



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD



COMMANDANT'S STRATEGIC INTENT 2015 – 2019





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THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Today's United States Coast Guard faces historic challenges. As we strive to meet the increasing demands of everyday operations while remaining prepared for more frequent major incidents, we must confront a host of unprecedented modern risks that threaten our Nation's security and prosperity. From historic levels of violence in Central America to increased activity in the newly-navigable waters of the Arctic, from the vast and complex reaches of cyberspace to the bustling and rapidly-changing energy trade that is now fueled by significant domestic production, we are facing a convergence of risks that demand the Coast Guard's strategic action and commitment of resources.



The *Strategic Intent 2015-2019* outlines the Coast Guard's highest strategic priorities to address these risks. These priorities are directly aligned with national strategies and policies, and guidance from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to include the priorities outlined in the *DHS Quadrennial Homeland Security Review*. In fulfilling our Service's responsibility to ensure the safety, security, and stewardship of our Nation's waters, the Coast Guard must: ***understand our strategic environment, adapt to the strategic challenges in all domains, and achieve and maintain a resilient service that is always ready for the realities of the 21st century.***

In addition to the complex threats and challenges this *Strategic Intent* addresses, it also recognizes that austere fiscal realities demand efficiency in all of our efforts. Reductions felt across government require innovative approaches in our allocation of resources to meet mission requirements in the 21st century, with emphasis upon a measurable return on investment. Similarly, we must be innovative in the management of our human resource capital, with an emphasis upon greater specialization across our many and ever more complex skill sets. The Coast Guard will continually seek efficiencies and cost control measures to provide the greatest return on every dollar invested in maritime safety, security, and stewardship. Between 2012 and 2015, the Coast Guard's discretionary budget was reduced by \$300 million, including a reduction of more than 1,500 personnel. During a time of increased demand for Coast Guard services, these reductions will challenge the Service to identify, react to, and combat all threats in the maritime domain. As new threats arise, assets must be redirected to the highest priorities of the Nation.

This document provides overarching guidance for a number of strategic priorities detailed in functional and regional strategies, such as the *Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy*, the *Coast Guard Arctic Strategy*, and the soon-to-be released *Coast Guard Cyber Strategy*. It is not intended to cover all Coast Guard efforts, but rather outline a four-year strategic agenda that will ensure the overall success of the longer-term goals identified in these strategies. This *Strategic Intent* also outlines the critical initiatives we must pursue to bridge national strategies and program performance planning to build and maintain a resilient Service that is Always Ready for the challenges of this new century.


ADMIRAL PAUL F. ZUKUNFT
Commandant



AMERICA'S COAST GUARD

At all times a military service and a branch of the armed forces of the United States, a federal law enforcement agency, a regulatory agency, a first responder and humanitarian service, and a member of the U.S. Intelligence Community, the United States Coast Guard is the world's premier, multi-mission, maritime service responsible for the safety, security, and stewardship of the Nation's waters. In the execution of its duties within the Department of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard serves on the front line for a Nation whose economic prosperity and national security are inextricably linked to its maritime interests. To preserve the Nation's interests at home and abroad, the Coast Guard employs its broad authorities, expansive network of interagency, military, and industry relationships, unique operational capabilities and presence, and international partnerships to execute daily, steady-state operations and respond to major incidents.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The maritime domain has never been more complex, and the challenges and threats in our operating environment have never been greater. Amidst a number of persistent and emerging risks, the Coast Guard remains an indispensable instrument of national security and prosperity. Our capabilities, capacities, partnerships, and authorities uniquely position our Service to meet the rapidly evolving and complex threats to our Nation.

While several modern trends continue to fuel new threats, fiscal and budgetary realities necessitate new strategic approaches to confront the greatest risks. The Coast Guard will adapt to the changing strategic landscape as we endeavor to maintain steady-state mission performance and major incident readiness. The evolving landscape will require adjustments to our operations and support initiatives as we prepare our Service for the demands of the 21st century.

Strategic Landscape

Global trends and geostrategic threats are rapidly changing our world. Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) networks, technological advancements in maritime industries, cyber risks, the impacts of climate change, shifting human migration patterns away from poverty and violence, and weakening sovereign nation states, all pose significant challenges in our operating environment. As such, the Coast Guard must rigorously assess and plan for the demands ahead, while meeting our steady-state mission obligations and ensuring our readiness for major incident response operations. This will require a continuing commitment to assess rapidly changing conditions that will have the greatest impacts on our Nation's security and prosperity.

