



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

U. S. COAST GUARD

STATEMENT OF

VADM THAD W. ALLEN

ON THE

**NOMINATION OF THAD W. ALLEN
TO BE COMMANDANT OF THE U. S. COAST GUARD**

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

U.S. SENATE

MARCH 9, 2006

Introduction

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee. I am honored to be before you today and look forward to listening to your views and answering your questions. I am grateful for the confidence of President Bush in nominating me to be the 23rd Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. I can think of no greater honor and no better way to continue serving our Nation than through our Coast Guard, a Service whose embedded responsibilities impact every American. Today I will discuss my priorities and objectives and provide an overview of where I intend to lead the Coast Guard. First, let me comment on our world of work.

The Coast Guard's "World of Work"

The Coast Guard's "world of work" is our oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, bays, sounds, harbors and our waterways – this is the maritime domain and it is unique. Distinct from land borders characterized by clear legal boundaries, our oceans represent the last global commons. As the Committee knows well, we live in an interconnected world. Nowhere is this fact more exemplified than in the maritime domain. It is fundamental to our own and the international community's economic prosperity. As a result, maritime safety and security are not just issues of U.S. national interest and security, but of global stability. The maritime domain is also enormously complex, with an unparalleled variety of users. From the world's largest cruise ships and tankers to professional fishermen and weekend boaters, the profiles of maritime users are as varied as the jagged coastlines surrounding our country.

Thankfully, the nation has built a Coast Guard able to successfully operate in this complex and unique environment. Single-purpose agencies such as the Revenue Cutter Service, the Lifesaving Service, and the Lighthouse Service have been integrated over the last century into the uniquely effective and efficient Service we are today. The Coast Guard you oversee, the Coast Guard that we have collectively built has a relatively straightforward purpose – exercise authorities and deploy capability to guarantee the safety and security of the U.S. maritime domain. That is who we are, what we are charged to do, and represents the core character of the service. We are military, multi-mission, and maritime.

While the character and nature of our Service are clear, our missions are not static. New threats emerge as others are mitigated and Coast Guard capabilities, competencies, organizational structure, and processes must change accordingly. If confirmed, my enduring goal will be to lead a Coast Guard that is steadfast in its character but adaptive in its methods.

The work of this committee helped ensure that the Coast Guard was transferred intact to the Department of Homeland Security. We now must adapt to the reality of an ever-changing maritime domain. Our mandate and responsibility, indeed our passion, is serving the Nation with the best leadership, authorities and capability we can muster.

Priorities ... Right Tasks ... Right People and Tools ... Effective, Integrated Support

Secretary Chertoff has set forth a six-point agenda to guide near term Department of Homeland Security priorities and initiatives.

- Increase overall preparedness, particularly for catastrophic events;
- Create better transportation security systems;
- Strengthen border security, interior enforcement, and reform immigration processes;
- Enhance information sharing with our partners;

- Realign the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) organization to maximize mission performance; and
- Improve DHS financial management, human resource development, procurement, and information technology

These are the Secretary's priorities, and they are mine. If confirmed, I will work collaboratively throughout the Administration and with the Congress to translate this agenda into action. I will focus on:

- Mission execution ... performing the right tasks with the right doctrine that reduce risk, mitigate threats, improve response, increase preparedness, and enhance our ability to recover from events that occur;
- Capabilities and competencies ... we are nothing without our people, and our people cannot be effective without the right tools; and
- Coast Guard organizational structure that optimizes mission execution ... aimed at field support, leveraging partnerships at all levels of government, and internally aligned with DHS systems.

Mission Execution ...

The Right Tasks

The nature of the maritime domain requires an integrated, layered approach to its security. With 95,000 miles of coastline and 360 primary commercial ports, there is no fence or barrier that can be erected to protect our maritime borders. We are bounded by the oceans but we're not protected by them. It is precisely this reality that led the President to issue in September 2005 the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* (NSMS). This strategy is unprecedented in its dedicated focus on the maritime domain and the necessity for its global security. The NSMS addresses the full range of maritime threats and is not limited to terrorism. With the structure provided by the Congress in both the *Homeland Security Act* of 2002 and the *Maritime Transportation Security Act* (MTSA) of 2002, together with the International Ship and Port facility Security (ISPS) code, the requisite pieces are in place to provide a maritime policy framework appropriate to the risks we collectively face.

