

IS IT TIME TO DESIGNATE COAST GUARD
SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES?

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General Studies

by

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<p>This qualitative thesis examines the Coast Guard's historic participation in special operations and a potential national requirement for designated Coast Guard special operations forces. Some observers have rejected the label, "Global War on Terror," and embraced the notion of a "global counterinsurgency" characterized by a constant state of low-intensity conflict punctuated by short periods of mid- to high-intensity conflict. "Peacetime" and "wartime" are less useful terms. The Coast Guard's domestic missions have made it useful for niche missions in conflict, but Goldwater-Nichols overlooked Title 14, <i>U.S. Code</i>. There is no reason today administratively to transfer the Coast Guard to the Navy Department because neither the Secretary nor the Chief of Naval Operations is a warfighting commander. Likewise, Congress overlooked the Coast Guard when it created U.S. Special Operations Command. Insurgent, terrorist, and criminal networks all have cellular, compartmented structures and undermine legitimate governments. The Coast Guard is a natural enemy with considerable experience fighting them at home and abroad. Moreover, post-11 September Maritime Security Response requires prolific, robust, all-weather, day-night, opposed boarding capabilities with highly discriminate use of force to respond immediately to real-time, all-source intelligence. Homeland Security presents the opportunity to acknowledge the historical record and correct the policies and resourcing necessary for Coast Guard special operations forces.</p>					
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

IS IT TIME TO DESIGNATE COAST GUARD SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES?
by LCDR Gary Russell Bowen, USCG, 203 pages.

This qualitative thesis examines the Coast Guard's historic participation in special operations and a potential national requirement for designated Coast Guard special operations forces. Some observers have rejected the label, "Global War on Terror," and embraced the notion of a "global counterinsurgency" characterized by a constant state of low-intensity conflict punctuated by short periods of mid- to high-intensity conflict. "Peacetime" and "wartime" are less useful terms. The Coast Guard's domestic missions have made it useful for niche missions in conflict, but Goldwater-Nichols overlooked Title 14, *U.S. Code*. There is no reason today administratively to transfer the Coast Guard to the Navy Department because neither the Secretary nor the Chief of Naval Operations is a warfighting commander. Likewise, Congress overlooked the Coast Guard when it created Special Operations Command. Insurgent, terrorist, and criminal networks all have cellular, compartmented structures and undermine legitimate governments. The Coast Guard is a natural enemy with considerable experience fighting them at home and abroad. Moreover, post-11 September Maritime Security Response requires prolific, robust, all-weather, day-night, opposed boarding capabilities with highly discriminate use of force to respond immediately to real-time, all-source intelligence. Homeland Security presents the opportunity to acknowledge the historical record and correct the policies and resourcing necessary for Coast Guard special operations forces.

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ACRONYMS

AMO	Air and Maritime Operations (Division of Customs and Border Protection)
CBP	Customs and Border Protection (DHS Directorate of Border and Transportation Security)
CBRNE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, or (High-Yield) Explosive
CGHQ	Coast Guard Headquarters
COTP	Captain of the Port (Coast Guard)
CT	Counterterrorism
DA	Direct Action
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DPB	Deployable Pursuit Boat
EMSST	Enhanced Maritime Safety and Security Team (Coast Guard, also called SRT)
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GAM	Gerakin Aceh Merdeka
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
HITRON	Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (Coast Guard)
HRT	Hostage Rescue Team
ISR	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
JSOA	Joint Special Operations Agency
JSOC	Joint Special Operations Command
LEDET	Law Enforcement Detachment (Coast Guard)
LOC	Lines of Communication
MIFC	Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center (Coast Guard)

MSST	Maritime Safety and Security Team (Coast Guard)
NEO	Noncombatant Evacuation Operation
NSSE	National Special Security Event
NSW	Naval Special Warfare
NSWC	Naval Special Warfare Command
ODA	Operational Detachment—Alpha (Special Forces)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
OTH-RHIB	Over-The-Horizon Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat
RHIB	Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (Coast Guard parlance)
RIB	Rigid Inflatable Boat (Navy parlance)
SF	Special Forces (Army)
SOC	Special Operations Command
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SRT	Security Response Team (Coast Guard, also called EMSST)
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
TACLET	(Coast Guard) Tactical Law Enforcement Team
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USDEA	United States Drug Enforcement Administration
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Due to its complex nature and immense size, the Maritime Domain is particularly susceptible to exploitation and disruption. The United States must deploy the full range of its operational assets and capabilities to prevent the Maritime Domain from being used by terrorists.¹

