Ret.)
1985 REPOY

Note: Chief, thanks for your feedback. While it is true we could have photo shopped or cropped the photo, we felt the original most accurately portrayed the moment it documented. - JDS

SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thank you for publishing the article and picture of the memorial for DC3 Bruckenthal.

The memorial was designed and created by BM1 John Quincy Lawton during deployment in 2010.

Respectfully,

BM1 Ute Kavanaugh,
USCGR

CORRECTION: Due to a production error in Issue 2 – 2012, the last sentence of the article entitled, “Managing Personnel Resources in Troubled Times” was left off. The complete sentence should have read as follows:

“The creation of the MRTT Go Team is a small step in the way forward to resolve the conflict between requirements management and requirements sourcing, and every person in the Coast Guard can make a difference.”

We apologize to both the author and our readers for this error.

-JDS
Seeking Counseling Services?

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www.oefoif.va.gov/caremanagement.asp

or Contact The Vet Center Combat Call Center

www.vetcenter.va.gov | 1-877-WAR-VETS (927-8387)
PSUs Begin Transition to New TPSB

Coast Guard Port Security Units (PSU) are welcoming a new asset to their arsenal, a 32-foot Generation IV Transportable Port Security Boat (TPSB). The high-performance vessel – powered with Twin 315 Yanmar Diesels and Bravo X-1 outdrives – replaces the PSU’s nearly 15-year-old inventory of the 25-foot outboard powered Boston Whalers. The new aluminum-hulled platform will better accommodate the expeditionary nature of the PSU mission of port security, maritime law enforcement, and search and rescue operations by providing better range, versatility and crew comfort than its predecessor.

“It definitely provides more protection than the old boat,” said BM1 Jesse Sandler, a TPSB coxswain and member of PSU 311 based in San Pedro, California. “The overall construction benefits the crew. We can go a lot faster and a lot farther now.”

Capable of deploying in coastal areas throughout the world with a crew of four, the Generation IV TPSB is far more comprehensive with its operational parameters. The new boat is designed to reduce crew fatigue by limiting their exposure to the elements and offering shock-mitigating seats. Ballistic Armor Protection and four weapon mounts, offer increased tactical capability and crew safety. An integrated communication system that is noise cancelling over engine roar, high winds, and gunfire and a cutting edge 3D navigation system completes the package.

“Overall, this new boat is a Cadillac compared to what we’re used to,” added Sandler. “The improvements made on the Generation IV TPSB have greatly enhanced the capabilities of the Port Security community.”

Story and photo by
PA2 Gina Ruoti
PADET Los Angeles

A Coast Guard Port Security Unit 311 boat crew conducts tactical boat crew training aboard the new Transportable Port Security Boat.
I was recently perusing past issues of the Reservist to avoid unnecessarily repeating relevant topics when I came upon an article authored by RADM Seward (Ret) entitled “A View from the Tractor.” RADM Seward noted that he did a lot of thinking about the Coast Guard while he was driving a tractor on his almond farm. Well I don’t drive a tractor, but I do try to run every day, and during these runs I frequently find myself thinking about the Coast Guard Reserve.

Lately, I’ve pondered the inevitability that our Coast Guard budget will be affected by efforts to deal with deficits and national debt, and that the Coast Guard Reserve must continue to demonstrate our value to the nation and the Coast Guard to justify our budget. We are fortunate that, due to your hard work and the leadership of those who have preceded me, the Coast Guard Reserve has proven its worth and is highly regarded by the public, by my fellow active duty Flag Officers, and the rest of the Coast Guard. Here in Tampa, approximately 25 reservists assigned to D7, Sector St. Petersburg and U.S. Northern Command were recently involved in waterborne security in support of the Republican National Convention, a National Special Security Event. On a much larger scale, in 2010, over 2,600 reservists were mobilized under Title-14 in response to the Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill. And in 2001-2002, nearly 59% of the Reserve force served following the tragic events of 11 September. But how do we continue to maintain our relevance and ensure that we continue to be the same highly-skilled and ready force for future contingencies? There are three irreducible components that must always be in place.

- We must be trained (qualified and certified) to do our assigned jobs.
- We must be “green” on our personal CGBI metrics and thus fully medically ready so we are able to come onto active duty.
- We must organize our civilian lives so that we can answer the call to mobilize when we are needed for surge operations.

Each of these components is simple, but each one requires tremendous coordination and a heaping dose of personal responsibility on the part of each member. What has earned us the respect of the CG senior leadership and even the nation at large? I believe it is the fact that we are citizen-sailors who are always ready. It stands to reason that not being trained, “green,” and ready to mobilize would cause us to become irrelevant more swiftly than any other scenario (but please, let’s not test my theory.)

Sometimes while running, I think about what my family and I have sacrificed for the opportunity to serve in the Coast Guard Reserve – the missed anniversaries, birthdays, vacations, weekends off, and many other ordinary days that may seem trivial to some, but are important to me and my family. But it never takes more than a few hundred yards for those thoughts to turn to how much I have benefited from being a Coast Guard Reservist.

For me, the greatest benefit has been the satisfaction I derive from being part of securing our nation’s homeland – a task much larger than myself and more enduring than just my generation. I get to serve with the best military in the world, a great organization with worthwhile missions involving maritime safety, security and stewardship. And then there’s the random extra-special reward when a stranger approaches simply to say, “Thank you for your service.”

I also remember that although I voluntarily participate, membership has its privileges. Currently, our oldest child is attending college with the assistance of the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. We are enrolled in TRICARE medical and dental insurance because those plans beat the socks off what my civilian employer offers, both in terms of cost and service. The extra income, in addition to what I earn as a civilian in private business, is appreciated all of the time, and retirement pay awaits me at age sixty (getting closer all the time.) Then there’s SGLI, TSP, and various support programs. Being a Coast Guard Reservist has been a welcome change from what I do in my civilian job, and I’m glad I have both.

So the reason I speak about relevance and benefits in the same article is this: let’s stay relevant so we can reap the benefits of serving in the U.S. Coast Guard.
For the next few minutes you own the United States Coast Guard Reserve Program. You are now in charge of all the personnel, policy and funds. All those late night discussions with your fellow shipmates about how you think things could and should be done differently are now sitting squarely in your lap. Some of you have wanted this authority for many years and others are intimidated just thinking about this awesome responsibility. And, while much of the policy is derived from our CG active duty and DoD counterparts, for today you own it.

Now that you are sitting in the big chair, let’s look at some of the recent studies that are sitting in your inbox (desk copies are authorized and encouraged for this exercise).

**RSAT** – Reserve Strategic Assessment Team: This post-911 chartered study assessed our processes and recommended changes that were required to improve the readiness and functionality of the Reserve force. It identified 84 administrative and policy gaps. Each one of the identified gaps was individually assessed and assigned a projected outcome and priority. The scope of this study was significant and its course of action was expected to take multiple years to complete. Over time significant progress was made, however many gaps remained.

**CIAO #9** – Commandant Intent Action Order: Then Commandant, Adm. Thad Allen identified the Reserve component still had room for improvement. He was aware of the RSAT study and the work that remained. Among the top ten priorities the Commandant identified to address during his tenure fixing long-stand Reserve force was on the list. CIAO #9 was to review all past studies and develop policy on contingency staffing to determine the correct size of the Selected Reserve. There was specific direction to address the future of the Port Security rate. I think we can all agree to put that task in the “completed file”.

**RFRS** – Reserve Force Readiness System: RSAT and CIAO 9 helped identify the lack of focused Reserve support on all levels of the organization and led to an internal review of the 536 Full Time Support (FTS) billets funded by the Reserve Training appropriation (AFC 90 account). It was determined that many FTS billets had little if any direct connection to supporting the Reserve force. In response, the RFRS structure was created and a multi-year plan was implemented to better align these billets within the organization. The goal was to improve management, administration, recruiting and training of the Reserve forces.

**CORE** – Concept of Reserve Employment: This is one of the newest additions to your reference material. Although not complete yet, it takes all the policies and inputs from CG Headquarters program offices and brings them down to the billet level. A series of CORE ALCOASTs are alleviating the age old question of what enlisted members really need to focus on during their training time. As the messages are promulgated, it is important to ensure that training software programs (TMT, ALMIS) are updated so readiness can be evaluated. Not only will the member better understand their tasking, but the commands, training centers, fund managers and leaders can make well informed decisions. CORE is better defining individual roles and responsibilities so we can manage our work force.

Without a doubt the above efforts have helped us better align ourselves to the Commandant’s direction of sustaining mission excellence, recapitalizing and building capacity, enhancing crisis response and management, and preparing for the future.

Now you have done all your homework, I think we can agree that we have made significant progress, yet work remains. For example, many believe it is time to reshape our workforce. For several years the phrase “re-rack the RPAL” has been tossed about. Sounds simple enough does it not? Maybe you believe certain rates are no longer required in the Reserve. Perhaps some of our isolated billets are not supporting our members for success and need to be moved to areas where training opportunities are better. The decisions you make, while in the best interests of the service, could very well have a negative impact on your closest shipmates.

In closing, this article was written as a mental drill for the entire workforce. In reality many of you reading this article are or will be involved in many of the strategic and tactical decisions regarding the Reserve force. In today’s turbulent environment some changes can occur very quickly while others seem to drag for years. Whatever course you chart, view the future as if you were at the beginning of your career. It is those who take the oath today that you are making decisions for.

Semper Paratus.
Reserve Command Master Chief Celebrates 28 Year Career

Master Chief Petty Officer Kyle Takakjian, First Coast Guard District Reserve Command Master Chief, retired after 28 years of service in the Coast Guard Reserve during a ceremony at Coast Guard Air Station Cape Cod, Massachusetts, Saturday, July 28, 2012.


Following his advancement to Chief Petty Officer and receiving his anchors, Master Chief Takakjian attended and graduated from the Chief Petty Officers Academy Reserve Class and the Senior Enlisted Leadership Course. A strong proponent of the Chief Mess, Master Chief Takakjian’s long and distinguished career aptly represents the meaning of the anchor. The anchor dates back to the Revenue Cutter Service, symbolizing the events that helped shape our Coast Guard heritage more than 200 years ago. As noted when the Meaning of the Anchor was read during the retirement ceremony, “The anchor is emblematic to a Chief. It reminds Chiefs of the responsibility they have to keep to those that they serve safe from harm and to maintain the finest traditions of the Coast Guard.”

Congratulations, Master Chief, you have worn your anchors with distinction and served your country well.

PSU 305 Goes “Green”

On August 19, Lt. Cmdr. Ronzelle Green was frocked to the rank of commander during a ceremony at Port Security Unit (PSU) 305, Fort Eustis, Virginia. Doing the honors was his wife Marlena and long time shipmate ET1 Keith Reisenweber. Also helping out was the newly frocked commander’s daughter, Pamela. In September, Cmdr. Green assumed command of PSU 308, Gulfport, Mississippi.
In late August, final preparations for the Republican National Convention (RNC) were underway in Tampa, Fla. Deemed a National Special Security Event (NSSE) by the United States Department of Homeland Security the U.S. Coast Guard was designated the lead maritime enforcement agency. Yet as Coast Guard crews set 22 federal security zones around bridges and waterways throughout Tampa Bay, a tempest named Tropical Storm Isaac was brewing in the Gulf of Mexico.

However, meticulous planning proved worthwhile, as forecasted 65 mile per hour winds had no major impact on security. That’s largely because heavy weather contingencies had been factored into the process early on.

As Tampa Bay officials prepared for the arrival of 50,000 delegates, 15,000 members of the media, and an unknown number of protestors - a tropical storm with a possible future as a hurricane approaching the Florida coast barely fazed senior leaders at Sector St. Petersburg. Capt. Sheryl L. Dickinson, Commander, Sector St. Petersburg, credits the planning process. Dickinson also served as the Incident Commander for the RNC 2012.

“We started our planning and coordination efforts early. Over a year before the RNC we reached out to our partner agencies, developed our planning team, and began to scope our security requirements and examine our contingency plans,” she said.

“It really came as no surprise that in late August, we might have to balance the heavy weather response with a massive security operation,” she said. “We were ready.”

With 479 personnel assigned to the RNC, Sector St Petersburg’s Prevention Department seamlessly assumed responsibility for standing up an Incident Management Team in preparation for the arrival of Tropical Storm Isaac. Those assigned to the event were told to make personal preparations as leadership discussed the Continuity of Operations Plan, which might force a relocation east toward Orlando.

As the weather worsened, the public affairs team issued a series of press releases on port conditions, while RNC waterways were secured by crews from Coast Guard units around the nation and several dozen federal, state and local agencies. That included 133 Auxiliarists. As RNC planners shifted their schedules, efforts included increased coordination with local Emergency Operations Centers in the Tampa Bay area.

Within the Maritime Operations Center (MOC) described as a mobile incident command center, phones were ringing as charts of Tampa Bay were spread out before an array of federal, state and local uniforms poring over them and discussing contingencies.

Using the Incident Command System allowed active duty, civilian and reservists members of the Coast Guard to brainstorm about potential issues and threats well in advance and develop a workable plan. Lt. Sharon Grau, a reservist...
and her civilian counterpart, Ed Morris, a port security specialist at Sector St. Petersburg spent 18 months examining maritime and Secret Service requirements, while also trying to anticipate an array of threats and challenges. In the months leading up to the RNC, weekly briefs helped uncover any potential gaps, allowing for development of contingencies. Grau attributes the success of the event to varied skills sets, and strong collaboration among team members with diverse experience.

“Given the requirements of such an event, I found it helpful early on to do lot of listening and information gathering to capitalize on individual strengths and skills,” Grau stated.

First, the geography was examined. Since the main venue was adjacent to a series of channels and a river and included several bridges, commerce and recreational boaters would be affected. Additionally, delegates staying at coastal hotels at far-flung locations would be transported to the convention on buses crossing 15 bridges within the Intracoastal Waterway and Old Tampa Bay. Each posed its own security challenges. That meant outreach to and coordination with port industries, marinas, recreational boaters and local governments would be an essential piece of coordination. The Coast Guard Auxiliary fanned out across hundreds of marinas, interfacing with boaters and distributing fliers to ensure understanding of forthcoming waterways restrictions.

Staffing for the operation was carefully considered and balanced against budget constraints.

“What we sought was a blend of skills, specialized training, and knowledge,” said Grau. It eventually included a mix of reservists, active duty, civilian and Coast Guard Auxiliary members. Crews from specially trained units included the Deployable Operations Group, Maritime Safety and Security Teams from Kings Bay, Ga., New York City and Boston, specialized teams from Sectors Key West, Miami, Charleston and Training Center Yorktown and air crews from Air Station Atlantic City. From boat crews to divers and canine units, a cadre of information technology specialists to decontamination units, to safety planners and logistical support, the focus was safety, security and continuity throughout the six-day evolution. Given the RNC schedule of events, 12-hour watches, running from 0200-1400 and 1400-0200, were set with comprehensive, twice daily briefings. Inside the MOC, Lt. Christopher Anderson, a Sector St. Petersburg reservist ran the off-peak watch juggling phone calls, orchestrating the flow of information gleaned from radio transmissions and live feeds, all while remaining in contact with colleagues from nearly 40 federal, state and local maritime agencies.

“The MOC is the nexus between the Coast Guard and other agencies,” Anderson said.

Generally, that meant responsibility for waterborne operations, but also included development of strategies or fielding questions about bridges, shore side intelligence, or a host of other issues.

The MOC coordinated issues relating to cruise line departures, port deliveries and RNC security, especially as the path of Tropical Storm Isaac appeared to be Tampa Bay. As the storm veered away, other issues become central to ensuring smooth operations. The team quickly shifted into a rhythm integrating seamlessly.

“I really enjoyed the camaraderie,” said Anderson. “Our Coast Guard team got a sense of accomplishment from a job well-done by both active duty and reservists.”

As an example, Anderson pointed to crews that meshed seamlessly, including the intelligence support that came from having a representative embedded within the MOC as well as the crowds and atop Tampa General Hospital (which gave them a critical view of the channels surrounding the main venue.).