Strategic Challenges & Coast Guard Approaches

While a multitude of factors shape U.S. maritime interests, five areas of strategic focus represent the most pressing demands for Coast Guard operations in the next four years. Although the Coast Guard must be ready for daily operations and a vast array of incidents that will inevitably occur with greater frequency over the coming decades, these five areas of focus provide a unifying strategic agenda for our Service, informing resource and operational decisions. They are directly aligned with national and departmental level strategies, and are coordinated with Department of Defense support of the U.S. strategic rebalance to the Asia-Pacific. The areas of focus are the result of a risk-informed approach based on our understanding of the strategic landscape. They include:

- ***Rise and Convergence of Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) Networks***
- ***Imperative for Southern Maritime Border Security***
- ***Increasing Maritime Commerce***
- ***Emerging Cyber Risks to the Maritime Transportation System***
- ***Adapting to Climate Change in the Polar Regions***

Building the 21st Century Coast Guard

To meet these increasingly-complex and converging strategic challenges, the Coast Guard must address a number of service-wide areas of effort that align with our Guiding Principles: ***Service to Nation, Duty to People, and Commitment to Excellence***. Although not all-inclusive, this document highlights a number of specific initiatives that directly support the priorities of the *Commandant's Direction 2014*.

- ***To provide the best possible Service to Nation, the Coast Guard will ensure the appropriate complement of ready assets, leverage critical partnerships, and maintain sufficient workforce capability, proficiency, and end strength to properly exercise our authorities and accomplish our missions***
- ***As a military service made up of talented and dedicated individuals, the Coast Guard will fulfill our Duty to People by driving sexual assault from our ranks while fostering a strong culture of respect and inclusion.***
- ***In upholding our Commitment to Excellence, the Coast Guard will streamline business practices, optimize our workforce, modernize financial management systems, and build a more agile strategic planning process.***





STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

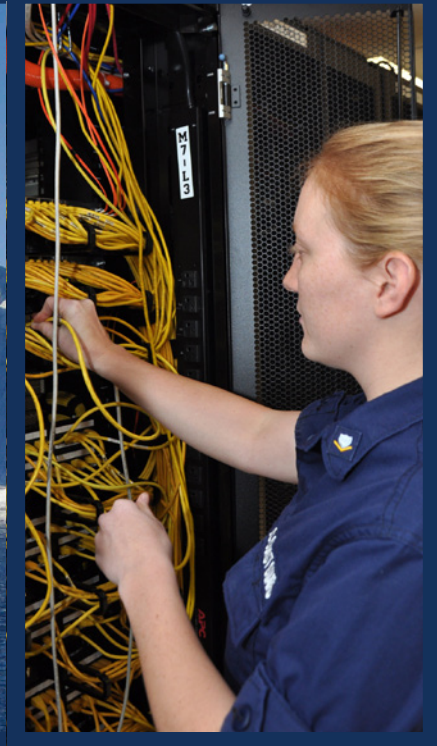
Over the next four years, the Coast Guard must confront complex challenges in our operating environment. In addition to the daily requirements placed on our mission programs during steady-state operations, a wide array of global trends and geostrategic threats will continue to fuel increasing—and in many cases unprecedented—demands for our Service.

Globalization has led to an interconnected world, where the security and prosperity of any one nation relies on productive international relationships. Today's economy is critically dependent on global trade, which in turn relies on safe, resilient, and efficient transportation systems. Over 90 percent of global trade travels through maritime conveyance, making the safety, security, and environmental stewardship of the U.S. Maritime Transportation System (MTS) a national security and economic imperative. Technological advancements have led to greater efficiencies in maritime trade, and have allowed for greater exploitation of critical maritime natural resources. Efficiencies in extracting critical—yet finite—resources have increasingly challenged our collective ability to govern and manage competing needs of growing populations. The impacts of climate change in the maritime environment—already evident in the Arctic—may also exacerbate many of these competing demands.

Technological innovations have led to a more interconnected and productive world, while introducing new vulnerabilities and risks for virtually all consumers, businesses, organizations, and governments. Cyber threats pose grave risks to our national critical infrastructure as well as government cyber systems. New developments in technology and communications equipment have also enabled Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) networks involved in drug trafficking and other illicit activities to plan, coordinate, and perpetrate their schemes with increased mobility and anonymity. The rise and convergence of TOC networks has also destabilized many governments, fueled violence and corruption, and stymied economic growth and development.

The demographics of our Nation are changing, as are Coast Guard human capital requirements. New operating areas, domains, and technologies will require both specialized expertise and the cognitive adaptability to understand an increasingly diverse mission space. Additionally, confronting strategic risks and maintaining the readiness of our assets will become increasingly difficult in an austere budgetary environment. The realities of competition for limited discretionary funding will create an uncertain fiscal climate. The Coast Guard continues to face downward budget pressure and decreased purchasing power as funding for operational expenses remains largely unchanged from previous years, with little adjustment for inflation or to meet the significantly increased demand for Coast Guard services. Operational capacity will be further strained as national security partners, such as the Department of Defense, rebalance their priorities to meet increasing security demands beyond the Western Hemisphere.

National and departmental strategies and guidance have clearly defined the greatest areas of risk the Coast Guard will face in the coming years. Comprehensive reviews and assessments of these mandates provide the Coast Guard direction in several emerging risk areas that threaten our Nation's security and prosperity. These risks are also detailed in greater depth in recently-released Coast Guard Strategies, including the *Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy*, the *Coast Guard Arctic Strategy*, and the forthcoming *Coast Guard Cyber Strategy*. Our nearer-term operational priorities and force allocation are aligned with these strategies, and the following areas of focus will serve to prioritize many ongoing and future implementation plans.