President George W. Bush
Homeland Security Presidential Directive 13, Maritime Security

I want to emphasize that our analysis of the threats and risks will drive the structure, operations, policies, and missions of the Department, and not the other way around.²

Statement by Secretary of Homeland Security Michael
Chertoff before the House Appropriations Homeland
Security Subcommittee, 2 March 2005

Americans are in a fight for their lives and their way of life. Although the administration has labeled this fight a “global war on terrorism” (GWOT), terrorism is simply a tactic in the broader scope of revolutionary war.³ In testimony before Congress, defense analyst Andrew F. Krepinevich defined insurgency as “a protracted, multi-phased struggle, whose objective is to overthrow the existing order,” and applied the term to the GWOT.⁴ This definition is broader than the classic joint definition that applies to a single nation-state. According to the State Department, “The global jihadist movement-- including its most prominent component, al-Qa’ida--remains the preeminent terrorist threat to the United States, US interests and US allies.”⁵ According to General Wayne Downing, former commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and former Deputy National Security Advisor (to President G. W. Bush) for Combating Terrorism, radical-Islamists “are waging a worldwide insurgency to reestablish the Caliphate in ‘corrupt’ Muslim nations and institute Salafist, extreme-Islamist states

[resembling] the Taliban.”⁶ These insurgents see Western governments as supporting the existing regimes and Western culture as antithetical to their own, and therefore as targets. Whether or not one agrees on the nature of the enemy, the era of the nonstate actor has arrived, and radical-Islamists will make further attempts at horrific attacks within the United States. The research suggests two critical ways in which the Coast Guard can contribute to the global counterinsurgency: with a credible, kinetic Counterterrorism (CT) capability at knife-fighting distances in the nation’s Tier One ports; and by using its influence and access abroad, integrated with theater special operations command campaigns, to build the capacity of foreign forces, deny sanctuary to terrorists, and provide early warning on the strength or collapse of maritime security forces around the world. Some may counter that the Coast Guard is not the place for special operations, but in point of fact, the Coast Guard has been a place for special operations and must be a place for special operations if it is to contribute the full weight of its authority, expertise, and capability to help the nation defeat the radical-Islamist insurgency.

A Future Concept

At 1900 hours, the Coast Guard Captain of the Port duty officer in San Francisco receives a weak cellular call from an officer aboard an oil tanker. The caller reports that approximately 40 miles offshore, the ship’s Filipino crew has mutinied, seized control of the ship, and killed the officers with automatic weapons. The source managed to escape but he knows they will find him soon. In fleeing to another part of the ship, he nearly ran into another group of crewmen working on some kind of device that he had never seen before. He overheard one crewman asking another if he was sure they could steer the ship into the bridge, and the man responded, “We shall certainly destroy it, if God wills it.

And about 30 minutes later, when the first responders and the media helicopters have arrived, the nuclear bomb will explode. God willing, your brothers shall attack the infidels in four cities tonight!”

Via classified situational awareness and intelligence fusion networks, the duty officer feeds this digital audio simultaneously to the Coast Guard 11th District command center, the Pacific Area Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center, NORTHCOM, USSOCOM’s Center for Special Operations, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the national and local FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTFs). The audio correlates to recent intelligence streams and a distress code transmitted by the ship’s Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) radio and received at Coast Guard Group San Francisco. The Group’s GMDSS software plots on the Common Operational Picture the ship’s name, position, course, speed, cargo, and the preprogrammed message, “This ship is under attack by armed pirates or terrorists.”