Many attribute successful coordination to early engagement during the planning process. Chief Petty Officer Klaus Tobitsch, a reservist who works in policy and planning at the Defense Information Agency, gave high marks to his active duty counterpart.

“The RNC operation worked seamlessly because of our early understanding of well-honed working relationships critical to our success, and because of early engagement allowed input from all team members,” Tobitsch said. Working as the Intelligence Officer at the MOC with his active duty counterpart, Lt. Carl Wilson, the duo highlighted the skills, perspective and experience each brought to the table.

That winning combination was repeated across many facets of the operations. Another such example was communications where Chief Petty Officer Ryan Vess, Chief Operations Specialist, Sector St. Petersburg, was quick to credit his team.

“Our agency does maritime operations,” he said. “But we are responsible for communications and enforcement on the water, on shore and we expanded it to temporary operations centers including the MOC, MACC and TCC and a few EOCs, he said, ticking off a list of acronyms defining the vast scope of the RNC.

Vess also highlighted the challenges posed by having multiple agencies working together. The communications team provided an array of capabilities ranging from the Internet to secure chat capabilities, phone calls to radios, cameras and other tools helping provide a common operating picture in real time. Those capabilities proved invaluable. Many say the successful operation can be attributed to three things; coordination, communications and planning. That included housing and transportation for hundreds of people, ensuring crews were hydrated, and developing watch schedules.

“It was a large-scale security event with a lot of moving parts that required a massive team effort. I’ve never been more proud of our Coast Guard team,” Dickinson said.

*Story and photo by PAC Judy L. Silverstein*  
*Seventh District Public Affairs*
Eighth District "DARTs" Into Action

In a corner of the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport in the late evening hours of August 29, a dedicated crew of Coast Guard reservists from Marine Safety Detachment (MSD) Cincinnati’s Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) made a final run through their pre-flight checklist. Supplies were packed. Gear was secured. Boats were ready for their flight down to New Orleans to join in the Coast Guard’s multi-faceted response effort in the wake of Hurricane Isaac.

Boats? At the airport? Ready for flight?

While the crew, with their four-door Ford pickup and trailer stacked with boats may have looked out of place on the runway that afternoon, all questions concerning its odd location were answered when an HC-130 Hercules aircraft from Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Fla., touched down that evening.

DART’s, like this one from MSD Cincinnati, are a specialized weapon in the Coast Guard’s response arsenal. The crews are made up primarily of Reserve members and are deployed during inland flooding incidents. Crews use small, light-weight, flat-bottom boats that are ideally suited for navigating floodwaters in urban developments. Developments, such as towns and suburban neighborhoods, are full of unknown hazards when flooding occurs.

“Missing manhole covers, electrical lines, stepping hazards, contamination issues, animals and reptiles are just a few of the obstacles our crews face,” said Petty Officer 3rd Class Zachary Carlson, a boatswain mate with the DART. “Our chief snapped a photo of an alligator lurking close by during this deployment. People don’t realize that nature’s creatures also are affected in these situations.”

This particular DART is unique in that the trailer and the boats were specially designed to fit inside a Hercules. This allows the crew to be utilized anywhere in the country where flooding occurs. In only a matter of hours, the DART crew can be on the ground and response-ready hundreds of miles from their home unit.

There is a science behind transporting the MSD Cincinnati DART. Loading the truck and trailer of boats can turn into a logistics nightmare without the proper planning.

“There is an awful lot of planning and quite a bit of math homework that goes into coordinating one of these flights,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Paul Johnson, an aviation maintenance technician at Air Station Clearwater and loadmaster for the flight. “Total length, basic parameter, weight of cargo, number and weight of passengers, consideration for the joint between the trailer and the truck...these are all things that have to be factored into the equation.”

The evolution of the load is lengthy, taking upwards of an hour to complete. There is no room for error – much like there is no room on the plane.

“It is a really tight flight,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Joel Brown, a reservist with the MSD Cincinnati DART. “The front bumper of the truck is all the way at the front wall of the cargo area, and the tail lights of the trailer extend all the way to the back. There is just enough space on either side of the boat for our crew to sit.”

The DART crew spent the entire three-hour flight from Cincinnati to New Orleans facing the boats, with minimal room for movement. Luckily for the team, it was a smooth flight.

“We were able to fly right over the top of the storm, which made this trip nice and uneventful,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Darren Johnson, an aviation maintenance technician at Air Station Clearwater, who served as a crew member on the Hercules. “It was a good flight.”

This is far from the first time the MSD Cincinnati DART has been down to the Gulf Coast. “Our team was here for Katrina and Rita,” said Brown. “This is our seventh deployment to the area.”

DARTS provide the Coast Guard the essential surface logistics support it needs to successfully launch and execute response efforts. The versatility of the DART makes them ideal for deployment during inland and coastal flood events. The small, flat bottom boats allow response personnel to maintain access to storm-damage areas. DART crews can reach the areas that air assets cannot.

“We have the ability to go from house to house,” said Brown. “We can drive down each street of the affected neighborhoods and bring the residents the help they need right to their homes.”

In all, the DART crew rescued 5 people and assisted partner agencies in the delivery of food and supplies to residents in one of the hardest-hit areas of southeast Louisiana. And then, as quickly as they had appeared, they were gone –headed back up to the Midwest to await the next emergency call to action.

“Being able to provide assistance to people when they are losing hope, even if we are only here for a short time, is one of the most rewarding things about these types of deployments,” said Carlson with a smile. “And while the expressions and gratitude we receive from people when we show up is rewarding enough, I always accept the hugs when they come my way.”

Although the people of the Gulf Coast appreciate their visit, they hope that it will be quite some time before they are back in the neighborhood again.

By PA2 Elizabeth Bordelon
Eighth District Public Affairs

In the aftermath of Tropical Storm Isaac, members of a Coast Guard Disaster Assistance Response Team return from assisting a trucker from Texas along the flooded frontage road by the Highway 55 underpass in LaPlace, La., Aug. 31.

Photo by PA2 Bill Colclough
Interagency Partnering:
Assistance to Army Corps Hones CG Reserve Readiness

United States Coast Guard Naval Engineering Support Unit New Orleans Reserve Reconstruction Team partnered with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) St. Louis District to perform depot level mechanical and welding maintenance support to several dredgers and crew boats during their Active Duty Training (ADT) period. The relationship between the two entities is rooted in three Coast Guard commands -- Base Support Detachment St. Louis Industrial Division, Sector Upper Mississippi Logistics Division, and the Coast Guard Cutter Cheyenne -- being tenants on the ACOE St. Louis District property footprint located on the western bank of the Mississippi River waterfront.

Established in 1837, the St. Louis ACOE District encompasses 28,000 square miles of land, dedicated to maintaining a proper and healthy balance of the varying uses of the heartland’s waterways. One of the missions of the St. Louis District ACOE is to maintain a 9 foot navigable channel on the Upper Mississippi River. Dredging in the St. Louis District is accomplished by using hydraulic pipeline dredges. A hydraulic dredge mixes large quantities of water with the excavated material (almost always sand in the St. Louis District) to create a slurry which is then pumped out of the navigable channel. By performing channel reconnaissance surveys, the ACOE is able to identify possible dredging locations.

As the primary executing arm of the Deputy Commandant of Mission Support’s (DCMS) contingency support plan, members of the Reserve Reconstruction Team -- also known as the Facility Repair Team (RT) -- continuously seek opportunities to sustain their rating competencies at a high level of proficiency. The RT carries out emergent repairs to USCG facilities thus enabling them to resume operations and prevent further damage until longer-term, permanent repairs can be completed. This capability has been essential in successfully responding to domestic natural disasters during the last quarter century.

During the initial project planning phase of the ADT period, leaders from both agencies established the requirements, work scope, budget, risk, and capabilities necessary to properly execute, monitor and control the proposed project. The RT performed maintenance tasks on Crew Boat Barron, Crane Derrick 6, Motor Vessel Prairie Du Rocher, Motor Vessel Kimmswick, and the Pipeline and Baffle Shack. The tasks completed included the replacement of engine belts, block heaters, air, oil and hydraulic filters, lube oil renewal on all main propulsion and generator engines, and the fabrication and installation of 95% of all fuel and hydraulic hoses. Welding operations consisted of cutting old dredge pipe out of the coupling flanges, removing old wear plates from the discharge baffle, and the fabrication and installation of new plates, handrails, and exhaust flaps.

Overall the project was a success for all parties involved. The amount and type of work was a perfect fit for the time allotted and skill sets required for completion. As a result of the manpower provided by the RT, the ACOE saved over $35,000 in labor; resources used to supplement the procurement of material found to be in need of replacement upon initial inspection of the proposed work items. This collaborative environment enabled work to proceed without any delays. Future possibilities for additional projects with the ACOE include increased exposure to diesel electric propulsion plants, filter, oil, gasket, hose and electrical preventative maintenance, as well as opportunities to weld on unique material, equipment and structures.

Long Serving Sta. Galveston Reservist Advances

Reservist BM1 Mike Summers, left, receives his advancement certificate from MEC Mike Bazzrea, Senior Enlisted Reserve Advisor, Station Galveston, TX, during a ceremony on Aug. 18.

“BM1 Summers has held a number of qualifications during his time here including 41’ UTB coxswain and Boarding Team Member. Currently, he is certified as a RB-S Contingency coxswain,” reports BCMCM Robert “Bob” Milmoe, Officer-in-Charge at Station Galveston. “Mike has been a major asset to ensuring the safety of the Port of Houston/Galveston for many years while patrolling the Houston Ship Channel which leads to the largest petrochemical port in the United States.”
Reservist attains Marine Safety Proficiency

Lt. Gregory Jensen (right), a Sector Buffalo reservist, was recently presented with a certificate attesting to his recent earning of the Marine Safety Device (the “M” pin). Making the presentation at Sector Buffalo on behalf of Commanding Officer Capt. Steven Wischmann is Sector Buffalo Senior Reserve Officer, Cmdr. John Hartzell.

USCG Hosts Kappa Leaguers: Outreach, Dreams, Options and Excitement Full Speed Ahead

In late spring, Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach (LA/LB) hosted over 25 members of the Kappa League Leadership Development Program. This entity provides mentorship to urban youth helping them keep focused in school while setting their sights high in pursuit of future careers. The students were accompanied by their mentors Mr. Doug Brown of Los Angeles Unified School District, Dr. Ray Ivey, Dr. Todd Barnett, Mr. Jimmie Theragood, and Mr. Julius McCurdy.

Lt. Cmdr. Greg Duncan, a member of Sector LA/LB Reserve Sector Boarding Team (RSBT), worked with numerous Sector personnel to ensure the students’ day long visit would provide a dynamic and interesting look at the types of training and missions Coast Guardsmen perform on a daily basis. In addition, he arranged for the students to even have some hands on time on a range of equipment from boats to aircraft.

Lt. Cmdr. Duncan began the day with a broad overview of the Coast Guard, his experiences and a presentation of numerous videos. A question and answer session followed covering topics like, Basic Training at Cape May; Officer Candidate School and Academy officer training programs; and Coast Guard missions including search & rescue, port state control, pollution response, maritime law enforcement, and counter terrorism.

Next, CWO Gardner explained his job at the Sector working in the Inspections Department. He was followed by MEC Gonzalez and ME1 Clark who gave the visitors a briefing on Maritime Law Enforcement Department missions. They showed the tools of their trade including; the Sig 229 .40 caliber pistol, the Model 870 Remington12 gauge shotgun as well as critical safety equipment like the Mustang dry suit, ballistic armor and gas analyzer. These presentations generated yet another steady flow of questions from these inquisitive young men as they absorbed the information and began the process of internalizing where their futures may lead.

By this time lunch was on the plan of the day, the Kappa League Kids and their hosts marched to the parade field for a special lunch of pizza at the gazebo. However, they had no idea of the surprise that Lt.j.g. La’ Shanda Jones and others from Air Station LA had in store for them. A USCG helicopter flew low overhead as the young visitors stood in wide-eyed awe, as the great orange and white machine alighted on the grass. Lt.j.g. Jones shared her story of achieving her dream to become a Coast Guard pilot, with the help of her mentor Lt. Cmdr. Jeanine McIntosh, the first African American female aviator in the USCG.

With lunch over, the helicopter crew spun up the turbines and whirred skyward with a final salutatory fly over of the Kappa Leaguers. Next on the their agenda was a visit to the Sector LA/LB boat basin to inspect some of the Sector’s boats up close. At the boat basin the students made their way down to two 45 foot Response Boat Mediums and crewmembers BM2 DiMaio, MK3 Wilson, and FN Maryutt conducted a tour covering the boats’ mission uses, capabilities and training the crew must undergo to qualify as crew and coxswains aboard these multipurpose boats.

With the boat tour over and many questions asked and answered the leaguers headed to their final tour stop of the day, the Sector Operations Center. There Lt.j.g. Arumae and his crew of specialists OS2 Clifford, OS2 Werre, OS3 Cordero gave a tour of the operations center. They explained how different monitors and computers track incoming and outgoing ship traffic, base activities, lend support to area operations and carry out the work directed by the Captain of the Port. Students were interested to know how a lifesaving rescue scenario is managed and how fast help can arrive.

Throughout the day the students often asked if and how they could get trained to do these exciting USCG jobs. At every stop along the way Coast Guardsmen were there to ensure these students left with a clear understanding of what it takes to serve. They gained a greater understanding and appreciation for the diversity of the Coast Guard’s capabilities, its mission and the value it places on grooming a diverse workforce to accomplish these missions.

Story and photo by Ens. Patrick Horton
Sector LA/LB

Kappa League students pose with flight crew and other Sector Los Angeles/Long Beach personnel in front of a HH-65 helicopter.
The Truckload Carriers Association has named FedEx Freight employee and Coast Guard Reservist BMCS Kenny Cass, of Portland, Oregon, as one of its Highway Angels for his response at the scene of a late spring accident on a Portland highway.

Cass witnessed a pick-up truck as it rammed a tractor trailer rig, and became wedged up to its windshield under the trailer. Cass immediately went into action. He called 911, parked his truck and signaled other drivers to warn them of the accident. He checked on both drivers and found them conscious but disoriented and in shock. He then located the reflective triangles on the wrecked truck and put them out to warn oncoming traffic as well.

At this point smoke began to billow out from under the truck and Cass returned to the pick-up and pulled the driver to safety. He then returned to the wreck site to get the driver of the tractor-trailer to safety as well and remained with both until paramedics arrived.

Cass is assigned at Station Seattle serving as the unit’s Senior Enlisted Reserve Advisor (SERA). His “day job” is as a driving trainer for Federal Express.

“I’m willing to help anyone and everyone when I can,” said Cass, who’s combined 26 years Coast Guard/Navy experience have prepared him well for keeping calm and acting quickly in stressful situations. “I’m a people person, which is why I enjoy training new drivers and helping them accomplish whatever they set out to do. When one of my students gets a CDL, it makes me feel good. I know that I did my job properly.”

**By Lt. Kyle A. Stone,**
**Reserve Boat Forces Officer**
**USCG Station Seattle**

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**Great news! Reserve CPO Class Available**

The CPO Academy Reserve Class XXXI is now in Direct Access, and ETRs (electronic training requests) can be submitted.

The course code is 500884, and the convening date is 22 Oct 2012. The graduation date is 02 Nov 2012.

For additional information contact:
ETCM Rich Hines,
Reserve Leadership Programs Advisor,
Office of Leadership & Professional Development
at: rich.l.hines@uscg.mil or rhines@hess.com
CG Reservist “Channels” Her Inner Self

To say Yeoman Third Class (YN3) Paige Crimmin’s life journey has been both diverse and exciting would be somewhat of an understatement. Currently assigned to the 14th District (D14) Legal Office as a drilling reservist, YN3 Crimmin began her military career as an active duty member. Following four years at small boat and aviation units, she left active duty and affiliated with the Coast Guard Reserve to pursue life as a full-time student athlete.

In 2010 she was recalled to Coast Guard Headquarters to provide administrative support for those involved in creating and implementing policy related to the BP oil spill disaster. Upon release from activation, Crimmin took advantage of her Post-911 G.I. Bill benefits to continue her education abroad in New Zealand. Moving to New Zealand also provided her with the opportunity to pursue her passion for long distance swimming and her ultimate goal of swimming the English Channel.