STRATEGIC CHALLENGES & COAST GUARD APPROACHES

Challenge – The Rise and Convergence of Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) Networks

As outlined in the National Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime, TOC networks have now evolved to form a crime-terror-insurgency nexus, with illicit activities that span drug trafficking, terrorism, human smuggling, trafficking in persons, trafficking in weapons, piracy, environmental crime, intellectual property theft, and cybercrime.

In the Coast Guard's primary operating environment, TOC networks are fueled by immense profits from drug trafficking, and their indiscriminate use of violence weakens regional governments, stymies legitimate economic activity and development, and terrorizes peaceful citizens. The most recent United Nations Study on Global Homicide found that eight countries in Central America, the Caribbean, or on the Caribbean Coast of South America ranked in the top ten globally in terms of homicide rates. Comparable spikes in violence have also occurred in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Coast Guard Approach: As detailed in the *Coast Guard Western Hemisphere Strategy*, our effort to combat TOC networks with an offensive posture involves proactive engagement with domestic and international partners to identify, target, and defeat illicit networks. This will require the ability to project persistent offshore presence in high-threat areas where TOC networks are active, as well as improved integration and synchronization of intelligence and operations. Our efforts in combating networks will focus on three areas: (1) understanding illicit networks and fostering our own network culture; (2) identifying TOC networks; and (3) targeting and interdicting TOC networks for prosecution.

Unity of effort will remain a major focus as we continue to improve and leverage diverse partnerships across government and throughout our hemisphere. The Coast Guard will align efforts with national-level strategies and initiatives for the Central America region. Likewise, we will maintain strong international partnerships, supported by bilateral and multilateral agreements with regional governments and cooperation with other maritime forces that operate in the Western Hemisphere. Also critical to combating TOC networks in the near-term is our ability to leverage intelligence and project persistent presence in high-risk areas in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific, where TOC network smugglers' illicit shipments are largest, of highest purity, and most vulnerable to disruption. Successful disruptions create an interdiction cycle of investigative activities and criminal prosecutions leading to additional intelligence and follow-on seizures. Possessing a broad range of authorities and capabilities across diverse maritime missions, the Coast Guard is a versatile and critical resource in our Nation's larger battle against TOC networks.



Challenge – Imperative for Southern Maritime Border Security

The current risk to our southern border and approaches will continue to be the most significant border threat to our Nation's security. Our southern maritime border consists of economically-vital maritime ports of entry and the vast distances between them; six million square miles of ocean and coastline, including the waters of southern California, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean extending to Central America and the northern waters of South America. Persistent threats to our southern maritime border include market-driven illicit flows of people and goods such as drug- and human trafficking, as well as non-market flows such as illegal migration and terrorism. Regional political and economic instability has historically increased threats to our southern maritime border, and the rise in TOC-associated violence, coupled with the convergence of TOC activities, has helped fuel significant migrant flows such as the 2014 unaccompanied child migration. Securing our southern border and approaches is of highest priority for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as evidenced by the Department's Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan. As the lead federal agency for maritime law enforcement, the Coast Guard will play a pivotal role in securing our southern maritime border and approaches.

Coast Guard Approach: The Coast Guard will play a pivotal role in leading and executing the overarching *Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan*. Achieving unity of effort across the DHS enterprise will be critical for success. The *Campaign Plan* emphasizes a number of strategic initiatives, including the establishment of three DHS Joint Task Forces (JTFs). Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area was selected to serve as the first Commander of Joint Task Force - East, with senior Coast Guard officers also selected to serve as Deputy Commander in both Joint Task Force - West, and Joint Task Force - Investigations. Our plan to help secure the southern border will emphasize efficient and effective allocation of resources, improved awareness through a common intelligence picture that supports risk-based decision-making, constant improvement through measures of effectiveness, and a targeted presence that interdicts threats far from U.S. borders.

Challenge – Increasing Maritime Commerce

The prosperity of our Nation is inextricably linked to a safe and efficient Maritime Transportation System (MTS). Increased congestion, larger vessels, greater complexity of port operations, increased exploration and resource extraction in the outer continental shelf, advanced marine technologies, and the expanded use of the MTS to transport energy resources and hazardous materials will continue to place more people and property at risk. Expansion of the Panama Canal could also drive major changes in maritime shipping routes, creating new challenges for our safety, security, and stewardship regimes. Additionally, our Nation's changing relationship with Cuba will potentially alter and increase commercial and maritime activity.

Recent trends in domestic energy production demonstrate how quickly technology and dynamic markets can increase challenges in MTS management. Driven primarily by advances in technology that allow for more efficient and effective extraction of previously-inaccessible oil and gas reserves, the U.S. energy industry recently experienced dramatic growth for the first time since domestic oil and natural gas production peaked in the 1970s. In October 2013, the U.S. produced more oil than it imported for the first time in twenty years. In 2014 the U.S. became the world's largest producer of both hydrocarbon liquids (crude oil, condensate, and natural gas liquids) and natural gas. Offshore and inland domestic oil and gas production recently hit record levels and despite any short-term market disruptions, is expected to grow through future decades. The corresponding increased demand on the MTS to support the production and transportation of oil and gas, refined products and chemicals, and related manufactured goods will challenge the Coast Guard's capacity to ensure safety, security, and environmental stewardship of our Nation's waters.