Nationally, DHS sets the Homeland Security Advisory System to “Code Red/Severe” for the maritime domain and the Coast Guard sets Maritime Security Level Three in all Tier One ports. In San Francisco, the FBI assumes Lead Federal Agency (LFA) for CT investigation, and the 11th Coast Guard District Commander assumes LFA for maritime security response. Together, they establish a unified command post on Coast Guard Island. The FBI commander and Coast Guard Captain of the Port decide that a rapid, maritime CT response is required to interdict and defeat the threat as far offshore as possible. Via secure computer network, the 11th District command center launches the Security Response Team (SRT) and diverts an airborne Coast Guard unmanned aerial

vehicle (UAV) with a mission module optimized for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) to get “eyes on” the target ship.

Within minutes, the ready assault and support elements of Coast Guard SRT-2 (San Francisco Bay) “come out of the wood work” all over the city. Each with a secure, GPS-enabled cell phone, they recall individually based on an automated text message. Because of the need for rapid response, the distance, the infamous Bay Area traffic, and the need for operational security as well as public discretion, all team members proceed to preplanned staging locations for helicopter pickup: Buchanan Airport in Concord, the Novato Housing Site, and the helipad at San Francisco General Hospital.⁷ The SRT carries law enforcement credentials and the SIG P229R DAK handgun on their persons and the rest of their kit in the hardened trunks of their cars: flight suits; dry suits; boots; helmet; encrypted, hands-free radio; CBRNE protective mask; integrated body armor, flotation, and tactical vest labeled “COAST GUARD;” M4 CQBR carbine; and jacketed-hollow-point ammunition for both firearms. The team masses at Fort Baker in the Marin Headlands, briefs the plan, loads radio codes, and conducts a quick rehearsal using the UAV’s live thermal imagery and as-built 3D animations of the target ship provided by enhanced MDA, which allows each squad to rehearse its route through the ship. The SRT then disperses into gray fast-boats and gray helicopters for tactical movement to the target ship. Also confirmed by UAV imagery, there are four armed terrorists on deck and two on the bridge--all neutralized from the air by the security element’s designated marksmen. Simultaneously, the assault elements board the ship using fast-rope and small-boat climbing tactics. With synchronization, shock, and violence of action, the first team penetrates to the exact location where three terrorists are preparing a stolen nuclear

device (as previously phoned in), overwhelms them, and secures the scene for investigators. At this point, the SRT has achieved what Rear Admiral Bill McRaven, USN (SEAL) calls “relative superiority, a condition that exists when an attacking force, generally smaller, gains a decisive advantage over a larger or well-defended enemy.”⁸ Meanwhile, the second team has assumed positive control of the ship. The technical team follows on and prepares the nuclear device for packaging and removal via special purpose vessel to the Johnston Atoll. The security element then deploys the vetted and scheduled San Francisco Bar Pilot to safely moor the ship at its scheduled berth, resulting in zero disruption of maritime commerce. Total time from alert to takedown: less than one hour. Before the target ship ever got “danger close” to the U.S. population and port infrastructure, the Coast Guard SRT has interdicted an oil tanker and nuclear device under the command of terrorists. They have killed or arrested 15 terrorists for transfer to the FBI. Scratch one combined maritime terrorism and WMD “incident of national significance”⁹ in San Francisco. Scratch three more in the Ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach, Hampton Roads, and New York/New Jersey. The Coast Guard’s Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) Loop was faster than the terrorists’. No SAR alarm ever sounded, and all SAR assets remain in immediate (B-0) standby.

Compared to the capabilities of today’s Coast Guard, this scenario may seem far-fetched, but--save the domestic scenery--such operations are routine for Department of Defense (DOD) special operations forces (SOF). The means to achieve this capability within the Coast Guard exist today, but is it necessary? Is this a Coast Guard mission? Can the Coast Guard reasonably expect to achieve this capability in its multimission (i.e., conventional) forces, or does it lie exclusively within the domain of special operations?