Crimmin’s supervisor at D14, Cmdr. Lisa Schutz has no doubt that the young petty officer will accomplish what she sets out to do. “As a YN3, Petty Officer Crimmin is gaining proficiency in her craft, working with Reserve Force Readiness System staff and D14 legal during her drills and annual training period.” Cmdr. Schutz goes on to add, “Given her passion for the Coast Guard Reserve and swimming competitively, she successfully manages to accomplish both, commuting from New Zealand to Oahu to complete her Reserve obligations and competing in local swimming events wherever she goes. She is definitely driven and dedicated.”

Former Hillie, Crimmin Conquers Arduous Cook Strait in New Zealand

Note: Article below reprinted (in part) with the permission of Dave Dyer and the Eagle-Tribune on-line. For full text visit: www.eagletribune.com/sports/x1862283559/Former-Hillie/Crimmin-conquers-arduous-Cook-Strait-in-New-Zealand

By Dave Dyer

There are a lot of things you can say about Paige Crimmin, but there are some things that just don’t apply.

Crimmin is hardly a homebody and she is not one to shy away from a challenge.

A resident of Haverhill, Mass., Crimmin went to Haverhill High as a freshman, but since then she’s been on the go, transferring to St. Thomas in Dover so that she could more easily train with Seacoast Swimming Association under the guidance of Mike Parrato, a coach for Olympian Jenny Thompson, and then off to the west coast for college.

A multi-event repeat state champion in New Hampshire, Crimmin joined the U.S. Military for Rescue Swimmer program in 2005 while continuing her education. She had started her college career at the University of San Diego as a Division 1 swimmer, got involved with the Coast Guard Reserve, getting called up when the BP oil spill created havoc in the Gulf Coast.

In February of 2011, Crimmin moved to New Zealand to finish her college degree in primary school education at Victoria University in Wellington. She moved to New Zealand for a new challenge and to explore a new culture.

She also picked New Zealand because it is an ideal place to train for her ultimate goal, which is to swim the grueling English Channel. She has scheduled to attempt it in June of 2013.

“It’s been a goal of mine for a long time,” said Crimmin. “I was attending Haverhill High my freshman year and told my English teacher that I will swim the Channel.”

In New Zealand, the conditions are ideal for all sorts of training and, last month it provided her with a great “warm-up,” a swim across Cook Strait, which is the channel that separates the North from the South islands, where the Tasman Sea connects to the Pacific Ocean.

Less than 100 people have ever swum the Cook Strait because it can take anywhere from 15-25 hours, the currents can be ferocious and the water is nearly freezing.

Rarely deterred, Crimmin completed the Cook swim despite freezing temperatures and waves so big that the whole crew on a support boat got sick. The currents were so intense that she had to detour two miles down the coast to finish. “The toughest thing was not the distance, it was more the cold,” said Crimmin.

“Never in my life have I ever been exposed to freezing temperatures that shocked my bones on the first hit I submerged. The first four hours were cold numbing.

“The Cook Strait was a new challenge for me as well as a prep for the English Channel.”

As Crimmin prepares for the English Channel, she will continue to vary her workouts, similar to when she was training for the Cook Strait. Living in New Zealand allows her to do that.

“If I really concentrated on a balance of swimming and outdoor activities, the main challenge being not to get bored and to be a well-rounded athlete.”

But Crimmin doesn’t expect the Channel swim to end her physical adventures. She has an informal bucket list that revolves around travel.

“I would love to explore Asia, travel India and make a difference,” she said. “I like indulging in different cultures in a positive manner like building a school or teaching and writing in Japan.”

For Crimmin, life is just one big adventure and she’d like to keep it that way.
USCG Pipe Band “plays” major role in DC-Area activities

The United States Coast Guard Pipe Band (USCGPB), which is an all volunteer organization affiliated with the Coast Guard, participated in several events in the Washington, DC area in May 2012. These events included National Police Week activities, its first pipe band competition, Vice Commandant Sally Brice-O’Hara’s Change of Watch and retirement, and the National Capital Region Chief’s Call to Indoctrination Acceptance Dinner. Founded in 2002 the Coast Guard Pipe Band has had an increasing presence in the national spotlight. Comprised of USC active duty, reserve, retired, combat veterans and auxiliarist, the band membership is approximately 80 members strong today.

Piper Ken Hines, Cmdr., USCGR (ret), who works for the U.S. Department of Justice recognized that there are several Coast Guard shipmates included on the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC and realized a Coast Guard presence was appropriate to honor our fallen comrades.

With the assistance of band leadership and personnel and in his role as project officer, Cmdr. Hines set in motion what would be the USCGPB’s first appearance at this event. Thirty-five pipers, drummers, and band staff responded to the call for the two day event with assistance from Coast Guard Headquarters.

Monday, May 14th was a day of firsts for the USCGPB. The day opened with a performance before a large crowd off Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC at the annual Law Enforcement Honor Guard and Pipe Band competition. Under the direction of Pipe Major M. L. Loudermilk, (Coast Guard Combat Veteran), and facing tough competition from pipe bands representing numerous law enforcement agencies, the band came away with the third place trophy. This first was followed by the first USCGPB band performance at Coast Guard HQ for an enthusiastic crowd of about 100 off 2nd Street.

The band was also invited to perform at the “Tent City”, an entertainment venue for law enforcement officers attending the events. This piping opportunity during the Police Week subsequently led to a request for the USCGPB to take part in a major police memorial service in Pennsylvania in 2014.

A very long day included a parade with law enforcement agencies from across the nation marching from near Capitol Hill. Drum Major and band member Lt. Mike Doria (USCGR) led the pipe band in the mile long parade to the National Law Enforcement Memorial where a very moving ceremony and final respects were rendered to those law enforcement officers who paid the last full measure. Later that night members of the the band performed at the National Capital Region Chief’s Call to Indoctrination and were well received by the guests. The USCGPB intends to add the National Law Enforcement Memorial and Police Week events to its annual performance schedule to honor our shipmates forever remembered at this memorial.

The Washington, DC week concluded with another exceptional event. The USCG Pipe Band and the USCG Band performed at the Vice Commandant’s change of command and retirement ceremony for Vice Adm. Sally Brice-O’Hara. The USCGPB was honored for its performance in the ceremony and wished fair winds and following seas to Vice Adm. Brice-O’Hara and saluted her for her many years of service to this country.

Membership is open to any US Coast Guard member and additional information can be obtained by visiting the US Coast Guard Pipe Band website [www.uscgpipeband.org](http://www.uscgpipeband.org/).

*Story by Mike Goodwin, Public Affairs Coordinator, USCGPB*  
*Photo by Nicole Tuminello, USCGPB Photographer*
The “USCG Joint Forces Command Unit” Is Now Affiliated With DoD’s Joint Staff South

In August of 2011, one of the ten DoD Combatant Commands (COCOM’s), namely Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) was decommissioned as a cost cutting measure. JFCOM’s mission was as a “joint force provider” for DoD tasked to develop, train, and integrate joint, inter-agency, and multi-national forces. At the time of the decommissioning the Coast Guard (CG) had a unit assigned to JFCOM consisting of 16 reserve billets; 1 Captain, 8 Commanders, 5 Lieutenant Commanders, and 2 senior enlisted. Under JFCOM, unit personnel spent the majority of their time training and getting qualified as DoD operations and exercise planners by working in DoD’s major exercise program.

During the decommissioning process, senior DoD leadership determined that certain functions performed by JFCOM had to remain intact. Among those were functions performed by personnel assigned to the CG unit. When JFCOM was decommissioned the functions performed by CG members were transferred to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

The unit now performs the same functions for the JCS that it did under JFCOM and provides the same level of training to its members. Yet to be officially renamed, the CG unit is unofficially referred to as the CG Joint Staff Unit. Administratively the unit is attached to CG Atlantic Area (LANT). It works closely with the LANT-5 staff to ensure that it supports the LANT Command vision. The unit is also part of an ongoing LANT study which is analyzing the billet structure and the functions performed at all Reserve COCOM Units.

The training that the Joint Staff Unit receives provides LANT with personnel who are capable of working with DoD in a joint and multi-national environment. In addition, the training prepares unit personnel to mobilize for national defense, homeland security, and disaster response missions. This training is generally received through planning and participation in major DoD exercises including TERMINAL FURY, VIGILANT SHIELD, and ARDENT SENTRY. On a smaller scale, the unit members also participate in exercises such as PANAMAX and UNIFIED ENDEAVOR. Recently, the unit shifted its focus to NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, and PACOM exercises which tend to provide better training opportunities for Coast Guard personnel.

The unit drills at the Joint Coalition and Warfighting Center (JCW) in Suffolk, Virginia, which is the headquarters of Joint Staff-South (JSS), and is part of a large DoD Reserve and National Guard organization that works and trains together. Unit members generally perform their inactive duty for training periods during a common defined weekend with the DoD and National Guard reservists in Suffolk. The command provides unit members the flexibility to drill outside of the standard drill weekend when it enhances their individual training. Typically the member’s 12 days of annual training is spent participating in a DoD exercise, often overseas or at a state-side DoD installation.

Being part of an organization made up of reserve and guardsmen makes training at a combatant command a truly special experience. All COCOM unit commanding officers strive to make sure that CG reservists are provided with unique training opportunities to build specialized capability in alignment with the Commandant’s Reserve Policy Statement. That is certainly the case at the CG Joint Staff Unit.

Story by Capt. Francis ‘Stash’ Pelkowski

JFCOM CGRU Wins JFCOM Commanders Cup

Coast Guard Reserve personnel proudly display the 2011 Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) Commander’s Cup trophy. A team building competition, the JFCOM Commander’s Cup fostered competition and camaraderie among the DoD, National Guard and Coast Guard components assigned. The CG unit captured the trophy during the final competition prior to JFCOM’s decommissioning in August 2011.
The CG Joint Staff Unit Hosts
Pentagon Leaders and DoD Reservists

Because the Coast Guard Joint Staff Unit trains side-by-side with all four of DoD’s military services plus the National Guard, it is important for all service members to understand the capabilities of their sister services. To help solidify these critical joint relationships with Joint Staff-South personnel and Pentagon leaders, the Coast Guard personnel volunteered to host a Joint Staff-South reserve all-hands and family-day. The all-hands event provided a unique opportunity to educate over three hundred DoD personnel, their families, and Pentagon leaders, about CG missions and capabilities.

Hosted at Coast Guard Base Portsmouth, the day started with a number of formal events. First, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) “Patriot Awards” were presented to a number of civilian employers for their support of Joint Staff-South reservists. This was followed by an address from Major General Kelly McKeague, Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs on National Guard Matters, to the Joint Staff-South Reserve and Guard members to whom he stressed the importance of Reserve and Guard members gaining experience in the joint environment.

Following the day’s formal events, unit members and their families got better acquainted over barbeque and sporting activities. In addition, tours and demonstrations showcasing Coast Guard missions and capabilities were provided. These included a CG helicopter (HH-60) performing a rescue swimmer deployment demonstration. Following the demo the aircraft landed becoming a static display affording guests an up close look at the HH-60 and the opportunity to speak with the crew.

Guided tours included the Sector Hampton Roads Command Center, the Buoy Tender FRANK DREW, the High Endurance Cutter TAMPA and a static display by Coast Guard Dive Team showcasing its diving capabilities. In addition, the ESGR award winners along with the visiting dignitaries got underway on Station Portsmouth’s 41’ utility boat for a cross-harbor ride to the Norfolk Naval Base.

Accentuated by good weather, joint camaraderie, great food, family participation, the event accomplished its intended objectives while highlighting the Coast Guard’s unique set of missions and capabilities to our DoD and National Guard counterparts.

Rear Admiral Hinrichs
assumes PACAREA SRO Post

The Pacific Area Commander, Vice Adm. Paul Zukunft, presided over the Pacific Area Senior Reserve Officer Change of Watch Ceremony held June 15, 2012 on Coast Guard Island. During the ceremony Rear Adm. John S. Welch was relieved by Rear Adm. Kurt B. Hinrichs.

Reservists ME2 Brian Bowman and MST2 James Hardesty of the Redeployment Assistance Inspection Detachment (RAID) along with Lt. Cmdr. Kent Sieg of Coast Guard Atlantic Area on ‘The Boardwalk’ at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, June 12, 2012. Personnel with long-term assignment in-theater are issued the Army Multi-Cam uniform. Additional uniforms are worn by Coast Guardsmen assigned elsewhere in U.S. Central Command’s area of operations. Photo by ME2 Michael Nishikawa.
Reserve PAs: “Report” for Duty

During our First District Reserve all-hands in October 2011 and again in April 2012, there was a reoccurring message from the command, “Check with your supervisors regarding scheduling your annual training (ADT). Chances are you’ll be joining us for the events planned for the Bicentennial of the War of 1812.”

As a Public Affairs Specialist, this was a given. Where there’s an event significant enough to set up a Joint Information Center to deal with local and even national media attention, the ‘PAs’ came out of the woodwork.

As advancements are made in technology, the way we communicate is under a microscope. It’s not just a one-way conversation anymore; people are engaging on social platforms like Facebook, Twitter and blogs for the public to see and interact. There is increased pressure to communicate both accurately and efficiently, and in a way that truly represents the members of the U.S. Coast Guard and its missions.

That is why the Public Affairs rating is one of the most integrated jobs between active duty and its reserve counterparts. If we can’t communicate with each other, how are we supposed to successfully interact with constituents—taxpayers, elected officials and the men and women of the Coast Guard?

It is important for reserve PAs to spend their one weekend a month, two weeks a year training to support real world operations such as the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 and for contingency responses like many of us experienced while deployed at Deepwater Horizon. To develop and strategize the message of the Coast Guard, PAs take into account several stipulations like the nature of the event, the public perception and the Coast Guard’s role.

Effective communication can improve internal and external relations by:
• Increasing Coast Guard effectiveness through public understanding and support
• Helping to save lives by educating and informing
• Improving morale, recruiting, retention and performance by informing and motivating

To harmonize our efforts, PAs use several platforms, strategies and mediums to reach our targets. Here is what you can expect to find Reserve PAs doing on a typical drill weekend:

Capturing Imagery and Video

With most cases the Coast Guard is involved in, we are one of the first responders. Also, due to the nature of our missions, the Coast Guard is out there in conditions that are deemed unsafe.

A Public Affairs Specialist is responsible for capturing or collecting any visuals that coincide with ongoing operations. The media may not have the authorization to be on scene, or even the resources. It is our job to help them tell the story and as they say, ‘a picture is worth a thousand words.’

Standing Duty

Reserve PAs are often in the duty rotation upon completing watch stander qualifications for their unit. Responding to cases by informing the public with news, images and updates validates the Coast Guard as a source for information. Standing duty and communicating with the units involved also enables PAs to develop messaging in a timely manner and to serve as a spokesperson.

It is also essential for the duty PA to work with the media to inform. Just as with the established Coast Guard networks -- news releases, tweets, blogs -- the media serves as a valuable tool to communicate with the community and beyond.

Monitoring the News

Staying on top of news trends and community discussions arms PAs with the information needed to inform appropriate Coast Guard members of the public’s perception to develop effective messaging to reach the intended audience.

Training

The men and women of the Coast Guard are integral to the public’s apprehension. Often times, the Marine Science Technician (MST) covered in oil serves as a better spokesperson than the unit PA. Regardless of where they serve, leaders from around the Coast Guard should emphasize the importance of Public Affairs training and encourage members’ involvement as appropriate.

Public Affairs Specialists are at the forefront of bridging training with real world experiences. They stand Semper Paratus, always ready to report for duty when ever and where ever called.