To further strengthen maritime border security, I will develop and deploy a supporting Coast Guard Maritime Strategy. In December 2002, the Coast Guard published its *Maritime Strategy for Homeland Security* and it has served us exceedingly well. Under Admiral Collins' leadership, we have moved boldly to accomplish its objectives and execute its directed initiatives. Now is an appropriate time to "take a fix", and lay out a trackline for the future. The Coast Guard's Maritime Strategy will directly support both the NSMS and MTSA and integrate our activities related to security, safety, preparedness, response and recovery. With that strategy as a foundation, I will work closely with DHS, the Administration and with the Congress to align legislative, budgetary, and rulemaking activity in support of national policy.

The Right Doctrine ... Improved Response, Ability to Recover

The Coast Guard's capstone doctrinal publication, what we call "Pub 1," is entitled *America's Maritime Guardian*. It describes how, while executing multiple missions, we "harmonize what seem to be contradictory mandates. We are charged at once to be policemen and sailors, warriors, humanitarians, regulators, stewards of the environment, diplomats, and guardians of the coast. Thus we are military, multi-mission, and maritime."

Our value proposition to the American public lies in our ability to shift among roles with the same platforms and personnel, capable and competent of performing a range of missions. This is made possible by adhering to Coast Guard principles of operations that have evolved, and been tested, over two centuries of maritime operations. They are codified in “Pub 1” and listed below:

- Clear objective,
- Effective presence,
- Unity of effort,
- On-scene initiative,
- Flexibility,
- Managed risk, and
- Restraint.

The application of these principles across a wide-ranging mission portfolio is the mission model of the Coast Guard. The exercise of these principles by our ship captains, pilots, air crews, and boat crews was never more evident than in the response to Hurricane Katrina. These principles were also the tools I used in the execution of my duties as Principal Federal Official for the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. From national incidents to day-to-day operations, from local responses to interagency efforts across broad regions, from domestic enforcement to international partnership – these principles empower and enable execution of all our missions. If confirmed, I intend to build on the time-tested strength of this operational model and ensure it is ready for the dynamic maritime domain we face.

The Coast Guard is well versed in operating land-based and large mobile assets such as cutters and maritime patrol aircraft. However, deployable units such as strike teams and port security units have evolved in the last thirty years and are relatively new force structures in the Coast Guard. After September 11, 2001, additional capability was added to these forces in the creation of Maritime Safety and Security Teams. Based on my experience leading the Federal response to the Gulf hurricanes, I am convinced we can better exploit the special operational capabilities inherent in these deployable units. By grouping these capabilities into tailored force packages under a unified chain of command, we will sharpen our own tool kit for maritime disaster and threat response. More importantly, we will be better able to integrate these Coast Guard capabilities with other DHS and Federal capabilities such as Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) law enforcement, urban search and rescue teams, disaster medical assistance teams and, when deployed, DOD forces.

If confirmed, my first step will be to align Coast Guard deployable forces internally and then seek opportunities to integrate these forces with other DHS and Federal capabilities.

Capabilities and Competencies ...

The Right Tools

The Coast Guard has embarked on a comprehensive recapitalization of our cutters, aircraft, and C4ISR¹ architecture through the Integrated Deepwater System. Delivery of these assets to relieve aging ships, aircraft, and systems is essential to our forces’ near-term readiness and long-term effectiveness. Extensive effort has been expended to adjust this program to meet new post-9/11 requirements and address gaps arising from the increased operations tempo required to meet current threats. I am personally committed to executing this program in the most effective manner possible. Our nation needs these platforms and the improved operational capability they deliver. My focus will be on program

¹ C4ISR is an acronym for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance.

management, effective cost control, integrated logistics support, and platform effectiveness. In addition, successful stewardship and program execution associated with both the Rescue 21 and Response Boat – Medium acquisitions are critical to current and future operations of our shore-based and coastal operating forces.