A Brief History of USSOCOM

USSOCOM is a “service-like” combatant command that organizes, trains, and equips SOF to meet the needs of the warfighting combatant commanders. U.S. SOF as they exist today have a history of about 60 years. Army and Navy SOF trace their roots mostly to World War II. President John F. Kennedy significantly expanded SOF in the 1960s to counter the communist insurgencies spawning all over the world. USSOCOM is the result of a decades-long process triggered by the post-Vietnam decay that produced the failed rescue attempt and subsequent disaster at Desert One in April 1980. In an effort to apply the hard lessons learned in the desert, the Army consolidated all Army SOF under the First Special Operations Command in 1982, but proved unable to translate this concept into action “at the joint level,” and Congress took note. By 1984, growing pressure from Congress prompted DOD to form the Joint Special Operations Agency (JSOA), but JSOA lacked budgetary, organizational, operational and command authority. DOD and the services opposed pulling SOF out from under the services. Thus SOF still languished under the weight of conventional forces, whose rigid culture, regulations, and training precluded their understanding and appreciation for SOF capabilities. In 1986, Congress “shocked” DOD by introducing several bills that proposed drastic restructuring for the military, including the the 1986 DOD Reorganization (or Goldwater-Nichols) Act that among other things established the Unified Combatant Commands as the joint warfighting authorities. Later that year, Nunn-Cohen amended Goldwater-Nichols to provide that SOF would be commanded by its own four-star combatant commander. It also established the Assistant SECDEF for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict and created a new budget line item in Major Force Program 11 (MFP-11), which

specifically designates funding for SOF operations and SOF-peculiar materiel at the DOD level. “Congress clearly intended to force [DOD] to face up to the realities of past failures and emerging threats.”¹⁰ Despite the resistance from DOD and the services, seventeen years after the birth of USSOCOM (as USCINCSOC), and with such SOF victories as Operation Earnest Will (against Iran in 1987-1988), Operation Just Cause, coalition warfare and “SCUD hunting” in Operation Desert Storm, Operation Allied Force, the astounding Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and countless lesser-known engagements, it is hard to imagine a U.S. force structure without USSOCOM.

Unfortunately, both Goldwater-Nichols and Nunn-Cohen completely overlooked the Coast Guard, and the Coast Guard was happy to be overlooked.¹¹ By way of example, there is no reason for the Coast Guard ever to be transferred administratively to the Navy in the wake of Goldwater-Nichols, because the CNO and the Secretary of the Navy have no warfighting responsibilities. They organize, train, and equip only. Geographic combatant commanders and Commander, USSOCOM fight wars. Therefore Goldwater-Nichols should have amended 14 USC 2 to require the Coast Guard to maintain capability and interoperability sufficient to meet the needs of the combatant commanders. Similarly, it seems that no one considered the Coast Guard’s significant contributions to special operations since before World War II. Had the Coast Guard been included in the SOF discussion of the 1980s and had its special purpose forces been placed within the SOF context, the Coast Guard may have been positioned to make more significant contributions and in some cases, possibly even prevented some of SOF’s casualties by

freeing up Naval Special Warfare reinforcements from critical infrastructure protection to direct action missions. Saving lives, of course, is a very familiar role for the Coast Guard.

Emerging Threats

In considering emerging threats, not every battlefield in the global counterinsurgency may be found in the desert. Consider the island nations of Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and The Republic of the Philippines. According to Jane's Intelligence Review, considerable evidence suggests that the next batch of 11 September terrorists right now is training and refining its skills in this region for their next attack on the United States. Indonesia has a newly established and still fledgling democratic government, al Qaeda has demonstrated operational capabilities there, and the country faces a continuing maritime piracy and terrorism threat from the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakin Aceh Merdeka, GAM), "which was established in the 1970s to compel [Indonesia] into recognizing Aceh as an independent Islamic state." Malaysia faces Islamist terrorist threats from Jemmah Islamiyya (an al Qaeda ally) and Kumpulan Mujahadeen Malaysia (KMM). The Republic of the Philippines has the radical Islamist Abu Sayyaf Group, a close ally of al Qaeda also conducting an active piracy campaign. Citing a January 2004 report by the International Maritime Bureau, Jane's noted that pirate attacks increased from 370 in 2002 to 445 in 2003. In addition, the numbers indicated an increase in the incidence of murder and kidnapping by pirates. In 2003, 22.5 percent of all reported attacks involved military small arms and rocket-propelled grenades. "In the maritime domain, the distinction between terrorism and piracy has become blurred both in terms of execution, outcome, and gain. Certain terrorist groups have well-honed piracy capabilities and a willingness to use of them."¹² While the

fundamental aim of piracy is private gain, terrorist organizations may use piracy--like drug trafficking--to support their political objectives.¹³ A successful, global counterinsurgency will require defeating existing terrorist organizations worldwide, denying sanctuary, and improving the capacity of foreign maritime security forces.