Story by PA3 Ann Marie Gorden, First Coast Guard District

Stay informed:

Coast Guard’s Digital Newsroom:  www.uscgnews.com
Coast Guard Compass Blog:  coastguard.dodlive.mil
Coast Guard Visual Imagery:  cgvi.uscg.mil
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From June 28th through July 5th, 2012, over 150 Reservists from throughout District One participated in the bicentennial celebrations of the War of 1812, held in conjunction with Boston Harborfest. Over the past year, many of these same reservists were actively involved in the various planning stages of these festivities, festivities that the U.S. Coast Guard was proud to be a part of. The events that took place were ultimately about supporting the community, volunteering, and enabling the public to have an up-close look at the rich history of the U.S. Coast Guard and the history of Boston. The public was also able to see first-hand the people and ships that played and continue to play an important role in the safety and security of the port of Boston and the nation as a whole.

Planning an event like this is no small endeavor. Over 824,000 visitors came to Boston to participate in the activities and the U.S. Coast Guard played a significant role throughout the week. Four U.S. Coast Guard cutters were in port, the Juniper, Marcus Hanna, Escanaba, and Seneca as well as the Coast Guard Cutter Eagle, the training ship from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. The general public had the opportunity to tour these vessels as well as attend War of 1812 Coast Guard history lectures, witness Search and Rescue demonstrations, see the Coast Guard Drill Team in action, witness the Coast Guard Period Color Guard and interact with the Coast Guard Historic Ship’s company, just to name a few.

U.S. Coast Guard active duty personnel, with support from reservists, played a monumental role in ensuring the planned events went smoothly and were well received by the public and the various partner agencies involved. They stepped up a Unified Command at Sector Boston, with various key positions being filled by participating reservists, and were actively involved in the planning stages up to one year prior to the start of the commemorations.

The Coast Guard has a long and rich military history of providing security and enabling commerce, dating back before the War of 1812 with the establishment of the Revenue Cutter Service, a service that started just up the road from Boston in Newburyport with the Revenue Cutter Massachusetts. Similar to the modern day Coast Guard, their mission was to protect American commerce, provide law enforcement assets in ports and along our coasts, develop valuable maritime intelligence, transport precious government cargos, dignitaries and diplomats, deliver vital dispatches, and fight alongside the U.S. Navy to protect against foreign invasion.

In Massachusetts, these continuous efforts to fulfill the above mentioned missions have contributed to the nearly 8,800 companies that import and export goods to and from Massachusetts. Today’s export-supported jobs linked to manufacturing account for an estimated 4.9 percent of Massachusetts’ total private-sector employment.

As shown by their involvement in the War of 1812 Bicentennial events, 1st District reservists continue to play an important role in the Coast Guard’s efforts to serve the general public and key stakeholders within the district’s area of responsibility.

By Lt. Cmdr. Kevin M. Tyrrell, District One External Affairs
Reserve members played a crucial role in the high visibility visit of the Coast Guard Cutter Eagle to Naval Station Mayport, Florida, from April 27 to May 3. Reservists served as Security Officers responsible for the safety of over 700 guests including school children, teachers, Scouts, and cadets who visited CG Cutter Eagle.

Reservists also manned security check points to ensure guests without official identification were thoroughly screened to ensure the safety of all attendees. They also controlled vehicle parking and access to secure pier areas. In addition, reservists secured personal flotation devices and coordinated transportation aboard the USCGC Kingfisher and a Response Boat Medium 45654 for guests so they could board Eagle for the very special and unique “Ride-In” event as the cutter approached Mayport, Fla.

A Letter of Appreciation (LOA) from Mr. Robert Manning directed to the CG Cutter Eagle’s Commanding Officer Capt. Eric Jones, congratulated the CG Cutter Eagle crew as well as all active duty and reserve personnel responsible for the efficiency and professionalism they exhibited in managing access to the CG Cutter Eagle during this high profile event. Members particularly commended in this LOA for their efforts included Lt. Brian Doyle, Lt. Keith Meverden, and Lt.j.g. Ruben Del Rio. Also recognized for the contributions were: Lt. Cmdr. Corey Thayer, MST2 Jo Deming, BM3 Corey Weber, YN3 Taris Smalls, YN3 Sarah Keck, ME3 Marvin Page, and SN Maurice Todd.

By Lt. Ruben Del Rio
Instructors and students from the Boat Forces Center at Training Center Yorktown get underway on the York River for a day of underway training.

Photo by Jeff Smith
Filling in the Future

In an effort to maximize results within limited time constraints, several CG units have devised innovative approaches to ensure reservists attain the training necessary to maintain proficiency.
RB-S Boat Crew Training Hits Its Stride at Training Center Yorktown

Story and Photo by Jeff Smith

Following several years of planning, course development and beta testing during 2011, the Reserve RB-S Boat Crew Member Course completed full-scale implementation this year with six classes held at Training Center Yorktown, Va., between late April and early September.

Sponsored by the Office of Boat Forces, the RB-S Boat Crew Member Course was created to address the unique challenges Reserve personnel assigned to Boat Forces units face in order to gain initial crew qualification. The two primary challenges identified were a lack of a standard qualification process from unit to unit and protracted attainment of initial qualification due to limited or inconsistent training time availability. For reservists in the Machinery Technician (MK) and Maritime Enforcement Specialist (ME) ratings required to attain boat crew qualification, these challenges were more difficult to overcome. Unlike their Boatswain Mate (BM) counterparts, these ratings do not receive any boat crew training as part of their formal ‘A’ School curriculum.

The Reserve RB-S Boat Crew Member training was specifically designed to help non-BMs develop a set of core skills they can build on at their home units. In addition, by providing the members with a solid foundation of boat crew skills, the Office of Boat Forces hopes to reduce some of the strain training Reserve personnel presents at the unit level.

“The Reserve RB-S Crew Member course is a result of close collaboration between the Office of Boat Forces and the Boat Forces Center at Training Center Yorktown,” states Lt. Dave Ruhlig, (CG-7311). He goes on to report that in March 2011, a National Graduate School project team, which included Lt. Cmdr. Michael Sharp, Lt. Jocelyn Soriano, and Lt. Juan Hernandez, completed research on improvements in the Reserve component qualification system. The team provided recommendations that dramatically reduced qualification time from an average of 3 years to just 6 months for the typical non-BM Reserve personnel assigned as crew member trainees. “Working with Yorktown we were able to develop a two week curriculum and put on a pilot course in October of 2011. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the field, which prompted us to move forward with formalizing the course and funding six two-week classes (six students per class) during FY12.”

At Yorktown the focus is two-fold according to BMC Matt Wolanzyk who, until recently, was the RB-S/TANB School Chief. “The students get exposed to almost the entire boat crew personnel qualification system (PQS) during the two weeks they are onboard,” reports Chief Wolanzyk. “Our primary goal is to get them to a basic level of skill and proficiency while they are here. It is our hope that with just a little follow-on training at their parent command they will be ready for a crewman board within two to three weekend drills.” While not a prerequisite, he notes that having students already entered into ALMIS helps facilitate documentation of PQS tasks during the course and allows units to quickly determine where to focus once the student returns.

A review of post-training critiques highlights how much value the students derive from attending the RB-S Boat Crew Member Course. “This course was perfect for understanding all that is required to become boat crew qualified,” writes MK3 William Foronda, Station Little Creek, VA. “The night time training was really good and highlighted the role of the crew member in the safe navigation of the RB-S.”

For BM3 Luis Yarro assigned to Station Shinnecock, NY, it was about time underway. “At the stations we have one RB-S and eight reservists competing for training time on drill weekends. This is the first I have been able to get significant underway time on the RB-S. This (course) is definitely going to help me get qualified sooner.”

“I have been in the CG Reserve for less than a year and the majority of that time has been focused on training related to becoming an MK,” notes MK3 Nicholas McMaster, Station Indian River, DE. “For me this course has been a great kick start to my boat crew training and ultimately getting qualified.”

Looking ahead, Chief Warrant Officer Don Hartmayer, who has the lead on Reserve workforce training issues for the Office of Boat Forces, notes that additional capacity has been added to the FY13 schedule. “Working with Yorktown, we have been able to increase the number of students from 6 to 8 per class for FY13. In addition, we are exploring the possibility of working within the formal training system to see if the development and delivery of a standard exportable course is feasible.”

BMC Chris Bearden, who has taken over as the RB-S/TANB School Chief from BMC Wolanzyk, reports that, “Based on the feedback, the reservists attending this course are able to accomplish in two weeks what they normally spend months or years trying to do. The Reserve RB-S Boat Crew Member Course is a huge return on investment for both the Coast Guard and for reservists who can maximize their training time.”

BMC Bearden is working closely with CWO Hartmayer and reservist BMC Eric Neilson (see accompanying story) as this course moves into its full second year.
BMC Eric Neilson: Helping Build Proficiency One Coast Guardsman at a Time

Story and Photo by Jeff Smith

Ask Chief Boatswain Mate Eric Neilson what he likes most about his job and a wide grin instantly appears. “You can’t beat the gratification you get from teaching someone a skill and seeing their confidence blossom.”

An eleven year veteran of the Coast Guard Reserve, Chief Neilson has seen and experienced much since taking the enlistment oath in June 2001. After attending the Reserve Enlisted Basic Indoctrination course at Training Center Cape May, he reported to Port Security Unit 305, Fort Eustis, Virginia in August 2001 as a Third Class Port Security Specialist (PS3). Less than a month later, on September 12, he found himself deployed along with his unit to New York City in the aftermath of the 9-11 terrorist attacks. “As a civilian law enforcement professional you sometimes think you’ve seen it all and can handle anything. But nothing can completely prepare you for what we witnessed in Lower Manhattan in the days and weeks after September 11,” remembers Neilson.

For PSU 305 and Neilson the New York deployment was just the beginning. In February 2002, they were the first Coast Guard unit to deploy to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in support of detainee operations, a mission that continues today. That six month mission was followed less than a year later with a four month deployment to Rota, Spain as part of the build up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Along the way Neilson changed his rating from Port Security Specialist to Boatswain Mate First Class (BM1).

Following a second deployment to Cuba, BM1 Neilson was transferred to Station Milford Haven where he earned his coxswain qualification and advanced to BMC in 2008. In 2010 he found himself mobilized yet again. This time the recall was domestic in support of the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

In anticipation of the Reserve RB-S Boat Crewman Course pilot BMC Neilson was transferred to Boat Forces Center Yorktown to provide instructor support and Reserve subject matter expertise. “In addition to his excellent small boat operations skills, Chief Neilson brings great Reserve specific knowledge which helps both the students and the staff here at the Boat Forces Center,” notes BMC Matt Wolanzyk, former Reserve RB-S School Chief.

BMC Neilson attained his instructor certification and was the lead instructor for the RB-S Boat Crewman Course convening which kicked off the FY12 schedule in April. “Since being reassigned here, Chief Neilson has hit the ground running,” reports Wolanzyk. “His life experiences (21 years as a law enforcement professional), plus an extensive and diverse Reserve background make him an excellent instructor, mentor and role model for our students. We’d love to have more just like him.”

Members of Reserve RB-S Boat Crew Member Course apply classroom theory during underway heaving line and stern towing drills on the York River, Yorktown, VA.
Coast Guard Boards Vintage Ship for Maritime Law Enforcement Training

Story and Photos by PAC Judy Silverstein, Seventh Coast Guard District Public Affairs

The 455-foot *SS American Victory*, a World War II-era cargo ship and troop carrier turned maritime museum, has seen recent military action with Coast Guard crews onboard.

It’s all part of rigorous annual Boarding Team Member training at Sector St. Petersburg. Using the vintage ship was the brainchild of Reserve Maritime Enforcement Specialists in collaboration with the Reserve Force Readiness staff, which together recognized a unique training opportunity.

“The goal is to provide realistic training that prepares the students for what they might encounter in the real world,” said Chief Petty Officer Christopher Wellington. “Using the American Victory as a platform, gives the students an opportunity to work in an actual shipboard environment.”

It further hones team communications that are vital for stellar performance under duress. In the case of the Florida-based class, the nine-deck ship with its dark cargo holds engines, hidden staircases, dim lighting and small cabins, offered realistic staging areas for scenario-based training. That training is critical to understanding the hazards, risks and challenges presented by a shipboard environment.

Wellington gives high praise to Reserve instructors who ensured the training adhered to the strict guidelines of the Maritime Law Enforcement Academy. He also credits their diverse professional backgrounds with helping design a well-rounded curriculum with an eye on tactics and realistic training.

This year, 32 Coast Guard members spanning a cross-section from units on Florida’s west coast participated in the June training. Six class members were reservists. It also marked the third time Sector St. Petersburg reservists used the vintage vessel moored behind The Florida Aquarium, according to Wellington. Once the classroom section was complete, Reserve instructors served as evaluators in the scenario-based portion of the training.

Students crept up the ladders, moving in unison across decks, while practicing their tactical training. They were encouraged to strategize and practice back-up and safety movements as active duty members portrayed gunmen, stowaways, hostile crew members and hostages.

“The scenarios were meant to duplicate a high stress environment” said Wellington. “The point is to prepare and train high-performing boarding team members.”

In one early scenario, a four-member search team inched carefully up a shadowed ladder into a dark cargo hold, searching for a potentially-armed stowaway.

As they searched behind crates, and around cargo holds, the tension was palpable. Where was this guy? Stacked in the hold were yards of line, canvas and barrels—all ideal hiding spots. The team meticulously checked a series of nooks and crannies, while keeping an eye on one another. Suddenly, the stowaway leapt down from his perch above their heads, surprising the team before being caught, handcuffed and led away.

During the evaluation period that followed, the team was asked to self-evaluate and self-correct for the next scenario, with tips and highlights offered by an instructor. He reviewed defensive and physical tactics and how to prepare for the unexpected.

The two-week course began with classroom instruction on topics including authority, jurisdiction and use-of-force policies. On-the-water training included boarding recreational vessels, drills involving assistance from the Coast Guard Auxiliary as well as the Eckerd College Search and Rescue Team.

Instructors said this year’s class was enthusiastic and worked hard to improve their skills and teamwork with each scenario.

“The group trusted their Reserve crewmembers and recognized instantly that the law enforcement challenges could resemble
real-life maritime risks,” said Chief Warrant Officer A.J. Matthews, who has helped teach the class for several years.

Another team carefully approached a cabin where loud arguing could be heard. Peering through the porthole, the student crew cleared the hallway. Upon entering the cabin, scripted tempers flared between a pair of crewmembers. Yet the episode demonstrated how quickly - and dangerously - things can escalate.

Students working as boarding team crews ordered the pair to separate. When the request was ignored, the team leader tried again, raising his voice.

“Do it now,” he demanded.

The suspect was given another warning: “Do not resist.”

The muscular suspect continued yelling as he was handcuffed. A scuffle ensued. This scenario tested the mettle - and the skills - of the student group, who did not let their guard down.

“I’ll get you back…you’re gonna pay for this,” yelled the role player. His anger palpable, he gave the trainees a realistic performance designed to keep them on their toes.

The now-calm role player gave the team high marks for peering in the porthole and the door before entering the cabin to assess the situation. He also offered tips for communicating what you observe.

“Take time to assess, formulate a plan and work as a team,” said Lt. Pete Webber.

The instructors talked with their students about additional ways to establish authority and how to diffuse an emotionally-charged situation. Seaman Rachel Corbett from Station Sand Key said she felt more confident after the role plays.

“It gave me a chance to practice what we learned in a realistic environment. That’s the best part,” she said.

That means instructors accomplished their goals.

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Daniel Wolfe, a reservist and third class petty officer from Station Yankeetown, spends his civilian life working as a surgical assistant, usually in an air conditioned environment. Emerging from a crawlspace on a day with nearly 75 percent humidity and soaring temperatures, he gave the course high marks.

“The instructors were very informative, gave us great detail and preparation ahead of time,” he said.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Martin Shermetaro from Station Cortez concurred.

“It’s cool that this ship is a piece of history and it helped better prepare us for being boarding team members. This very hands-on class and the realistic scenarios were great.”

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**Sector Detroit Hosts Reserve Facility Inspector Workshop**

**Story and Photos by Lt. Cmdr. Jerry Stanek**

Sector Detroit’s Prevention Department sponsored a one week Facility Inspector (FI) workshop for Reserve personnel from August 20-24, 2012. The primary target for the training was reservists who had either completed the Facility Inspector “C” school course or MST “A” school. The objective was to have students prepared to demonstrate their FI proficiency before a qualification board.