The Right People

Under Admiral Collins' watch words of Readiness, People, and Stewardship, we have significantly grown and improved the competency of the Coast Guard's work force. This unflinching focus on people has benefited the Service at every level. The challenge I accept is to continue to provide Coast Guard personnel the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to effectively contribute to mission execution and at the same time further individual growth, career development, and life-long learning. Identification of core competencies needed to operate and maintain new boats, cutters, aircraft, and sensors must be accelerated and completed to allow delivery of new platforms at full operational capability. The terrific work of the current Master Chief of the Coast Guard Frank Welch to provide leadership training at key accession and transition points must be sustained. Leadership training and broader exposure to homeland security policy and operations should be provided to mid-level managers. Finally, initiatives to improve law enforcement competencies, language proficiency, and officer specialty management must continue.

Coast Guard organizational structure that optimizes mission execution ...

Focused on field support

The Coast Guard has taken bold steps to consolidate shore-based forces at the port level into single, mission-focused Sector commands. This consolidation will provide a single point of accountability for operations. It will also unify resource allocation and enable risk based decision making tools to focus Coast Guard capability and competencies to reduce risk and mitigate threats.

Based on the new Sector mission delivery system and the new requirements for deployable forces, I will conduct a comprehensive review of existing command and control structures, and logistics and maintenance systems to ensure that the Coast Guard is optimally organized to support field operations. In addition, we will develop and enhance partnerships within DHS and at all levels of government to improve interoperability, joint operating procedures, and employment of finite resources.

Leveraging partnerships

The vastness and complexity of the maritime domain make public and private partnerships a prerequisite of preparedness and effective response. For example, the standards-based approach of MTSA and ISPS regulatory efforts explicitly recognize that security and commerce cannot be competing interests. The combination of detailed performance standards and rigorous Coast Guard enforcement has made us safer. Additionally, the creation and regulatory enforcement of security partnerships at the port and national level will allow us to make continual enhancements to our collective effort.

In the public arena, I believe the Coast Guard is well positioned and uniquely equipped to contribute to the growing relationships between DHS and the Departments of Defense and Justice, as well as the Director of National Intelligence. For example, the recent issuance of a revised Navy-Coast Guard *National Fleet Policy* by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Commandant focuses on our shared world of work and the best combined use of our respective capabilities and competencies in support of the NSMS. Similarly, the recently published Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) speaks directly to the need and value of fully integrating Coast Guard capabilities into defense planning. Further, the President has laid out a specific vision for global maritime intelligence integration. As a member of the

Intelligence Community, I will seek to strengthen the Coast Guard's relationship across the community to help facilitate DHS' achievement of the President's vision.

Aligned with DHS systems

In too many cases, the Coast Guard's current finance, maintenance, and logistics systems are based upon platforms (e.g., aviation, surface) rather than common functions or processes. A unified financial accounting system is a requirement for effective support to the field, necessary for the deployment of internal control systems, and fundamental in addressing material weaknesses identified in recent audits. At the same time, the Integrated Deepwater System acquisition is transforming our maintenance and logistics systems. The inadequacy of the status quo as well as future requirements require that the Coast Guard develop and deploy an integrated, transformational business architecture that aligns with DHS and, above all, facilitates more effective mission execution.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee - I have spent my entire life in the United States Coast Guard. I was born while my enlisted father, a Seaman on the deck force, was underway on a Coast Guard cutter. In 1967, I traded my dependent's ID card for an active duty card when I entered the United States Coast Guard Academy. I have seen life from the junior enlisted ranks as a dependent, and I have been lucky enough to advance through the organization as an active duty officer.

The entirety of this experience has prepared me to sit before you today, and I am truly honored by the trust that the President and Secretary Chertoff have placed in me. My Coast Guard service has ingrained in me an abiding respect for its people, their work, and the value this work provides to the Nation. My pledge to the Committee and the public we serve is to effectively lead and improve a tested and trusted organization that provides value to people's lives every day.