According to Jane's,

All the pieces are now in place--nautical skills, personnel, weaponry, firepower, motivation, connections, tactical flair, command and control acumen, and strategic outlook--to design a maritime terrorist operation. Thus, something that may first be dismissed as an act of violent piracy in waters distant from U.S. or European shores could evolve into a maritime terrorist attack against a critical and densely-populated Eastern Seaboard port-urban area complex, a vital Asian trading artery, a Gulf Coast port-located refinery, or a 100,000 [Gross Ton] cruise ship two hours into a night passage in the Strait of Florida.¹⁴

President Bush and the Congress have enacted similar findings into law via the Homeland Security and Maritime Transportation Security Acts. The opening lines of this legislation are essentially laundry lists of homeland security vulnerabilities.

Are the emerging threats of Southeast Asia to become "past failures" before the United States acts decisively? Although the Coast Guard's International Training Division (ITD) has trained host nation forces in Southeast Asia and the Coast Guard Cutter *Mellon* participated in the Southeast Asia Cooperation Against Terrorism exercise,¹⁵ Southeast Asia merits considerably more attention. Coast Guard MSSTs, LEDETs, PSUs, and/or HITRON also should be engaged there regularly, pervasively, and clandestinely if necessary to improve those nations' maritime security forces and vet Coast Guard forces in real-world operations for use at home, where their success is most important.

There are several factors that point toward using Coast Guard special purpose forces in special operations. First is the Principle of Unity of Effort. USSOCOM has been

directed to “synchronize” all efforts in this counterinsurgency against radical Islamists.¹⁶

Therefore it would be reckless of the Coast Guard to freelance such operations, even though it may be accustomed to doing so in politically sensitive areas where large commitments of DOD forces have been unacceptable. USSOCOM does not have comparable assets to run such operations. Although some overlap in capability exists between Naval Special Warfare (NSW) and Coast Guard special purpose forces, the forces are not identical. Further, the scarcity of NSW assets dictates that they be employed at the high end of their operational spectrum: clandestine, deep-penetration missions for direct action, strategic reconnaissance, and joint targeting that require them to use all of their specialized skills to the utmost of their capabilities. With SEALs and other DA/SR-focused SOF decisively engaged in the hunt for Al Qaeda and in counter-proliferation, Coast Guard special purpose forces can conduct--*and for years have conducted*--SOF-like missions in the other three quadrants of full-spectrum military operations: defense, stability, and support. Traditional special operations missions in this respect include Security Assistance/Foreign Internal Defense (referred to in the DOD/DHS memorandum as “peacetime military engagement”), Counterinsurgency, Counterdrug, and Foreign Humanitarian Assistance to name only a few. In much the same way as SF work with indigenous ground forces to shape the foreign security environment, Coast Guard special purposes forces have long-term relationships with the maritime police and other counterdrug forces of Latin America. Likewise, they are ideally suited to working with host-nation maritime security forces to help them establish Maritime Security Conditions in their ports; to help them run an ongoing, asymmetric, mobile defense of their maritime domain; and to support national intelligence

requirements in the maritime domain. As a law enforcement agency that reinforces state power, the Coast Guard brings with it an inherent legitimacy. With Naval Special Warfare focused on DA and SR missions, USSOCOM has never had a maritime equivalent to the Army Special Forces and Civil Affairs teams that build ground force capacity overseas and carry out the increasingly decisive work in the civil-military realm. The maritime forces that can best perform such missions exist today in the U.S. Coast Guard.

What is Coast Guard Transformation?