The workshop syllabus encompassed laws and regulations, various facility types, safety and security and other pertinent material. The coursework was complemented with table top exercises and hands-on field training.

At the completion of the workshop students sat for their certification boards with three of the four attendees attaining their Facility Inspector qualification. This training not only had the benefit of preparing Reserve personnel for contingency response but expanded the pool of qualified Facility Inspectors at Sector Detroit as well.
Sector Mobile Provides Concurrent Training Opportunities

By Lt. Cmdr. Kim Guedry, Sector Mobile Senior Reserve Officer

In late May, Sector Mobile simultaneously hosted two training opportunities during which forty-six students completed upwards of 95% of the required Performance Qualification Standards (PQS) towards a qualification. A Boat Crew College was held for a second year at Station Destin, while in Mobile the Sector held it’s first-ever Facility Inspector School. Reservists from across the Eighth District, in addition to members from District 7, attended the courses.

Boat Crew College.

In an effort to better prepare and qualify Reserve boat crew personnel for surge operations, Sector Mobile offered its second Coast Guard-wide Boat Crew College (BCC). Team members assembled a group of highly qualified instructors who identified critical gaps in Reserve boat crew training, and provided a thorough course curriculum enabling twenty-six students to complete 95% of the initial Boat Crewmember’s PQS during a two-week period. The instructors provided a challenging course of underway and classroom teachings, including day and night time training exercises. The training team also assisted students in meeting many core requirements to include: team coordination training, first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, personal water survival, emergency distress signaling, and pyrotechnics training. Instructors demonstrated navigation and piloting fundamentals, seamanship, Response Boat Small (RB-S) design characteristics, operational and emergency procedures, boat handling, law enforcement, and RB-S tactics. The boat college curriculum effectively met the needs of the students while not impacting the normal search and rescue capabilities of Station Destin which graciously hosted the training.

Facility Inspector School.

Taking lessons learned from last year’s BCC initiation, Sector Mobile wanted to provide the Prevention Department with an equally beneficial training. To that end and in an effort to better prepare and qualify reserve facility inspector personnel for surge operations, the Sector hosted a Coast Guard-wide Facility Inspector School (FIS). Team members assembled a group of highly qualified FIS instructors who identified critical gaps in Reserve facility inspector training, and provided a very thorough course curriculum enabling twenty students to complete 90-95% of the Facility Inspector’s PQS within the same two-week period. Course instructors executed a challenging regimen of classroom lectures and field training exercises, adjusting to meet each student’s pre-existing knowledge level and individual training needs. Core requirements covered included Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response refresher training, Facility Security and Response Plan review, operations manual review, Marine Information for Safety and Law Enforcement database training, and Maritime Security Risk Assessment Model training. The team also coordinated actual field inspections, which included Bulk Liquid Transfer facilities and Liquid Natural and Hazardous Gas facilities.

Bravo Zulu.

Neither Sector Mobile nor Station Destin could have successfully executed these two simultaneous events without the efforts of an integrated active duty and reserve support team, including the team members with the administrative and logistical expertise to finalize orders, pay, allowances, travel claims, and berthing. In recognition of the effort required to plan, coordinate, support, and execute these training opportunities, the BCC and FIS Planning and Support Teams were awarded the Coast Guard Meritorious Team Commendation.

The team member’s ultimate reward will be when they put their training into practice by completing their PQS, studying, sitting for their boards, and maintaining their qualifications.

Finally, congratulations to all graduates and all involved!
Sector Houston Galveston Incident Management Division Hosts Pollution Responder College

By MST1 Theodore A. Neitzschman

Sector Houston Galveston Incident Management Division (IMD) hosted a Pollution Responder College on August 6, 2012 in Pasadena, Texas. Active duty, reserve and auxiliary members from Sector Houston Galveston, Marine Safety Unit Texas City, Marine Safety Unit Port Arthur, and Marine Safety Unit Lake Charles attended the one week course at the Bayport Cruise Terminal operated by the Port of Houston.

The curriculum consisted of three and a half days of classroom training and one and a half days of hands-on field exercises and industry familiarization. The training team from Eighth Coast Guard District Response Advisory Team (DRAT) consisted of Lt. Cmdr. Ken Pounds, Lt. Jereme Altendorf and MSSD2 Matthew Tilimon. Organizing the course was Sector Houston-Galveston IMD Chief Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Boyd and MSSD2 Tilimon.

Upon arrival at the Bayport Cruise Terminal students received opening remarks from Reserve IMD Chief Lt. T. Zachary Barnett and MSTC Jorge Torres. The students were quickly immersed in their first class module; environmental law. The understanding of these laws is the basis for the Coast Guard’s response and regulatory authority. This was the largest of the modules taught.

Over the next three days students were exposed to modules consisting of Properties of Oil, the National Contingency Plan, Pollution Prevention, Spill Notification, and Response Efforts. At the end of each day the instructors remained in the classroom for follow-on discussions with students and to sign off any demonstrated performance qualification standard (PQS) in which the students could demonstrate proficiency.

Thursday began with a review of the previous course material followed by guest speaker, Mrs. Rhonda Murgatroyd with Wildlife Response Services, LLC. A veteran of 15 years in the wildlife rehabilitation arena, she was able to share her years of experience and regulatory knowledge with those in attendance. In addition to an informative discussion on how wildlife are properly cleaned and released, Mrs. Murgatroyd also brought a response trailer so attendees might better understand the materials used in wildlife rescue response through hands on observation.

The day ended with a site visit to Marina Bay Harbor Yacht Club in preparation for Friday’s boom deployment exercise. A member of the pollution response community, OMI Environmental Solutions, was on hand with response equipment and personnel standing by to answer questions and give demonstrations of cleanup techniques. The students were broken into teams and were able to visit the stations that were set up to allow hands-on training. A tour of a response trailer was given to help familiarize students with the type of resources a contractor would have on hand during a pollution response. A vacuum truck with a skimmer demonstration by OMI response personnel highlighted both its practical field use and its limitations. Finally, a boom response trailer filled with multiple types of boom was placed on display with response personnel explaining the different booms specifications, uses and limitations. These demonstrations and hands-on question and answer periods helped prepare the students for the next day’s boom deployment exercise.

On the final day of the training a boom deployment exercise was planned in conjunction with OMI Environmental Solutions. Just prior to the start of the exercises, Rear Adm. Roy Nash, Eighth District Commander, paid a visit to the training and exercise site and addressed the participants. Following Rear Adm. Nash’s comments, the exercise was underway. The students were split into response teams that were mixed with active, reserve, auxiliary and industry personnel and given a task to accomplish. All attendees were able to deploy boom from a response vessel and use mechanical means to corral the mock oil spill.

In all, the class was quite a success according to Lt. Cmdr. Boyd.

"The Pollution Response College has given newly assigned active duty personnel, reservists, and auxiliarists performing in the capacity as Assistant Pollution Responders, a solid foundation on the basics of pollution response. Equally as valuable was the strengthened network across the approximate 60 students, instructors, industry, and pollution response leadership."

Boyd went on to note that, “specific to the reserve community, this one-week course allowed reservists to schedule a second week of annual training in order to gain field experience and achieve signatures towards qualifications at their respective drilling unit. Every attendee went back to their respective units with added knowledge of the pollution response world and the signed-off PQS necessary to work toward their Pollution Responder board. This was an extraordinary opportunity, and we are thankful for everyone who helped put this together.”
On June 18, 2012, Lieutenant Michael J. Doria, Ph.D. was presented with the U.S. Coast Guard Meritorious Public Service Award from the Director of Health, Safety, and Work-Life for his contributions as a Coast Guard Reservist with the Department of Defense’s (DoD) Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metrics (ANAM) program and most notable for his work as a government contractor in the development of Military Acute Concussion Evaluation (MACE) Training Programs, which were developed to ensure a uniform procedure for conducting traumatic brain injury (TBI) assessments in a deployed combat environment.

Prior to the implementation of the MACE Training Program, deployed DoD medical personnel did not have standardized evaluation and documentation protocols for screening, identifying and documenting TBIs. According to Lt. Doria, “This lack of standardization may have exposed sailors, soldiers and Marines to negative compounding effects of TBIs because they were not being uniformly evaluated after experiencing a TBI event (e.g. explosions).” The MACE Training Program, under the stewardship ofLt. Doria, has succeeded in educating providers on the standard processes for evaluating and documenting TBIs. The training program equips medical personnel to identify TBIs and will ultimately protect the health and wellness of many sailors, soldiers and Marines. Capt. Jeffrey Salvon-Harman, MD, Chief of Operational Medicine and Medical Readiness for the Coast Guard, elaborated, “Broader implications exist beyond TBI itself. Suffering from a TBI unknowingly may result in depression or substance abuse, and can even lead to premature separation from service.”

Lt. Doria was employed by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine through the Center for Deployment Psychology, Uniformed Services University, which was contracted by the U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine (BUMED). There he was the principal facilitator in the development of four new training courses over the span of about one and a half years forming the foundation of the MACE Training Program. The courses support the Navy and Marine Corps’ TBI Program in assessing brain trauma within the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

The purpose of the MACE Training Program is to properly train medical personnel in providing a brief standardized battlefield evaluation that combines the documentation of the subject’s injuries and symptoms, and a cognitive screening procedure for a TBI incident (e.g. concussion) and facilitates the rapid decision-making process for identifying the requirement for an increased level of medical care on the battlefield (i.e. MedEvac).

When an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detonates, all personnel within a 50 meter radius of the blast require MACE screening and receive a minimum 24-hour recovery period to recuperate. Personnel are then rescreened again using MACE after the mandated time period, and medical treatment determinations are made affecting the personnel’s deployment status, orders, and subsequent medical treatment.

The courses Doria developed include: a standardized MACE Program; a MACE Train-the-Trainer Program; a MACE Line Leader Training Program and a Lead MACE Trainer Program designed for each of the three branches. Training is tailored to different levels of instruction of those deployed personnel. The MACE Program itself is a peer-taught, four-hour continuing education course that consists of several components with a Medical Officer (MO) and a corpsman co-teaching the material.

The MO teaches about brain function and the policy pertaining to TBI/concussion, which is “a traumatically induced structural injury or physiological disruption of brain function as a result of external force to the head,” states Doria. Signs of mild TBI/concussion include: loss or alteration of consciousness, impaired memory, confusion or disorientation, neurological deficits or intracranial lesions detected with imaging. IEDs are currently the number one cause of brain injuries. The corpsman provides instruction on how to administer the MACE training. In addition, participants practice with exercises, partake in case studies, and watch instructional videos.

The model designed by Lt. Doria provides quality control and centralized headquarters management of curriculum design and development, instructional delivery, testing,
everyone knew about MACE Training Program and received full support of each Service Surgeon, the support of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard,” noted Tarantino, “For the Marine Corps, we had personnel on both coasts, and units deploying from Okinawa, making just-in-time travel, more than 78 locations around the world. Last-minute schedule changes within units and operational logistics faced by Lt. Doria and his team. The nature of the mission required Doria’s findings were presented to the Australian Defense Department and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Forces in Italy. He also co-presented two presentations on the process and program development at the 5th Annual Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center National Summit in August 2011.

The program’s success came about despite several obstacles faced by Lt. Doria and his team. The nature of the mission required extensive travel, more than 78 locations around the world. Last-minute schedule changes within units and operational logistics also challenged the team.

“Setting up the program was a huge undertaking,” said Capt. Tarantino, “For the Marine Corps, we had personnel on both coasts, and units deploying from Okinawa, making just-in-time trainings critical before deployments.”

Lt. Doria also created the first MACE Programs being considered for utilization by the Coast Guard. “I couldn’t have done it without the support of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard,” noted Doria. The program received full support of each Service Surgeon Generals. “Everyone knew about MACE Training Program and was requesting the training.” A MACE website was even created to allow materials and information to be accessed easily by trainers and educators.

The goal of the standardized MACE Training Programs was to incorporate this crucial education into pre-deployment preparation, ensuring that all deployed military personnel are appropriately trained, familiar, and capable of administering the MACE when the need arises. Doria’s contributions will be prove beneficial to the U.S. military and deployed personnel in the years to come.

“Lt. Doria is very dedicated and played a huge role in both training and supervising the programs,” Capt. Tarantino noted. “He was an instrumental asset to the program, as he is a remarkable professional and invaluable to our efforts. His tenacity, initiative, and amiable personality were vital to the success of these groundbreaking programs, and he has allowed for direct contributions to the health and safety of our military combat troops.” Capt. Jack W. Tsao, MD, DPhil, director of TBI Programs for the US Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery also had praise for Doria. “He came in and immediately had a positive impact on our program. He worked tirelessly to update and expand the trainings. Our frontline military personnel now have a better understanding of how to care for service members with concussion due directly to his efforts.”

Lt. Doria has tentative plans to remain with the Coast Guard in a neuropsychologist role. Capt. Salvon-Harman added, “Lt. Doria has provided a very clear proposal of activities and costs. The leadership is supporting the initiative and is working through logistical hurdles to bring him onto active duty.”

Rear Adm. Maura Dollymore, USPHS, and Capt. David Tarantino, USN present Lt. Michael Doria, USCGR, with the Coast Guard Meritorious Public Service Award during a ceremony at Coast Guard Headquarters for his contributions while assigned to the Department of Defense’s Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metrics program.

Photo by Caroline Acton
Leadership Update

Coast Guard Sector's Reserve Silver Badges

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None assigned.
New Silver Badge Assignments

Assignment Year 2012 (AY12) saw a number of changes within the Reserve Gold and Silver Badge cadre. Reserve Command Master Chiefs work closely with their active duty counterparts and report directly to the Area or District commanders where they are assigned. Reserve Silver Badges also work closely with their active duty counterparts and are direct reports to their respective Sector commanders. In an effort to ensure that these critical billets were filled a significant number of senior enlisted leaders voluntarily accepted orders during AY12 to assignments well outside what is considered a normal distance from where they live.

The last issue (Volume LIX – Issue 2, 2012) focused on the new Gold Badge assignments. Below we introduce the most recent Reserve senior enlisted to be selected to fill these important leadership positions.

NEW RESERVE SILVER BADGES

**SCPO ANDREW JAEGER – SECTOR N. NEW ENGLAND**

Senior Chief Andrew Jaeger assumed duties as Command Senior Chief, Sector Northern New England on July 1, 2012. Most recently Senior Chief Jaeger served as Response Supervisor and Chem Department Enlisted Supervisor for the Gulf Strike Team in Mobile, AL. “Serving the Coast Guard as Silver Badge Command Senior Chief is a unique opportunity to advocate for the well being and professional development of Coast Guard members,” states Senior Chief Jaeger. “Although it is the responsibility of all Chief Petty Officers (CPO) to mentor and assist in the personal and professional growth of junior personnel, the demands of most CPOs primary assignment often consume a substantial portion of their time. My sole job will be to be a source of support and information to Coast Guard members. As a Silver Badge, I will be particularly focused for issues that affect quality of life and leadership challenges for Reserve members. That said, I have found that always being alert for opportunities to assist and work with all Coast Guard members, including active and reserve, civilian and auxiliary is the best way to bring success to the individual and the entire organization. The Coast Guard has been a cornerstone of my personal and professional success for over 22 years. I look forward to giving back by advocating for and assisting with the careers and lives of personnel in Sector Northern New England.”

**SCPO JAMES WHEELER – SECTOR LAKE MICHIGAN**

Senior Chief James W. Wheeler assumed the duties as Command Senior Chief, Sector Lake Michigan on July 1, 2012. Most recently Senior Chief Wheeler served as Reserve Section Leader and Reserve Section Leader and Operational Group in Ballston, Virginia. “I am very excited about heading to Sector Juneau. I was hoping for an assignment that would stretch me both professionally and personally and Alaska certainly do both,” reports Senior Chief Gilmer. “Being so geographically isolated poses a unique set of issues for all Coast Guard personnel stationed in Alaska. Having responsibility for the full range of Coast Guard missions brings additional challenges. Maintaining personal, family, and job readiness, qualifications, and morale are essential to getting the job done. I look forward to working with Sector Juneau’s active duty personnel and Command Senior Chief McGowan as well as our Reserve members to insure we maintain that critical readiness, professionalism, and multi mission capability that makes the Coast Guard such an important national asset.”