Coast Guard Approach: The Coast Guard will continue to promote a safe, secure, efficient, and resilient MTS. Risk management and hazard prevention across the MTS will remain essential to accomplishing our objectives of safety and security. In an increasingly complex maritime environment, we will continue to emphasize the role of effective incident management in response and recovery operations for events and activities that pose major threats to commercial activity, the environment, or human life. The Coast Guard must comprehensively assess and meet the evolving demands of the energy sector within the offshore, coastal, Great Lakes, and inland zones. These demands include ship design and construction, offshore infrastructure, transportation of energy products via the MTS, and the construction and operation of new terminals. The Coast Guard will focus efforts on improving regulatory frameworks and enhancing technical competency, as well as developing workforce capacity. The Coast Guard will also expand contingency plans and preparedness activities, ensure vigilance in waterways management, and explore improvements to national response policy.



Challenge – Emerging Cyber Risks to the Maritime Transportation System

Securing Coast Guard cyberspace and protecting maritime critical infrastructure will be of utmost strategic importance in the coming years. Cyber technology has fueled unprecedented growth and efficiency in our globalized economy, but it has also spawned a growing number of challenges and risks that threaten our Nation's security and prosperity. Government and critical infrastructure systems face emerging cyber threats from adversaries that possess substantial resources and employ sophisticated tools. These threats pose significant risks to Coast Guard systems and networks, as well as our Nation's maritime critical infrastructure and the MTS. Using a variety of maritime safety and security authorities, including those specified under the Maritime Transportation Security Act, the Coast Guard will play a pivotal role in helping maritime infrastructure stakeholders secure their cyberspace.

Coast Guard Approach: The Coast Guard must develop broader cyber capabilities, as well as more focused lines of effort that are informed by a comprehensive cyber strategy. The strategy will more clearly define roles and responsibilities of Coast Guard programs and future initiatives in the context of governing strategies such as the *National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace* and the *National Infrastructure Protection Plan*. Our strategic effort will provide a clear framework, ensuring effective Coast Guard network defense, protection of maritime cyber infrastructures in the public and private sectors, and appropriate programs and capabilities that will enhance operational effectiveness in meeting our strategic priorities. The *Coast Guard Cyber Strategy* will be released in 2015, and will guide our cyber strategic efforts for the next four years.





Challenge – Adapting to Climate Change in the Polar Regions

The consequences of climate change are wide-ranging; in the Arctic in particular, the Coast Guard's most pressing near-term risks stem from increased maritime activity as a result of diminishing ice coverage. Maritime traffic in the Bering Strait is increasing. Ships now transit previously unnavigable routes, sometimes saving hundreds of thousands of dollars per transit. Tourism activity from cruise ships is also on the rise, and is expected to increase demands for Coast Guard response capability. The Arctic region is also extremely rich in natural resources, which adds to its geostrategic significance. The vast distances that separate the remote and isolated Polar regions present daunting challenges to governance. Although activity in the Arctic is increasing demand across Coast Guard missions, our capabilities are primarily dependent on our aging national icebreaking fleet to provide assured access to both the Arctic and Antarctic regions.

Coast Guard Approach: In accordance with the *Coast Guard Arctic Strategy*, we will look to improve awareness, modernize governance, and broaden partnerships in the Polar Regions. In the next four years the Coast Guard will advocate for more reliable national solutions to help meet rising mission requirements. Increasing maritime and economic activity will continue to heighten demand on extremely limited Coast Guard resources in a region with minimal shore-based infrastructure. The national icebreaking fleet currently includes only one operational Heavy Icebreaker—the USCGC POLAR STAR. The Coast Guard also operates a Medium Icebreaker, the USCGC HEALY, which is best suited for scientific missions to the Arctic in the summer months, but is not designed for heavy icebreaking.

Our Nation faces significant risks due to the lack of capacity of our icebreaking fleet. The Coast Guard may be called to respond to a maritime emergency involving a cruise ship, merchant ship, or other vessel, and we may not be able to come to our own aid should our Heavy Icebreaker experience difficulties. Consequently, we may have to rely on the goodwill and capabilities of foreign nations to assist. Additionally, our icebreakers regularly require long periods of extensive inport maintenance to ensure their ability to perform in the harshest polar environments, further exacerbating the limitations of capacity and availability.

The Coast Guard is coordinating across the federal government to develop requirements for the next generation of U.S. icebreakers. Sustaining U.S. presence in the Polar Regions will require a whole-of-government approach and increased funding for acquisition and operations. Additionally, to be prepared for any changes in these remote operating environments, the Coast Guard will advocate for national solutions, consistent with guiding policy such as the *National Strategy for the Arctic Region* and the *Coast Guard Arctic Strategy*. We will ensure alignment with joint and interagency efforts such as those laid out in the Navy's *Arctic Roadmap*, and advance multilateral approaches through coordinating bodies such as the Arctic Council and the Arctic Coast Guard Forum.