Against the backdrop of DOD SOF evolution and emerging threats, the Coast Guard now struggles with its own transformation issues, and Coast Guard transformation cannot be simply an advertisement for the Deepwater recapitalization program.

Deepwater recapitalization is a necessary condition of Coast Guard transformation, but it is not sufficient. For their multi-billion-dollar investment in Deepwater, Americans have a right to expect more than a newer, sleeker, faster version of the 1998 U. S. Coast Guard working 1998 missions in 1998 modes of thought. In a 1997 study, the Center for Naval Analysis made this recommendation to the service: “Accept the growing divergence in the technological capabilities between high-endurance cutters and U.S. Navy vessels of comparable size, and the related need to think more broadly about its defense role. That means recognizing that Coast Guard cooperation with DOD is broader than its naval mission, and not solely an afloat procedure.”¹⁷ Formal command and support relationships with USSOCOM would give the Coast Guard a second means of ingress into DOD power circles. The Coast Guard recognizes that it needs new capabilities to deal with the emerging threats facing the country, and that some of its forces must be

exceptionally well trained in select specialized skills. The Coast Guard created MSSTs specifically in response to 11 September. HITRON, originally intended and used extensively to counter “go-fast” drug smugglers, has since been approved for use in Homeland Security missions. With the help of the Marine Corps Special Operations Training Group, the Coast Guard established its Special Missions Training Center at Camp Lejeune specifically to train the service’s special purpose forces. Yet the Coast Guard process is flawed. It always seems to want to “reinvent the wheel” by learning all over again what others already have figured out. Consider vertical insertion (fast-roping), diving, and Deployable Pursuit Boats (DPBs)--DOD already has these capabilities, and DOD SOF are the best. The Coast Guard has been working on vertical insertion for over five years and has yet to implement a coherent policy or a pervasive operational capability. MSSTs, in existence since 2002, have been operating on policy waivers, implicit if not explicit, because Coast Guard Headquarters (CGHQ) has not kept up. The problem generally lies with the myriad of “slow, ponderous”¹⁸ program managers exercising authority over small niches of MSST life.¹⁹ In 1999, the Coast Guard procured highly complex DPBs (high speed RIBs) which then failed to perform well in the Caribbean Sea while chasing “go-fast” speed boats smuggling cocaine.²⁰ Meanwhile, USSOCOM in 1997 had developed the Naval Special Warfare RIB for high-speed SEAL insertion and extraction. These vessels have the same operational capabilities as DPBs-- they can carry a Coast Guard boarding team as easily as SEALs, they are about five feet shorter in length, they have the secure communications and electronic navigation aids needed to operate over the horizon, they have better sea-keeping, and a forward .50-caliber machinegun mount that works. As a DOD system, the NSW-RIB certainly is

more easily supported than the DPB. “The [NSW-RIB] program, which was completed under cost and months ahead of schedule while exceeding every performance objective, won the 1998 Defense Department’s Packard Award for excellence in acquisition.” Not all of the news is bad. Some of the Coast Guard’s resounding successes include the Enhanced and original MSSTs, LEDETs, PSUs, ITD, Airborne Use of Force, and the OTH-RHIB concept. Taking these forces’ capabilities to the next level, however, requires Coast Guard leaders to think anew, to drop old prejudices and inhibitions, and to allow such forces to operate, train, and develop their capabilities beyond the constraints of conventional imaginations. While some of these capabilities may occasionally migrate to multimission forces as they have in DOD, the more specialized Coast Guard forces will always be at the forefront in their employment and development. If 11 September was a “failure of imagination,”²¹ then establishing a Coast Guard SOF component offers an immediate, direct opportunity to change the old paradigm, which is tempered by post-Vietnam, Department of Transportation (DOT)-inspired notions of what the Coast Guard is and does. To earn a starting position on the varsity national security team, the Coast Guard should reorganize its special purpose forces into a flag-level Coast Guard special operations command; train and equip them to accomplish national special operations and intelligence missions in support of both homeland security and the global counterinsurgency (the latter improving their ability to execute the former); and build ties between this new command and USSOCOM that progress from an interagency relationship to a fully joint and subordinate component of USSOCOM.