**SCPO RICHARD BAENEN – SECTOR LA/LB**

Senior Chief Baenen assumed his duties as the Reserve Command Senior Chief for Sector Los Angeles – Long Beach (LA/LB) on July 1, 2012. He will report directly to the Sector Commander and is responsible for assisting the command in maintaining readiness, promoting professional development, and ensuring a positive command climate. Senior Chief Baenen was most recently assigned to the Sector LA/LB Reserve Sector Boarding Team. “As the new Reserve Command Senior Chief for Sector LA/LB, I want to share background on our dynamic and exciting command,” reports Senior Chief Baenen. “We are home to two of the busiest ports in the world and are involved in all missions of the Coast Guard except ice breaking. We have three stations, four 87’ WPB’s, an ATO team and an MSD. We have a workforce that exceeds 300, of which, approximately 100 are reservists. Together, we deliver multi-mission services in search and rescue, maritime safety and security, environmental protection, maritime law enforcement and aids to navigation. I eagerly look forward to my new responsibility as the Reserve Silver Badge and the opportunity to actively represent the command, shape our workforce and policy, influence future leaders, and take care of our people. In doing so, I will be relying on the collective experience of the Chief’s Mess intently listening to voices from the deck plate.”

**SCPO ROBERT YOUNG – SECTOR CHARLESTON**

Senior Chief Robert Young assumed the duties as Command Senior Chief, Sector Charleston, South Carolina on July 1, 2012. Most recently Senior Chief Young served as Senior Enlisted Reserve Advisor for Station Charleston. “In the new world normal that has followed 9/11, so much more is being asked of the Reserve. We are now a tactical asset as well as a strategic resource. It requires us to be more nimble. It’s not if you’ll be recalled but when,” notes Senior Chief Young. “Sector Charleston has been a hub for contingency operations for nearly ten years, and I have had the opportunity to serve active and reserve duty here. I have been fortunate to cross paths with a number of people who invested in me. They prepared me to answer the call, and set me up for success. My goal is that as Command Senior Chief at Sector Charleston I will be able to continue that tradition of service to one’s fellow shipmates.”
Enlisted Rating Advancement System (ERATS) brings evolutionary changes

BY PACM KEITH ALHOLM, FORCECOM

The last time the Coast Guard’s advancement system underwent a major change, gas was 24 cents a gallon, Elvis Presley was a private in the Army and a 3rd Class petty officer with four years in the Coast Guard made $170 dollars a month.

It was 1958 and the Coast Guard just adopted the Navy’s service-wide examination process that is currently used and remains largely unchanged. Rating advancement correspondence courses are even older, and have been in use since 1927. More than half a century later, the Coast Guard has decided to change how enlisted people train for advancement. Why change it now?

According to Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Bill Gibbons, a performance analyst at the Mission Support Branch at Force Readiness Command Training Division, the service has long recognized the advancement training system needs improvement.

“During rating occupational analysis, we ask general questions about rating health. The lowest responses always came in one specific area - the existing course materials always being out of date,” said Gibbons.

Gibbons conducted further research into the members’ concerns, and found the same problems have been officially documented as far back as 1970.

“Fundamentally, the system was flawed because we were always looking backwards,” he said. So, in 2008, several training managers and rating force master chiefs got together to discuss the problems and came up with potential solutions that provided the groundwork for the new system.

The Enlisted Rating Advancement System (ERATS) makes evolutionary changes to our current system to improve performance expectations, guidance and accountability, while remaining highly adaptive to our changing world of work.

“The new system is designed to be more compatible with the way people learn,” said Gibbons. He continued to say most Coast Guardsmen obtain knowledge necessary for advancement informally, on the job, rather than in A or C schools.

“Good training actually replicates what you are doing in the field on the job,” he said.

According to Gibbons, this isn’t surprising to seasoned enlisted personnel. What is surprising, however, is discovering that retention rates for on-the-job training can exceed those of classroom training because the skills are put to immediate use.

The biggest change ERATS brings to the field is an emphasis on actual job performance needs, instead of the amassing of general rating knowledge. The primary tool enlisted people must become familiar with under ERATS is the rating performance qualifications (RPQ). The RPQ’s should be familiar because they contain all the essential elements that were in the original enlisted performance qualifications (EPQ) they replaced. RPQ’s will still be completed on the job, and a member’s performance will still be observed and evaluated by a professional development coach. RPQ’s, however, are significantly more advanced. RPQ’s resemble EPQ’s in the same way a 378-foot High Endurance Cutter is similar to a 418-foot National Security Cutter. They are both white with red and blue stripes; they are both commanded by a captain, manned by dedicated Coast Guardsmen and they are capable of multi-mission performance. However, there is no doubt which is better equipped for operating in today’s maritime environment. The same can be said for RPQ’s.

In addition to all the elements of EPQ’s, RPQ’s have specific standards, conditions and steps for completing each task. They also identify specific references used on the job and additional instructions for how the performance development coach can evaluate the performance being monitored. The references listed in the RPQ’s are the same manuals, job aides, books and multimedia used in the field.

For the ratings already transitioned to ERATS, the RPQ’s are the primary learning tool for preparing for the rating advancement test and service-wide examination. The performance qualification guides (PQG), or correspondence course, is no longer required for advancement.

“On the job you are surrounded by (learning) resources. You have someone who has expertise who can coach you,” said Gibbons. Instead of launching correspondence courses that are obsolete by the time they are published, the RPQ’s now serve as the roadmap for training enlisted members to take the rating advancement test and service-wide examination.

ERATS combines the structure of the PQG with the effectiveness of on the job training.

“Training degrades rapidly if it isn’t applied,” said Lt. Christopher McCann, a training manager who works with Gibbons. “We want training to emulate what is done on the job and have the trainee apply those skills in a work setting as quickly as possible,” he said.

With the end of the performance qualification guides and expanding of the RPQ’s, one might think it would increase the time needed to develop and publish updates to the system.

A key component of ERATS is the creation of an integrated process team called rating training advisory council (RTAC). Each rating’s RTAC serves as the authoritative and principle means of making resource-neutral decisions impacting enlisted advancement training. The council is empowered to effect immediate change under specific guidelines. At a minimum, an RTAC is comprised of a Rating Force Master Chief (RFMC), rate training master chief (often the A-school chief), the program and rating knowledge manager (SWE writer) and the FORCECOM training manager and FORCECOM Chief Rating Knowledge...
**USCG PPC 2013**  
**RESERVE DRILL WEEKEND DATES**  

*OCTOBER 20-21, 2012*  
(ALL HANDS – PHONES NOT MANNED)  

NOVEMBER 17-18, 2012  

DECEMBER 15-16, 2012  

JANUARY 12-13, 2013  

FEBRUARY 9-10, 2013  

MARCH 16-17, 2013  

*APRIL 20-21, 2013*  
(ALL HANDS – PHONES NOT MANNED)  

MAY 18-19, 2013  

JUNE 8-9, 2013  

JULY 20-21, 2013  

AUGUST 17-18, 2013  

SEPTEMBER 21-22, 2013  

**Hours of coverage**  
(on the above weekends):  
Saturday: Phone Coverage 0800-1130 and 1230-1500  
Trouble tickets worked: 0600-1130 and 1230-1600  

Sunday: Phone Coverage 0800-1130 and 1230-1400  
Trouble tickets worked: 0600-1130 and 1230-1400  

*April and October are PPC reserve training/admin weekends. Phones will not be monitored.

Manager. The RTAC doesn’t wait for changes to stack up, rather the council evaluates and implements change on an as-needed basis.

According to Gibbons, changes made to an EPQ average more than three years from the occupational analysis to promulgating the change to the field. Under ERATS, the time to publication is expected to be less than nine months. If a job or process changes, the RTAC can initiate a change to the RPQ without having to convene an occupational analysis.

“Under the previous process these changes had to navigate the stove-piped, up-and-over and back down, concurrent clearance process,” said McCann. “Now the members of the RTAC are empowered to make those changes.” Simple changes such as spelling, grammar and reference updates can be made any time, but larger changes that delete an RPQ or enabling objective or that change a condition or standard of performance must be published to the field with a minimum of six months notice to allow preparation time for the SWE.

The third enhancement that ERATS brings is improved accountability. ERATS is tied to the training management tool (TMT). In August 2012, TMT will be the official record for logging completion of the requirements for advancement eligibility for the ratings which have transitioned to ERATS. The paper RPQ worksheet only serves as a tool to temporarily record performance and provide instruction. The official record for logging completion of RPQs is TMT. When a member completes the RPQ worksheet, their unit then must enter the information as completed in TMT. The member can keep the RPQ worksheet in their personal files, but TMT will be the record used to determine a person’s eligibility to take the SWE. Each unit will have a reviewer that will verify completion within TMT. This provides a two-layered approval process for determining if the member meets the training requirement for taking the SWE. Like EPQ’s, RPQ’s can still be deferred under certain conditions. For example, if a member does not have access to equipment at their unit they can request the RPQ be deferred until a later date when they can accomplish the task. These instances were not tracked and often forgot about when a member advanced or transferred. Now a deferred RPQ will be logged into TMT. When person transfers, the deferment will end and the person will then have to complete the RPQ or seek another deferment.

It also provides an easy way to track RPQ’s that become obsolete. For example, if an RPQ is added or changed very significantly, then the RFMC can turn that particular RPQ competency in TMT off and require recertification by members attempting advancement to that higher pay grade.

“There is some additional burden on the field, however, the increased accountability and enhancement to the integrity of the advancement system far outweighs the costs,” said McCann, who was a Chief Petty Officer prior to obtaining his commission.

The marine science technician rating (MST) was the first to adopt ERATS and all ratings are projected to be transitioned by 2015. The ERATS system keeps evolving even as ratings begin adopting it.

“The system has to evolve. I think we have a good framework in place. The house is framed but we have to add the plumbing, electricity etc,” said Gibbons.

Members unfamiliar with ERATS should monitor their RFMC’s force notes for more information on adoption and implementation instruction and timelines. You can also read ALCOAST 577/11 for more information on how ERATS is being implemented across the Coast Guard. The M1000.2 Enlisted Accessions, Evaluations, and Advancements Manual, COMDTINST M1000.2(series) and the Performance Training and Education Manual, COMDTINST M1500.2(series) are in the process of being revised to reflect the transition to the new system.
Many people have heard the term BCMR (Board for Correction of Military Records), but few have an understanding of its purpose or the process. In this article I will attempt to demystify what the BCMR is and why it may be of importance to you!

**What is a BCMR?**
The United States Coast Guard’s Board for Correction of Military Records (BCMR or Board) is an adjudicative body within the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the General Counsel. Every branch of the military has its own correction board – e.g., the Navy has the Board for Correction of Naval Records or BCNR.

**What does the BCMR do?**
The BCMR has the authority to review Coast Guard military personnel records and order that corrections be made to them when the Board finds that a member’s record is erroneous or unjust. For example, corrections may be made regarding erroneous or unjust discharges, drug or alcohol incidents, DD-214 concerns, contracts, pay or financial matters, Non Judicial Punishment, Page 7 entries, officer or enlisted performance evaluations, non-selection for promotion or advancement, retirement, Reserve matters, medical disability ratings, medals and awards, bonuses, and other entitlements and benefits. The BCMR does not conduct investigations but may review reports of investigations that the Coast Guard has already conducted.

**Where does the BCMR obtain its authority and procedures?**
Authority is derived from Title 10 United States Code §1552 and Title 14 United States Code §425 and is further clarified in Title 33 Code of Federal Regulations Part 52.

**Is there any Coast Guard policy guidance regarding this topic?**
Yes. Recently promulgated COMDTINST 1070.1, Correcting Military Records, discusses appeals through the chain of command, the Personnel Records Review Board (PRRB), Discharge Review Board (DRB), and BCMR, as well as other forms of administrative remedy.

**Who may apply to the BCMR?**
An ‘applicant’ may be an active duty member, a reservist serving in any capacity, a former member of the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Reserve, or SPARs (the women’s contingent first organized during WWII), a potential Academy cadet, officer candidate, or enlisted recruit, or someone who wishes to apply on behalf of a deceased member or a veteran who cannot apply on his or her own, such as a widow, next-of-kin, or legal representative.

**When is it the appropriate time to apply to the BCMR?**
Before applying directly to the BCMR, you must first exhaust all other avenues of possible remedy within the Coast Guard. This may mean trying to resolve your complaint at the lowest possible level by following any administrative avenues of appeal or waiver through your command or Coast Guard Headquarters; if the error is less than one year old, applying to the Coast Guard’s PRRB; if you are seeking a correction of your character of service, reason for separation, separation code, or reentry code (all noted on your DD-214 separation document), and you were separated within the past 15 years, you must first apply to the Coast Guard’s Discharge Review Board (DRB) using DD Form 293. If any of these possibilities are not applicable or if your request gets denied anywhere in the Coast Guard, you may then turn to the BCMR.

**Will my case be rejected if the issue concerns a matter over three years old?**
Not necessarily. The Board possesses broad latitude to waive the three-year statute of limitations if they find it to be in the interest of justice to excuse the untimeliness of your application. Moreover, if the error is discovered while the member is still affiliated with the Coast Guard (in an active or reserve status), the three-year limitation period is automatically waived.

**Could the Board’s decision leave me in a worse state than my current situation?**
No. This would undermine the intent of the BCMR process. No correction will be made to one’s record that could be construed as damaging or unfavorable by the applicant.

**How does the process work?**
When the Board receives your DD-149 application, it will be docketed once the Chair determines that your application is complete, meaning that you have identified one or more specific allegation(s) of error or injustice and the Board has received your military records to include, if applicable, your medical records. If you have been discharged or are retired, these records may have to be ordered (by the Board) from the National Archives and/or the Department of Veterans Affairs before your case can be docketed. Once docketed, a copy of your application with any supporting documents you submitted, along with your record that was received, will be sent to the Coast Guard Personnel Service Center (PSC) for objective analysis. The PSC’s views are then forwarded to the
Coast Guard Office of General Law (CG-0944) for a legal sufficiency review and final policy and guidance interpretations and recommendations under the auspices of the Judge Advocate General of the Coast Guard. This office will then submit the Coast Guard’s final ‘advisory opinion’ on the application back to the Board. The Board will then mail a copy of the Coast Guard’s advisory opinion to the applicant for review, where the applicant will have an opportunity to tell the Board what they think about the Coast Guard’s advisory opinion. After this 30-day period is over, the BCMR staff creates a draft decision and places it with the case files in front of a panel of three civilian attorneys of the Department of Homeland Security for review, deliberation, and final adjudication. Most decisions of the Board are final, but a few are subject to review by the delegate of the Secretary pursuant to 33 CFR §52.64.

**How long will it take to receive a final decision?**

Unless you request an extension, modify your request, or submit evidence late, the Board will issue its decision within 10 months of your application being completed. If the Board has not issued a decision within 10 months, you may be able to get a court order directing the Board to issue the decision within 30 days as provided under 14 USC §425. In certain simple cases, the Coast Guard is able to correct an applicant’s record within 3 or 4 months without the Board issuing a decision.

**Should I hire legal counsel?**

This is a personal decision. All BCMR cases are evaluated objectively and impartially whether the applicant uses legal representation or not. The decision to hire legal counsel should weigh such factors as the possible gain at stake, the legal complexity of one’s case, the technical complexity of one’s case (such as a medical matter), the amount of time and research needed to substantiate the best argument, et cetera. Groups such as the VFW or American Legion may offer free or subsidized legal assistance to veterans.

**The application asks if I would like to appear before the Board. Is this necessary?**

You may request an oral hearing before the Board in Washington, D.C., at your own expense. The Board may or may not grant one. It is not necessary to appear in person to ensure a complete and impartial review. In fact, oral hearings are rare, so make sure that you submit everything you want the Board to know in writing.