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BUILDING THE 21ST CENTURY COAST GUARD

Decades have passed since the last major change in U.S. energy production. Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) in Central America has fueled levels of violence not seen in our hemisphere since the bloody civil wars of the twentieth century. Cyber represents the Coast Guard's first new operating domain since our service adopted aviation capabilities a century ago. The opening of vast and previously unnavigable portions of the Arctic Ocean will create the first entirely-new operating area in recent history. Individually, any one of these challenges would require significant effort to address with our existing steady-state obligations; taken together with downward budget pressures, these unprecedented challenges will strain existing capacity while increasing demand for the unique authorities and capabilities inherent in the Coast Guard.

To ensure the Coast Guard is able to address the demands of our rapidly evolving operating environment, we will pursue ongoing recapitalization and targeted improvements in assets, expand partnerships, support our workforce, and refine business processes. The Guiding Principles set forth in the Commandant's Direction 2014

— *Service to Nation, Duty to People, and Commitment to Excellence* —

provide the framework through which we will seek to accomplish a variety of service-wide strategic initiatives to ensure the Coast Guard is always ready for the challenges of the 21st century.

Service to Nation

Service to Nation requires that we safeguard America's security and prosperity by maintaining and building the capabilities, capacities, and cooperative relationships that we use to accomplish our missions. We will invest in updated assets to replace aging platforms and shore infrastructure, commit to working with a diverse array of stakeholders, and maintain an appropriately sized and trained force.

Building Capabilities

The Coast Guard will invest in resources that are critical to meeting the challenges of new domains and increasing service demands. Affordable recapitalization of the Coast Guard's fleet of cutters, boats, and aircraft remains an imperative for future Service viability. A significant portion of our cutter fleet is over forty years old, with some ships over fifty years old. To meet mission demands as these aging assets are necessarily removed from service, we will continue to pursue appropriate acquisitions. We will focus on acquiring Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPC) to meet our national security requirements to operate far offshore in the harsh maritime environment.



The OPC is the most affordable way to fill the service’s long-term need for offshore capability. Additionally, as capabilities and infrastructure to support heavy icebreaking; aids to navigation on inland waterways; command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and information technology (C4ISR and IT); vertical lift for search and rescue; and airborne surveillance are impacted by platform availability and service-life challenges in the near-to-medium term, we will strive to maintain capabilities through timely,

affordable recapitalization. We will combine these measures with appropriate investment in new technologies and tools—such as cyber security systems and unmanned aerial systems—in order to maintain a tactical advantage in both traditional and emerging domains. These efforts will be conducted jointly with DHS and DOD partners to ensure non-redundant and interoperable capabilities.

To ensure the highest return on our capability investments, the Coast Guard will continue to improve the integration and synchronization of intelligence and operations both internally and with partners. This integration is critical to the optimal allocation of resources to address the highest-priority threats in an increasingly complex operating environment. We will collect and disseminate intelligence to inform

Building Capabilities

Offshore Patrol Cutter

The Offshore Patrol Cutter is the Coast Guard’s number-one acquisition investment priority. As the replacement for the Coast Guard’s medium endurance cutter, the flight deck-equipped Offshore Patrol Cutter will provide the majority of the Coast Guard’s offshore surface capacity, bridging the capabilities of the high-endurance National Security Cutter and the short-range Fast Response Cutter.

commanders and other decision makers by providing actionable threat information for the maritime and cyber domains. We will continually employ intelligence not only to drive operations, but also to inform a strategic, risk-based decision-making process that enables greater organizational performance and surge capacity.

Unity of Effort

The Coast Guard will unify effort and foster beneficial relationships with the full range of partners across all strategic efforts. We will capitalize on the unique nature of our broad authorities and capabilities while increasing government efficiency. We will continue to lead DHS initiatives by integrating operational and support capacities with other departmental components. Additionally, Coast Guard leadership will continue to facilitate collaboration on departmental enterprise management through participation in the Deputies Management Action Group, and will identify cross-cutting opportunities and common requirements for investments through the Joint Requirements Council. We will participate in DHS-wide efforts to ensure efficiencies. Taking a leadership role in carrying out the DHS *Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan*, the Coast Guard will appoint a senior executive to serve as Director of Joint Task Force-East, exercising interagency responsibility for protecting the country's southern maritime border and approaches. As the Chair of The Interdiction Committee, the Commandant of the Coast Guard will continue to lead the coordination and integration of national efforts to combat drug trafficking. Moreover, senior Coast Guard Officers will continue to direct Joint Interagency Task Forces South and West, coordinating interagency efforts to detect, monitor, and interdict illicit traffic under the auspices of respective Department of Defense geographic Combatant Commands.