Research Questions

Primary

Is it time to designate Coast Guard special operations forces?

Subordinate

1. Is the Coast Guard a combat force?
2. Is there historic precedent for Coast Guard participation in special operations?
3. What historic conditions prompted the Army and Navy to establish special operations forces, and do similar conditions exist today for the Coast Guard?
4. What can the Coast Guard do for the Congress, the President, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security (SECDOHS), the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), Ambassadors, USSOCOM, and Theater SOCs that existing SOF cannot do?
5. What can USSOCOM do for the Coast Guard?
6. For which SOF essential tasks might Coast Guard special purpose forces be especially suited?

Assumptions

The Coast Guard as an organization wants to contribute the full weight of its authority, expertise, and capabilities to the national objective of winning what the president calls the “Global War on Terror,” but which may best be described as a global campaign against a radical-Islamist insurgency.

The Coast Guard as an organization would rather meet its statutory obligations to safeguard the American people than devolve any of its mission sets or capabilities to other agencies or services. The Coast Guard has no desire to find itself “abolished” by the

Congress, as happened to the Immigration and Naturalization Service after 11 September 2001.²²

Posse Comitatus reflects the will of the American public to balance the exercise of military power with the Constitutional principles of due process and civilian control of the military. Americans will insist that law enforcement agencies conduct CT operations within the maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States and probably also the immediate maritime approaches where concentrations of U.S. citizens are highest. Posse Comitatus therefore is an issue and will remain in effect.

U.S. Maritime Homeland Security (MHS) and Search and Rescue will continue as the Coast Guard's co-equal top priorities--very much locally and temporally determined--for at least the next 15 to 20 years. Therefore, the Coast Guard needs dedicated forces for both MHS and SAR. Other forms of law enforcement will continue as resources allow. The mission requirements of MHS and SAR may be sufficiently divergent as to require multiple "standard" platforms or multiple standards for platform configuration.

Coast Guard capabilities always have reflected and must continue to reflect the nation's threats and the services it must perform. The Coast Guard is expert at maritime SAR because so many people have for over 214 years run into trouble on the water. The Coast Guard has become expert at drug interdiction in the 30-plus years that it has been a major threat. The Coast Guard therefore must organize, train, and equip to defeat maritime terrorists in the short term and to help defeat the global insurgency in the long term.

The marine transportation system (MTS) is vulnerable to attack. Given that 95 percent of U.S. imports and exports--"more than two billion metric tons" annually--travel

through the MTS, that “the projection of U.S. military forces and their sustainment depends 90 to 95 percent on sealift deployment,”²³ and despite the sprawling, decentralized vulnerabilities of the MTS across 95,000 miles of coastline, the nation cannot afford significant non-availability of the MTS to support commerce and military movements.²⁴

With the proper mix of timely intelligence, capability, speed, agility, and ethos, the Coast Guard can counter the threats to Maritime Homeland Security.

Military combat is the best foundry and ultimate test of operational capabilities.

Limitations

This thesis was completed between September 2004 and June 2005 concomitant with the fulltime curriculum of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC).

One alternative to a closer relationship with the U.S. Special Operations Command may be a parallel USSOCOM with the Department of Homeland Security. Potential membership could include U.S. Coast Guard special purpose forces, the U.S. Secret Service Counter-Assault Team, and similar capabilities within the various DHS directorates. The idea would be to create a mirror-image organization replicating all command, support, and budget relationships within DHS that USSOCOM has within DOD. Because military combat is the best foundry and ultimate test of operational capabilities, because the Coast Guard is the only military organization within DHS, and because a parallel civilian-run organization likely would lack the unique authorities of USSOCOM as a combatant command, this author investigated the possibilities of aligning more closely with USSOCOM.

Unfortunate for the purposes of academic research and debate, all of the most compelling information in the CT field must be protected for national security purposes. Although such information cannot be included in this format, the analysis and conclusions are informed by this additional data.

Delimitations

Although the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the resultant security environment drive many government decisions today, this is not strictly a study of maritime terrorist threats on the homeland. The research probed historic and contemporary operations, domestic and worldwide.