**What about court-martial convictions under the Uniform Code of Military Justice?**

The Board cannot overturn a court-martial conviction but it does have the authority to grant clemency on a court-martial sentence or correct the military record of a member whose conviction has been overturned on appeal.

**Can I review past decisions of the BCMR?**

Yes, and this is a good idea. You may think your case is unique, but chances are you are not the first one. The “Boards of Review Reading Rooms” website is where redacted cases from all military branches are posted and searchable by keyword(s) online. Even if you do not find a case exactly like yours, you may still learn how similar cases have been evaluated and decided. You may also print a past final decision and include it with your application arguing that your case should be resolved in the same way. This site can be accessed at <http://boards.law.af.mil/index.htm>.

**What are my chances of getting my record corrected?**

The odds are pretty good. In fiscal year 2011, for example, 38% of applications were resolved by the Coast Guard to the applicants’ satisfaction requiring no Board action; 28% resulted in full relief granted by the Board; 6% resulted in partial relief granted by the Board; and only 28% were denied in full by the Board. Of course some types of cases are harder to win than others, and your success may depend upon whether you are able to submit substantial evidence supporting your allegations of error or injustice.

**So how do I start the process?**

Applying for any type of relief through the BCMR is considered a private matter and does not need to be routed through your chain of command (if applicable). The best way to start the process is to navigate to <http://www.uscg.mil/Legal/BCMR.asp> for more information. Here you can also download the necessary application (DD Form 149) as well as find the mailing address and contact information of the Board.

**What should I submit with my DD-149 application?**

Anything and everything you feel is pertinent. Do not rely on the notion that a vital document or information is already contained in your record – because it may not be. You should organize and submit for review any information and documentation you possess that supports your claim. You may also want to gather and submit signed statements from others who witnessed or have knowledge of the error or injustice.

**What should I keep in mind before I send in my application?**

As the applicant, it is important to understand that “the Board begins its consideration of each case presuming administrative regularity on the part of the Coast Guard and other Government officials. The applicant has the burden of proving the existence of an error or injustice by the preponderance of the evidence” (33 CFR §52.24(b)). In other words, the responsibility to substantiate that an error exists and that this error has caused or has the potential to cause an injustice rests solely on you, the applicant. Again, neither the Board nor the Coast Guard is required to conduct an investigation in response to a BCMR application.

**What are the possible outcomes I can expect?**

To reach a final decision the Board will review all of your submissions, your military record, the Coast Guard’s advisory opinion, and any applicable case law or court precedents on the matter. The Board may grant your request in full or in part, or it may deny your request. Regardless of the outcome, a written final decision will be provided to explain the Board’s findings and rationale.

**After a favorable final decision is reached, then what?**

The Board will send its final decision back to PSC to effect final action. PSC will then coordinate required record corrections with the appropriate field-level Servicing Personnel Office (legacy PERSRU), the Coast Guard Pay and Personnel Center (PPC in Topeka, KS), or complete the required corrections in-house.

**What do I do if I am not satisfied with the outcome?**

After the Board has issued its final decision, an applicant may either apply for reconsideration pursuant to 33 CFR §52.67 or file suit in federal district court or the United States Court of Federal Claims. Reconsideration through the BCMR should be sought first before pursuing redress through the federal court system.
DEERS new Self-Service Website - LAUNCHED!

During the last week of May 2012, Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) announced a new self-service website – RAPIDS Self-Service Portal!

Purpose: The primary purpose of the website is to serve eligible dependents of Coast Guard members/employees with processing their identification card updates at any facility.

How It Works: The RAPIDS Self-Service (RSS) is now available to Common Access Card (CAC) holders. RSS application provides sponsors with the capability to generate a DD Form 1172-2 for those dependents in need of a new identification (ID) card and add dependent data to DEERS.

Using this web based application, CAC holders have the ability to update certain information associated with their record. Additionally, they may use RSS to verify a family member’s relationship and eligibility by digitally signing the DD Form 1172-2* for ID card re-issuance.

All members/employees with a CAC card (or DS Logon, including Contractors) are authorized to use the website to update their information, and if they have authorized dependents/family members, can request the DD Form 1172-2 for them as well.

The only members who are still required to go to a DEERS facility to obtain a DD Form 1172-2 are members who have a college-bound student.

In these cases, a letter** from the college MUST be obtained PRIOR to the issuance of the DD Form 1172-2. The letter MUST indicate:

1) full-time student status; and
2) anticipated graduation date.

SAMPLE LETTER FOR STUDENTS OVER 21 BUT UNDER 23
FROM: OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL REGISTRAR
STUDENT’S NAME:
EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE:
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to verify that the above named student is currently enrolled in a full-time course of study leading to an associate degree or higher for the (FALL/SPRING) semester/quarter (DATES).

If there are any questions concerning this matter, please call (PHONE NUMBER).

Sincerely
(Certification Officer)

[Note: If an ID card is needed during a summer break, the sponsor should provide the above information and the school should also indicate that the student was enrolled full-time in the semester/quarter before the break.]

WEBSITES:
• TRICARE TYA: TRICARE for Young Adults

Questions: If you have any questions regarding this announcement, please contact Lt. Jocelyn Soriano, Policy and Plans Division, COMDT (CG-1311) at Jocelyn.L.Soriano@uscg.mil.

* A DD Form 1172-2 that is digitally-signed and generated through RSS will be stored in DEERS and is a viewable document in RAPIDS. Once verified using RSS, Sponsors no longer need to accompany their family members to get the ID Card – except in the case of college-bound students.

** This is an ANNUAL requirement, meaning that the card will be valid for 1 year, and must be renewed every year until the day before the dependent’s 23rd birthday. Upon the dependent reaching age 23, in order to receive continued medical/dental coverage, they must be enrolled in the TRICARE for Young Adult (TYA) program. (Contact your local TRICARE representative for enrollment procedures and more information.) The DEERS technician CANNOT add the TYA entitlement to the family record.

Did You Know…
...You Can Receive Email Updates of Your Personal Readiness?

Leveraging existing data systems to maximize operational capabilities, Coast Guard Business Intelligence (CGBI) now offers all CG active duty and reserve personnel the ability to receive personal readiness status updates and/or monthly status summaries by email – either their USCG account or a non-USCG account. (See ALCOAST 271/11.)

To sign up for this service log-in to CGBI at http://cgbi.osc.uscg.mil from any CG standard workstation. Then click on “My Profile”, and follow the instructions provided in the “My Personal Notifications” section. A job aid is available at https://cgportal.uscg.mil/ctl/6u252k. Users have the option to use either their USCG or non-USCG email account. However, only valid email accounts that are reflected in direct access can be utilized in this service.

In addition, CGBI has also developed the “CGBI email notification usage” report for command staff to view personnel utilization of this service. This report can be accessed by logging on to CGBI and opening the report either in the cubes and report view, or using the CGBI search engine.

For CGBI assistance, please contact the CGBI help desk at 1-877-USCG-SYS or (304)264-2500, Monday-Friday 6:30 am-6:30 pm (E.D.T).
The Importance of Understanding Your Point Statement

Story by Lt. Cmdr. Natalie Murphy, USCGR

When you're eligible to retire from the Coast Guard, how much pay will you have earned? Did you know the more points you accumulate, the bigger your paycheck will be? This is why confirming the information on your Reserve Retirement Points Statement is so important.

I discovered that my Reserve Retirement Points Statement had multiple problems more than 10 years into my career. I had an incorrect anniversary date, five years of active duty time and correspondence courses weren't converted to valuable retirement points. For years, I only looked at my points statements a few times just to review the drill dates that I performed. Thanks to the yeoman at my unit and Personnel Service Command (PSC), I was able to resolve the discrepancies and learn some key points along the way.

1. CHECK YOUR RESERVE RETIREMENT POINTS STATEMENT OFTEN.

"Your Reserve Retirement Points Statement is the most important and valuable tool available," said YNC Kurt Hemphill, Reserve Administrative Officer at the Gulf Strike Team. "It's not uncommon for a retirement to be delayed due to deviations on the member's points statement," Hemphill added.

In fact, according to Charlie Bartocci, YNCM, USCG (Ret.) and a member of the Procedures and Development Branch staff at the Pay & Personnel Command (PPC), reports that a number of those attending the Reserve Workshops have an incorrect point statement. He estimates that nearly 40 percent of Coast Guard reservists are affected by incorrect points statements.

As of June 2012, PPC is no longer mailing your Reserve Retirement Points Statement to your home. The document is available via Direct Access (Self Service>Employee>View>Reserve Points). It is paramount that you review your statement at least annually. Ideally, review it monthly to ensure recent activity, such as drills and correspondence courses, are recorded properly.

2. KNOW YOUR ANNIVERSARY DATE.

As a reservist, you must understand the difference between anniversary year, calendar year, and fiscal year. We operate within the anniversary year and fiscal year for retirement points, retirement-qualifying years, and the funding of drill and active duty time.

Your anniversary year is based on the date you entered military service, known as your anniversary date. For example, if you entered the Coast Guard Reserve on 01 June that becomes your anniversary year. This year is your anniversary year 01 June to 31 May. However, if you transitioned to the reserves from active duty and did not have a break in service (one day you were active duty, the next day you were a reservist) then your anniversary date defaults to your active duty entry date. For Coast Guard Academy graduates, this defaults to your graduation date. However, if you incurred a break in service, where you were discharged then re-enlisted at a later time, your anniversary date will be your new re-enlistment date.

Bartocci says the anniversary date is one of the most common problems with Reserve Retirement Points Statement. Your anniversary date is a vital piece of information because it is the basis for ensuring you have a retirement-qualifying year, more commonly referred to as a 'good' year. The 50 points you need for a 'good' year must be within your anniversary year, whereas the 48 Inactive Duty Training (IDT) drills and 12 days of Active Duty for Training (ADT) you are authorized is based on the fiscal year from 01 October to 30 September for funding reasons. Retirement eligibility requires 20 'good' years.

3. EARN ADDITIONAL RETIREMENT POINTS.

Retirement pay for a reservist is based on a mathematical formula that includes the Reserve Retirement Points you have earned each anniversary year. Simply put, the more points you earn the more your retirement paycheck will be. Chapter 8, Section C of the Reserve Policy Manual (COMDTINST M1001.28A) details retirement points and the retirement pay formula.

There are a variety of ways to earn points, including completing IDT, ADT, active duty time and membership as a Selected Reservist. But you can also earn retirement points for successfully completing correspondence courses. ALCOAST 556/09 encourages reserve members to "continue to seek growth opportunities through distance learning ...to prepare members to meet mobilization requirement today and add cash value to future retirement."

The message also addresses the increase of inactive duty points (membership, IDT and correspondence course points) to a maximum of 130 per anniversary year. This enables you to earn 67 extra retirement points (55 points for Deployable Specialized Forces units) every year for completing courses on your own time. Points are automatically converted for Coast Guard courses, similar to rate-specific End of Course Tests. Additionally, more than 2,200 retirement points are assigned to a list of approved non-Coast Guard correspondence courses. This list is available at http://www.uscg.mil/reserve/retirement.asp. Keep in mind, you cannot earn credit for courses completed while on active duty (ADT, ADOS, etc.) and each course will only be credited one time.

After successfully completing the non-Coast Guard correspondence course, submit your certificate to your yeoman or PSC for entry into Direct Access. It is important to periodically check Direct Access (Self Service>Employee>View>Member info Addition>Training History tab) to ensure all correspondence courses have been added to the system. Then, check if it converted to retirement points (Self Service>Employee>View>Reserve Points). Again, the more points you can earn now will equal more retirement money later.

The anniversary date and correspondence courses are just two of the areas on the Reserve Retirement Points Statement that could be incorrect. Bartocci said that the pay entry base date is also another common problem. Your local yeoman or the PPC Customer Care staff can help resolve a variety of reserve administrative issues, including problems with your Reserve Retirement Points Statement.

PPC Customer Care is staffed on selected weekends to assist drilling reservists (1-800-772-8724 or ppc-dg-customeercare@uscg.mil).

For my situation, it took the better part of three years to correct my retirement points and anniversary date. In the years since, I've regularly checked my retirement points in Direct Access and have followed my completed correspondence courses until I see the conversion to retirement points. Sometimes this can take months to appear. Don't wait until you are preparing for retirement, review your Reserve Retirement Points Statement now, and do it often, to ensure you get credit for every retirement point you have earned.
Enlisted Leadership Training Opportunities

There are several Enlisted Leadership training opportunities available to all enlisted members. They are specific to selected pay-grades align with the Coast Guard’s Leadership continuum. All of these courses are US Coast Guard Class “C” schools. Therefore, they are funded and supported by CG HQ. Units are not permitted to spend unit funds to send members to these schools. Reserve members will be issued “no cost” orders from TQC and must request funding from servicing (dxr). Requests should be submitted 45 days prior to course convening date. Additional information for each course can be found on the TQC website: www.uscg.mil/hq/tqc/

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SCHOOL (LAMS)

Course Code: 340720
Duration: 5 Days

To Apply submit Electronic Training Request (ETR) for a Resident class at Training Center Petaluma, Training Center Yorktown, or USCG Academy in New London, or contact the Point of Contact (POC) at the unit hosting the Exportable LAMS class near your unit. The schedule below is for first half of FY13 only.

PREREQUISITES: LAMS is for E-5s wanting to advance to E-6 and is mandatory for participation in the E-6 SWE. It is available at resident classes in Training Center Petaluma, Training Center Yorktown, or USCG Academy in New London. LAMS is also exported to the fleet and available at various CG units during the year.

COURSE INFO: LAMS is a unique 5-day course which develops Leadership and Management Skills for direct supervisors and mid-level leaders through an experience-based curriculum. All successful graduates of the LAMS course will receive 3 upper-level college credits in Organizational Development from the American Council on Education.

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USCG CHIEF PETTY OFFICER ACADEMY
Course Code: 230442
Duration: 33 Days in Petaluma, Calif.

USCG RESERVE CHIEF PETTY OFFICER ACADEMY
Course Code: 500884
Duration: 2 Weeks

To apply submit an Electronic Training Request In Direct Access

PREREQUISITES: Must be E-7 or above the cut for advancement to E-7, and have prior approval from CGPC (epm-2) to be frocked to the next higher pay grade.

COURSE INFO: To meet service and unit leadership needs by preparing new Chief Petty Officers for the increased responsibility as a member of the Chief Petty Officer Corps. This course teaches Chief Petty Officers a thorough understanding of their role as Leaders, Managers, Advisors, and Educators. Instruction is provided in areas of work-life, wellness, human resource management, oral and written communications, career information, human relations, and military customs and courtesies. Per ALDIST 173/98, all E-7s advanced on or after 1 Jan 1999 are required to attend this course. Per ALDIST 219/99 and CG PERSMAN, graduation from this course or from a Department of Defense Senior Enlisted Academy is required for all new CPOs (1 Jan 99 and after) in order to be eligible to participate for advancement to E-8. E-6s above the cut for advancement to CPO must obtain approval from CG Personnel Command (epm-2) to be frocked to the next higher pay grade before members will be enrolled into a CPOA class.

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USCG SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERSHIP COURSE

Course Code: 501799  Duration: 12 Days

To apply submit an Electronic Training Request In Direct Access

PREREQUISITES:

1. Be a Senior Chief or Master Chief Petty Officer on Active Duty or in the Reserves.
2. Be in compliance with Maximum Allowable Weight (MAW) standards 30 days prior to executing orders.
3. Have one year obligated service remaining upon graduation.
4. Must have previously completed the CPO Academy or DOD equivalent.

COURSE INFO: The Senior Enlisted Leadership Course (SELC) is an 80-hour blended course designed to provide our senior enlisted members the leadership and management skills required by their high level, critical assignments, including CMC and RFMC positions.

The course specifically addresses professional writing and verbal communications, concepts of strategy and organizational change management, organizational and human resource policies, and command relations.

US NAVY SENIOR ENLISTED ACADEMY

Course Code: 400302  Duration: 40 Days at Newport Navy Base in Newport, RI

To Apply email the following information to MKCS Thomas Hillman at Thomas.W.Hillman@uscg.mil with a CC: to your Commanding Officer and District Gold Badge.