We will build upon robust interagency relationships with federal, state, and local partners to improve intelligence support to operations while performing our shared missions. As outlined in the *Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*, we will also continue to cooperate closely with the Navy and Marine Corps to improve interoperability of assets, and ensure national security in all facets of the maritime realm. Exerting influence outside of our borders, we will advocate for national interests and leverage relationships through participation in international forums such as the International Maritime Organization and the Arctic Council, while furthering mutual interests with international partners through bilateral and multilateral agreements. Acknowledging the growing complexity and vitality of commercial activities in the maritime region, we will also enhance our outreach to interagency partners and maritime industry stakeholders.

The Coast Guard will also capitalize on relationships with both American and foreign partners overseas. We will continue to support the Departments of Defense and State by providing both Defense Attachés and Coast Guard Liaison Officers at various embassies as appropriate. In the development of a *Security Sector Assistance Strategy*, the Coast Guard will enhance our international maritime partners' abilities to ensure the safety and security of their own waters, thereby increasing the stability of the maritime environment worldwide and preventing the emergence of threats and hazards that could eventually reach our own shores. We will continue to maximize use of our International Port Security Liaison Officers to assess implementation of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code and other anti-terrorism security measures in foreign ports, thereby reducing risks to ports, ships, and the entire Maritime Transportation System.

Unity of Effort

International Agreements

The Coast Guard maintains over 40 international agreements with maritime nations throughout the Western Hemisphere to help facilitate activities such as law enforcement, search and rescue, and pollution response.

Building Capacity

Building Capacity for Major Incident Response Operations

The Coast Guard has authorities, capabilities, proficiencies, and a long history in leading responses to maritime disasters and incidents. The Service's ability to operate within and bridge between military, federal, state, local, and private sector response systems makes the Coast Guard an indispensable asset for ensuring national resilience in the maritime domain.

Building Capacity for Increased Mission Demand and Major Incident Response Operations

The Coast Guard must also build an appropriately sized and trained workforce to perform our missions. Critically, we will ensure that we are appropriately staffed for mission sets requiring increasingly technical and perishable skills, including an adequate number of proficient marine inspectors to facilitate maritime commerce, as well as a proficient and dedicated cyber workforce. In addition, we will work to build overall force size to ensure that we can meet steady-state demands while also maintaining surge capacity for major incidents. The Coast Guard will prepare to address future risks by ensuring the capability to simultaneously respond to events of national significance, perform enhanced nationwide security operations, and meet steady state mission demands.

Duty to People

Duty to People necessitates an unwavering commitment to the citizens we serve and those who serve beside us—the extraordinary people who make up our active, reserve, civilian, and auxiliary workforce. Our missions demand teamwork, trust, and selflessness. Trust thrives in an environment where our core values of *Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty* define us. Core value violations, such as sexual assault and discrimination betray and erode the trust so vital to performing our missions. The Coast Guard will further a culture of respect throughout our service, fostering an organizational environment of diverse thought, fairness, and dignity. A culture of respect begins with leadership, and our leaders require the tools, policies, and support to guide and mentor others. The Coast Guard will emphasize leadership, diversity, and a positive command climate as a system to sustain mission excellence.

Driving Out Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is an intolerable crime that degrades our Service by eroding unit cohesiveness and destroying morale. Our Service culture of respect demands that leaders foster a climate inhospitable to sexual assault and the behaviors that enable it, such as ostracizing, hazing, fraternizing, retaliation, and sexual harassment.

The Coast Guard Sexual Assault Prevention Council (SAPC) published the *Sexual Assault and Response Strategic Plan 2013-2017*, which further defines objectives, initiatives, and milestones to improve climate, prevent assaults, improve assistance services, and strengthen accountability. We will update our plan of action based on long-term analysis of our organizational culture and the results of the RAND Military Workplace Study. Also, we will continue to reinforce sexual assault reporting and provide timely, coordinated resources to victims; investigate all reports thoroughly; and analyze and share case disposition trends to ensure transparency.

Stamping out sexual assault means all allegations of inappropriate behavior are taken seriously and victims of sexual assault are treated with compassion. It also means that those accused of the crime are treated fairly and

afforded the presumption of innocence. Coast Guard members must have the courage to act to protect their shipmates by preventing a sexual assault before it occurs. When an assault does occur we will investigate it, when appropriate we will try the accused, and when it is proven beyond a reasonable doubt that a person has committed the crime, that offender will be held accountable. All Coast Guard members deserve to live and work in a climate of trust, respect, and dignity.

Diversity and Inclusion

There is an operational imperative to recruit, shape, and retain a workforce that reflects the diverse fabric of the United States. The Coast Guard's stakeholders are a broad maritime community represented by a multiplicity of nations, industries, and interests from around the world. A diverse workforce will increase our collective understanding of the greater society we serve, thereby improving our mission performance. The Coast Guard operates in far-reaching environments, often responding to unique and unpredictable crises. The force trusted to respond to a humanitarian or environmental disaster must have the cognitive diversity to solve problems creatively. The evolving complexities of our world and our operations demand a resilient service that draws upon the broad range of skills, talents, and experiences found in the American population.