Subject: Application for USN SEN ENL ACADEMY

- Name, Rank, and Employee ID #
- Active Duty or Reserve Status
- Current unit/Position
- Scores for Coast Guard Boat Crew Physical Fitness Test
- Two course dates you are available to attend
- Contact Information: Telephone number and Email address
- CO/XO endorsement must include that applicant is within CG weight standards and is an excellent Coast Guard representative

Note: This course meets SWE requirements for advancement eligibility to E-8 and previous graduates of the CPO Academy are eligible to attend.

PREREQUISITERS:

1. Be Active Duty or Reserve (E-9, E-8 or E-7s) (E-7’s must have 18 months TIG)
2. Members must be in compliance with CG and USN Weight Standards.
3. Have an outstanding appearance in and out of uniform
4. Be fit for full duty and able to participate in fitness program.
5. Be committed to providing full attention to curriculum and activities.
6. Have a one year obligated service remaining upon graduation.

COURSE INFO: The USN SEA provides a variety of leadership models and encourages students to solve problems in a systematic manner. The students will also increase their regional and cultural awareness as well as their understanding of the roles and missions of our sister services and coalition partners which will further prepare them for operations in an ever increasing joint environment. Upon graduation, students become ready to assume duties in the most demanding senior enlisted billets. They will have the opportunity to impact hundreds, if not thousands of military and civilian personnel.

ADDITIONAL INFO:

1. Navy SEA website: www.usnwc.edu/SeniorEnlistedAcademy/
2. USN weight and fitness standards at www.navy-prt.com/
3. You must have a current PHA prior to attending class.
4. You will be required to complete Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) which can be found at www.jfsc.ndu.edu/schools_programs/se_jpme/enroll_new.asp.
5. Complete the computer access training (Personal Identifiable Information and DOD IA Awareness) and print out certificates of completion prior to arrival to the course.
6. A book discussion is required. The Navy SEA website includes recommendations.
7. For any updates or changes contact SCPO Darcy Roland (401)341-4229 or by email at darcy.roland@usnwc.edu or SCPO Thomas Hillman at (202) 475-5511 or by email Thomas.w.hillman@uscg.mil.
US AIR FORCE SENIOR NON-COMMISSION OFFICER COURSE
Course Code: 400301  Duration: 43 Days at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Ala.

To Apply email the following information to MKCS Thomas Hillman at Thomas.W.Hillman@uscg.mil with a CC: to your Commanding Officer and Command Gold Badge.

**Subject:** Application for AFNSNCOA
- Name, Rank, and Employee ID #
- Date of Rank and Gender
- CMC name and contact information
- Active Duty or Reserve Status
- Current unit/Position
- Two course dates you are available to attend
- Contact Information: Telephone number and Email address
- CO/XO endorsement must include that applicant is within CG weight standards and is an excellent Coast Guard representative

**Note:** This course meets SWE requirements for advancement eligibility to E-8 and previous graduates of the CPO Academy are eligible to attend.

**PREREQUISITES:**
1. Be Active Duty or Reserve (E-7, E-8, E-9)
2. Members must be in compliance with CG Weight Standards at time of training request and prior to execution of orders.
3. Have a professional appearance in and out of uniform.
4. Be fit for full duty and able to participate in the Air Force fitness program (Running is required).
5. Have passed CG Boat Crew Physical Fitness assessment within the past 6 months from application
6. Be committed to providing full attention to AFNSNCOA curriculum and activities.
7. Have a one year obligated service remaining upon graduation.

**COURSE INFO:** The Air Force provides a curriculum based on improving communication, teamwork, and maximizing professional and personal development opportunities, while improving management procedures to meet current and foreseeable requirements. This high profile Academy classes consists of 430 top-rated Senior Enlisted leaders from all branches of the United States and Foreign Allied Armed Forces. Some DOD and Foreign service members come in contact with the U.S. Coast Guard for the first time in their military careers. You are tasked with showing fellow Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen the amazing accomplishments of our great service and our Chiefs Mess.

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US AIR FORCE NON-COMMISSION OFFICER COURSE
Course Code: 501358  Duration: 38 days at McGhee-Tyson AFB in Knoxville, TN

To apply submit a memo to: AF NCO Appointment Board Via MKCS Thomas Hillman CG-133.

Your Memo must have Command and CMC endorsement and should address:
1. Employee ID, your unit and address, phone number, email, time in service, time in rank, a statement that you are fit for full duty, and you are within your MAW and your two convening date choices.
2. Describe current responsibilities and collateral duties as they relate to the 28 leadership competences.
3. Describe how you have incorporated the Guardian Ethos with a focus on the Core Values into your life both on and off duty.
4. Why you believe this training will help you become a better leader.
5. The command endorsements should state at a minimum, that you will be an excellent CG representative who presents a sharp military appearance, and the member is fit for full duty and within CG MAW and why this person should be chosen over anyone else to attend this school.

**PREREQUISITES:** This training is primarily for E6 but E5s can apply. Member must be an excellent representative of the U.S. Coast Guard, who presents a sharp military appearance, in compliance with CG Allowable Weight Standards, be fit for full duty and able to participate in the Air National Guard fitness program and have one year obligated service remaining upon graduation.

**COURSE INFO:** The Noncommissioned Officer Academy is accredited by the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). CCAF awards all graduates 12 semester hours of college credit: Military Studies II - 3, Leadership Studies II - 6, Managerial Communication II - 3.
The Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Education Foundation is gearing up for the 2012-2013 season. September marks the beginning of the Foundation’s scholarship year, when applications for 2013 awards become available.

To be eligible for FRA Education Foundation awards, applicants must be affiliated with the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard, either through their own service or that of a spouse, parent or grandparent. Foundation scholarships of up to $5,000 are funded through private donations, established trusts and corporate sponsorships, and recipients are selected based on financial need, academic standing, character and leadership qualities. Members of the FRA and their family members qualify for a broader range of scholarships, several of which are funded through member legacy donations.

For more information please visit: www.fra.org/foundation.

Upcoming Yellow Ribbon Events

October 5-7
San Pedro, CA area
Event: pre-deployment
Primary audience: PSU 311

November 2012:
Tidewater (VA) area
Event: 60-day post-deployment
Primary audience: PSU 305

November 9-11
Ohio area
Event: 30-day post-deployment
Primary audience: PSU 309

December 7-9
New Orleans
Event: 30-day post-deployment
Primary audience: MSST NOLA

January 18-20
Chicago
Event: 60-day post-deployment
Primary audience: PSU 309

These events are open to all eligible Reserve members and their families or friends. For more information about these events, or to determine eligibility, contact the Yellow Ribbon Program at: yellowribbon@uscg.mil

FRA Education Foundation Launches 2012-2013 Scholarship Season

The Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Education Foundation is gearing up for the 2012-2013 season. September marks the beginning of the Foundation’s scholarship year, when applications for 2013 awards become available.

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A “Salute to the Armed Services/Veterans” in Tennessee

The 2012 “Salute to the Armed Services/Veterans” game will be on Saturday, October 27, 2012 at Johnny “Red” Floyd Stadium on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, TN. There will be free food and veteran related vendors will be giving away free stuff.

Coast Guard reservists, veterans, retirees, active duty, auxiliary members and their families in Nashville and surrounding middle Tennessee wishing to attend should meet at the food tent between 1200 and 1500. The football game, against North Texas, follows the lunch with on field recognition of all the services at half-time.

For more information contact Jim Clifton at jcliftonogr@hotmail.com.

Mr. Curtis Dubay, P.E., Director, Executive Secretariat for Intelligence, MDA and Information Sharing (CG-2-E) presents the CG Achievement Medal to Lt.j.g. Fiorella Michelucci, USCGR for her efforts conducting a pilot of the Border Protection’s Automated Commercial Environment Maritime & Rail (ACE M1) production system at Sector Charleston.
ESGR Honors Employers in Louisiana

On July 17, 2012, the United States Marshals Service, Eastern District of Louisiana received the “Patriot” and “Above and Beyond” Awards from the Department of Defense’s Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) for its outstanding support of its employees which include Lt. Garrett Hawk, USCGR along with 2 other members each of Louisiana Air National Guard and the Louisiana Army National Guard. The Patriot Award is given to employers that practice personnel policies that support employee participation in the National Guard and Reserve. The Above and Beyond Award is an award given in limited numbers by state and territory ESGR Committees. It recognizes employers at the state and local level who have gone above the legal requirements for granting leave and providing support for military by their employees. The ESGR was represented by its Southeast Louisiana Chair Larry L. Jones, Cmdr. USCG (Ret.). Chief Deputy Steven Hartman accepted the award on behalf of the U.S. Marshall’s Eastern District of Louisiana. The award ceremony was attended by U.S. Coast Guard 8th District Commander, Rear Adm. Roy Nash, Colonel Pete Schneider, Louisiana Air National Guard 159th Fighter Wing Maintenance Group Commander and Chief Master Sergeant James Downing, Louisiana Air National Guard State Command Chief, who came to show their appreciation for the District’s support of their respective Reserve personnel.
“Guardians of the Gates: the Surfboats,” produced and directed last year by David Wittkower, explores the daily life and responsibilities of being a Coast Guardsman in one of the nineteen designated surf stations. Filming takes place at Coast Guard station Golden Gate located in Sausalito, California. The film is a great testament to the most fundamental beliefs of the Coast Guard, attributed to the cinematography and editing as well as participating Coast Guard personnel, and is relatable to civilians and non-Coast Guard viewers.

Images of daily life in California, such as Coast Guard vessels amid brilliant sunsets and seagull flocks, draw the viewer into the film’s opening scenes. Although there is a variation of activities and scenes portrayed in the montage, the theme is established as water-centric from the beginning. One of the most impressive scenes in the film occurs during filming at dusk on the water, contrasted in others by twenty-foot waves and the involvement of rescue helicopters. The different times of day and conditions reflect the versatility and reliability of the Coast Guard. The Surfman’s Creed quote displayed on the screen at the beginning of the film exemplifies this mentality: “I will ensure that my superiors rest easy with the knowledge that I am on the Helm, no matter what the conditions.”

The cinematography and editing remain effective throughout the entirety of the film. Diverse camera angles allow for different points of view and attention-grabbing variation. A frequently utilized angle consists of the camera being submerged justbelow the water’s surface, usually with a Coast Guard lifeboat in sight. The water seems much rougher at eye-level, and the sound of the gurgling, lapping water seems to simulate the perspective of a victim overboard and in need of rescuing.

The cameraman did not directly interact or communicate with the crew on camera. This helped to preserve authenticity and solidified the realism of the rescues. In this respect, narration was necessary, and radio chatter provided background information through authentic medium.

The film furthered the theme of authenticity through its interaction with Coast Guard personnel and rescued victims. Introductions of crewmates and their hometowns, far and wide, personalized their stories. Rather than indistinguishable people who wore the same uniform and spoke the same jargon, they are individuals with unique names, origins, motivations for joining the Coast Guard, and with opinions and experiences to share. The Coasties describe their camaraderie in terms of their trust and respect in the bonds that they shared. As one member said, they all have “two families, [a] family at home and [another] family at work.” Even those rescued remained authentic, as most wind surfers pulled out of the water expressed a mixture of embarrassment as well as gratitude.

Another key attribute of the film is its accessibility. Being a civilian with only a rudimentary understanding of Coast Guard functions, I found the film very easy to follow and understand. From explanations of positions while on duty, and boats and technology, to the importance of hand signals, “sounding off” (making sure to yell loud enough so that the entire crew hears all calls and orders made) and the definition of the coxswain (the driver of the boat), the film can be enjoyed by a viewer with any level of knowledge. Jack McGrath, a historian from the Coast Guard Heritage Museum in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, provides a relevant patterning of Coast Guard history, complete with old photos to supplement explanations.

Smaller segments allow for elaboration on more specific events, such as the mandatory pepper-spraying of all crew members. As a seaman’s eyes water and burn after being sprayed, he struggles to hold them open as his crew mates stand by for moral support. These scenes capture the audience’s attention while portraying the real-life event truthfully.

A surprising aspect of the film has to do with the emphasis on the Coast Guard’s role in recovering bodies of those who attempt to or succeed in committing suicide. A fairly routine mission for the Coasties stationed adjacent to the Golden Gate Bridge, it proves for an interesting and unexpected, yet respectfully portrayed, twist in the story line.

The movie did a tasteful job of depicting the struggles and difficulties of working at this particular Coast Guard station, such as communication difficulties and suicide recoveries, while accompanying these themes with relevant footage and supplementary commentary by the Coasties themselves.

Above all, the film does a superb job exemplifying the Coast Guard’s ethos. The importance of training and uniformity is stressed because of the need for calculated, automatic responses in order to save lives. McGrath mentions, “You have to go out, you don’t have to come back,” as the service’s unofficial motto from the days when the Coast Guard was called the Lifesaving Service. There is an emphasis on the fact that the Coast Guard is the only service that is non-combative by nature, and has core values that revolve around saving lives, making it different from its DoD counterparts.

“Guardians of the Gates” is a great movie to check out, whether you’re affiliated with the Coast Guard or looking to learn more about the seafaring service. Authentic and eye-catching, the cinematography and commentary add to the appeal of the film that so respectfully depicts the Coast Guard and those who serve in it.

Reviewed by Caroline Acton, CG-1313 Intern

Note: This review is published as a convenience to our readers and does not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve or Reservist magazine.
Capt. Paul F. Egner, Jr., USCGR retired, died August 23, 2012 in Houston, Texas. He was born in Philadelphia on March 1, 1937 and attended public schools in Philadelphia and Ambler, PA. After graduating from Dartmouth College in 1959, he entered the U.S. Coast Guard at Yorktown, VA. After commissioning in December 1959, he was assigned to duty in San Francisco where he met Jane Heberling. They married in Honolulu in June 1960 and lived in the San Francisco Bay area. In 1963 Paul joined Shell Oil Company and worked in various assignments in California before moving to Houston in 1975.

Paul is survived by his wife Jane Egner of 52 years; children Paul F. Egner, III of Houston; Tom Egner of Spring; and Holly Dockery and husband Allen of Cypress; grandchildren Katherine Egner, Drew Dockery, and Ben Dockery; and his brother John Egner and wife Linda of New York City.

Paul stayed in the Coast Guard Reserve, serving in units in California, Texas, and Louisiana, and retired in 1986 with the rank of Captain. His career at Shell ranged from retail marketing to marine oil spill response retiring in 1997.

During his lifetime he participated in numerous civic industry organizations including the Ports and Waterways Committee of the Houston Chamber of Commerce, American Petroleum Institute, the Dangerous Goods Advisory Council, the State Bar of Texas Grievance Committee, the Houston Bar Association Fee Dispute Committee, Houston Grand Opera Guild, the Reserve Officers Association, and his Subdivision Board of Directors.
Vice Adm. Peter Neffenger, deputy commandant for operations, gets underway on an over the horizon small boat to conduct training with a boarding team crew of the Coast Guard cutter Bernard C. Webber Sept. 25. Armed with a 25-mm chain gun and four .50 caliber machine guns, the Fast Response Cutter Bernard C. Webber provides lethal homeland security firepower.

Photo by PA3 Jon-Paul Rios.
Regional Dive Locker East members signal they are ok after inspecting the hulls of the 87-foot patrol boats moored at Training Center Cape May. As part of their ships husbandry mission, RDLE inspected and cleaned three cutters’ hulls, removed line from their propellers and also inspected the ships’ anti-corrosion systems.

Photo by PA2 Michael Anderson

The Space Shuttle Endeavour rests atop the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft at Ellington Field near the Coast Guard Air Station hangar for a public viewing, Sept. 19. Air Station Houston provided aerial support, aboard an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter, for a NASA photographer to document this historic visit.

Photo by Fireman Edward Cheveresan.

A buoy deck supervisor ensures crewmembers properly secure a crane aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Saginaw, Sept. 08. The Saginaw was conducting aids-to-navigation operations in the wake of Hurricane Isaac.

Photo by Fireman Edward Cheveresan.
U.S. Coast Guard Reserve

Always There When Needed Most