At our junior officer and enlisted levels, the Coast Guard workforce is more diverse than ever. The Coast Guard Academy Class of 2018 is the most diverse in history, including 33 percent underrepresented minorities and 36 percent women. In our enlisted ranks, both minority and female representation climbed steadily over the last decade. We must sustain this diverse talent pool by putting the right programs in place to promote retention. We will make the Coast Guard an employer of choice for all American demographic groups.

The Coast Guard will remain committed to command and work climates in which members feel safe to raise



issues, and managers are vigilant in ensuring equal opportunity for all regardless of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, or other personal attributes. We will update and implement the *Coast Guard Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan* in order to build and sustain a diverse workforce and an inclusive work environment. The updated plan will mandate that an Assistant Commandant serve as Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, to be incorporated into all workforce diversity planning and governance. The plan will broaden the reach and impact of educated diversity leaders throughout the Coast Guard by directing development of standardized diversity leadership training for inclusion in all formal training environments (e.g. C-Schools and Command Cadre courses). The plan will also implement best-practice recruitment and retention strategies for outreach, mentoring, inclusive leadership development, and affinity and resource groups with access to the highest levels of leadership. Throughout the plan's implementation, we will update and monitor our diversity score card, increasing our ability to measure which initiatives are successful. Accountability reviews will be conducted as part of a formalized process, including required biannual reports to the Leadership Council.

Leadership – Service Culture and Mission Accomplishment

The Coast Guard instills leadership at the most junior levels. Junior officers command cutters and aircraft, while junior enlisted members function as boarding officers and boat coxswains. Leadership maximizes our ability to confront the risks and identify the opportunities of the future operating environment. Through effective leadership we will build a service known for its culture of respect, high standards, and decisive action. We will develop leaders who uphold our Core Values, fulfill their obligations as men and women of character and integrity, and exercise their authority with a sense of accountability.

Service Leadership

Leadership at the Unit Level

Coast Guard leaders are known for their on-scene initiative. Unit-level leaders are the lynch pin for successful operations, but also for effective personnel management. Coast Guard unit, shop, and team leaders are responsible for much of the training, evaluation, and mentoring of our most junior people. Unit-level leaders are also the line of defense for both sexual assault and suicide prevention. We will continually increase leadership proficiency at all levels through training such as the Mid-Grade Officer Career Transition Course, the Chief Petty Officer's Academy, and Senior Service Schools, Capstone, and Pinnacle courses for senior officers.

To be truly ready to both deliver day-to-day service and respond to incidents, the Coast Guard's leaders—military and civilian—must be grounded in the core values of **Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty**. Our leaders must uphold our commitment to the American citizens we serve while also managing fellow Coast Guard members. Coast Guard leaders will uphold the values that advance a professional working environment, where Service norms are defined, supported, understood, and enforced. Through organizational assessments we will carefully evaluate and improve our understanding of how leadership relates to mission accomplishment. Leaders must know their purpose and inspire others to find theirs. Leaders at all levels must also understand that mistakes are often learning opportunities, acceptable as part of the learning process. Violations of our core values, however, are a line not to be crossed.

The leaders of tomorrow will be locally-based, nationally-deployed, and globally-



connected. The maritime domain is increasingly complex and always perilous. Our leaders are expected to perform dangerous work in sometimes hostile situations. To succeed, leaders must be decisive and attuned to external threats. Plans often do not survive first contact with the environment, but a leader should have the flexibility and resiliency to succeed in dynamic situations by relying on the diverse, adaptable skills and capabilities of his or her team. Leadership is the cross-cutting necessity that gets the mission done while maintaining a service culture elevated to the highest standards

Commitment to Excellence

Commitment to Excellence obligates us to strive for the highest standards of performance and return on investment. The demands of the strategic environment and resultant operational focus areas require a Coast Guard with a resilient, skilled workforce and efficient activities and processes that consider responsiveness to operational needs and the degree of specialization required. Oversight and attention to improving proficiency and the efficiency of activities and processes will allow the Coast Guard to adapt and remain relevant in the face of rapidly changing demands. Emerging and future requirements mandate the innovative reinvention of business processes throughout the organization.

Excellence in mission execution relies on our greatest strength - the Coast Guard workforce. The Coast Guard must look to build and maintain the best possible workforce to meet future challenges. Such a workforce will need to be proficient, diverse, and adaptable in order to respond to rapid technology shifts, steady-state and incident response mission complexity, and dynamic partnerships. Coast Guard human resource systems must enhance responsiveness to both short-term and enduring recruitment, training, retention, and education needs in order



to keep up with the Service's requirements for increasingly specialized skills of military and civilian personnel.

The Right Force for the Future

The Coast Guard will develop a force planning construct to be able to respond to steady state and surge operations, such as hurricanes, mass migration, pollution, and major search and rescue operations. The Coast Guard must adequately plan and resource for a broad array of significant incidents and appropriate levels of staffing. We will develop a force planning construct to address future risks by ensuring the capability to simultaneously respond to major events and conduct steady-state operations. This force planning process will require a multi-year effort.

The force planning construct applies to the asset mix, the workforce required to operate those assets, and the infrastructure necessary to support them. New technologies will be compared against historical programs of record to develop efficient and effective multi-mission capable forces to meet strategic challenges, allowing for adaptation to emerging threats. The workforce must be agile and standardized to allow for mobilization and integration during surge operations.

To meet dynamic mission demands we must design a workforce structured to provide proficient response and support capabilities.

Optimizing the Workforce

We will build a human capital management system to access, develop, sustain, and retain a talented, diverse, and proficient workforce. This will include an established, deliberate process that will connect workforce planning and personnel planning to better balance the personal needs of

Human Capital

Cultivate the Well-Being and Professional Development of Our People

The Coast Guard is committed to assessing and implementing innovative human capital management solutions for the 21st century workforce. In doing so, we will seek to: provide members with the opportunity for geographic stability, by type and duration of assignment; select and assign personnel to maximize return on investments in training, education, and competencies; and increase proficiency and ensure sustainable expertise.

the member and the personnel needs of the Service. Building upon the Service’s core values and culture of respect, the Coast Guard must also provide effective programs for the well-being of military and civilian members and their families. This includes professional development in terms of training, education, and increasing responsibility, which are all necessary to ensure an effective 21st century workforce.

To accomplish our goals, the Coast Guard will develop the specific force requirements necessary to meet the challenges of building a 21st century workforce. We will conduct a strategic review to assess and communicate personnel requirements, leading to a fully mission-linked, requirements-driven, data-informed planning process. The resulting human resource system will ensure stable and predictable flows of competencies and experience across all Coast Guard mission demands.

Financial and Procurement Management Modernization

The Coast Guard will commit to excellence in modernizing financial processes and systems. Our financial management must allow for maximum readiness through best use of every dollar provided, and be comprehensive enough to build upon the Coast Guard’s support of DHS’s two consecutive clean financial audit opinions. The system also will be flexible enough to address changes to federal accounting standards. The Coast Guard will replace its financial and procurement systems with a Federal Shared Service Provider and improve financial management, asset management, and procurement business processes. Re-engineered business processes and procedures will reduce the administrative burden on field units, achieve economies of scale, and ensure enduring audit compliance through improved internal controls and accountability of resources. Through full accountability and strengthened financial and procurement management, the budget formulation and execution processes will provide better stewardship of public resources while being responsive to strategy and policy.

Financial Modernization

Financial Management System Improvement Initiative

The technology of the current financial management system is obsolete. The Coast Guard will acquire a hosted financial management and procurement service as a replacement for the Core Accounting System. The replacement system will provide Coast Guard senior leadership timely access to financial information and performance measures to improve tactical and strategic decision making.

A More Agile Strategic Planning Process

The Coast Guard will develop and codify a strategic management and planning process that is agile, deliberative, transparent, and repeatable. The process will establish and formalize a robust strategic review informed by and aligned to the *Quadrennial Homeland Security Review*, national and departmental strategies, external scans, and internal strategies and assessments. Promulgation of a *Commandant’s Direction* will establish principles and priorities that will guide enterprise management and operations. A *Strategic Intent* will further build upon the Commandant’s Priorities by assessing the strategic landscape and identifying areas of focus while articulating enterprise-wide choices. A *Coast Guard Strategic Plan*, aligned to the *DHS Strategic Plan*, will articulate the enterprise purposes, goals, strategies, and objectives that will define performance in the future years. The Vice Commandant will lead implementation of this process through the Deputy and Assistant Commandants.





THE WAY AHEAD

Today's Coast Guard faces unprecedented challenges. Our evolving operating environment requires strategic solutions, and a Service that is equipped for increasingly complex maritime risks. To this end, the Coast Guard must ***understand our strategic environment, adapt to the strategic challenges in all domains, and achieve and maintain a resilient service that is always ready for the realities of the 21st century.***

Today's new and complex mission demands necessitate optimal effectiveness and efficiency in all of our efforts. Present and future mission performance will be critically dependent on the most strategically advantageous employment of our authorities, competencies, capabilities, and collaborative relationships. To provide greatest value to the Nation, we must prioritize our efforts to meet the greatest risks and most pressing national strategy objectives, being ever-mindful of the importance of long-term planning.

We will fulfill our ***Service to Nation*** and safeguard America's security and prosperity through ongoing and responsible recapitalization of our aging assets, building cooperative relationships, and ensuring capacity for major incident response operations.

We will uphold our ***Duty to People*** by maintaining a culture inhospitable to sexual assault, shaping a service climate of diversity and inclusion, and developing leaders of character and integrity.

We will maintain our ***Commitment to Excellence*** by optimizing our force structure, modernizing our systems and procedures, and employing deliberate and agile strategic planning processes.

The Coast Guard's mission is to ensure the safety, security, and stewardship of our Nation's waters. For over two centuries, the Coast Guard has served the Nation's vast maritime interests by continually evolving to confront emerging threats and challenges in our operating environment. In the coming years, we will continue to adapt to the realities that lie ahead, and ensure our Service is always ready for the challenges of the 21st century.



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