¹U.S. President, *National Security Presidential Directive NSPD-41 / Homeland Security Presidential Directive HSPD-13, Maritime Security Policy*, (21 December 2004, accessed 27 March 2005); Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd41.pdf>.

²Michael Chertoff, Statement Before the House Appropriations Homeland Security Sub-Committee (2 March 2005; accessed 10 March 2005); Available from http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/testimony/testimony_0032.xml.

³Dr. Tom Marks, National Defense University, lecture for U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) SOF Core Curriculum, *A577: Foreign Internal Defense and Unconventional Warfare*, 28 April 2005.

⁴Andrew F. Krepinevich, *Are We Winning In Iraq?*, testimony before United States House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, 17 March 2005.

⁵U.S. Department of State, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2004* (Washington, DC: April 2005, accessed 1 June 2005), Chapter Three; Available from <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/45318.pdf>.

⁶General Wayne A. Downing, USA (ret.), lecture to CGSC Elective, *A576 SOF Regional Case Studies*, 15 April 2005; and Wayne A. Downing, e-mail to author, 1 May 2005.

⁷San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, "The Helipad," [website] (undated, accessed 17 May 2005); Available from <http://www.sfghf.net/helipad.shtml>.

⁸William H. McRaven, *Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare* (Novato, CA: Presidio, 1995), 4.

⁹U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *National Response Plan* (Washington, DC: December 2004, accessed 1 June 2005); 4, Available from http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/editorial/editorial_0566.xml.

¹⁰U.S. Special Operations Command, *United States Special Operations Command 15th Anniversary History*, (MacDill AFB, FL: 16 April 2002, accessed 22 September 2004); 1-5, Available from http://www.socom.mil/Docs/15th_anniversary_history.pdf.

¹¹Paul A. Yost, electronic interview by author, 24 February 2005.

¹²Rupert Herbert-Burns and Lauren Zucker, “Drawing the Line Between Piracy and Maritime Terrorism,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review* (1 September 2004; accessed 14 October 2004), Available from www.janes.com.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵Ron Pailliotet and Chris Phelan, “Around the World: Sharing our values and experiences with foreign maritime services, the Coast Guard's International Training Division is making a difference...” [website] (26 October 1999, accessed 14 May 2005); Available from <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/cb/OCT99/ITT.html>; Marianna O'Leary. “A Long Way From Home.” Photo in AP Preserver [online digital imagery database] (Washington, DC: U.S. Coast Guard, 21 October 2004, accessed 14 November 2004); identifier no. 041020-C-13300-006 (FR); Available from <http://cgvi.uscg.mil/>.

¹⁶Bryan D. Brown, Lecture to CGSC SOF Track. 21 April 2005.

¹⁷W. Seth Carus and Thomas J. Hirschfeld. “Coast Guard Future Direction Study: Capstone Support Analysis.” Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 1997.

¹⁸Lee Alexander (CO, Joint Special Missions Training Center), interview by author, Camp Lejeune, NC, 26 January 2005.

¹⁹Gerard Williams and Eric Grabins (XO and Direct Action Team Leader, Coast Guard Security Response Team One), focus group by author, Chesapeake, VA, 25 January 2005.

²⁰DPBs suffered transmission failures, a forward M240 mount that was too heavy for the boat to handle properly, and at least one case of swamping.

²¹Paul Wolfowitz, “Were We Asleep?” Memo to Donald Rumsfeld (18 September 2001), quoted in *The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, The 9/11 Commission Report* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 353.

²²Homeland Security Act of 2002, Section 471.

²³U.S. Department of Transportation. *An Assessment of the U.S. Marine Transportation System* (Washington, DC: September 1999, accessed 29 November 2004), 13-19; Available from <http://www.dot.gov/mts/report/>

²⁴*Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The sea was, and still is, a grand arena for the pursuit of fighters and for decisive battles. Some of the great days of Arab conquests were fought at sea, such as Dhat al-Sawari and Dhat al-Salasil--or the destruction of the destroyer USS Cole, and the strike against the French oil tanker, and others. We ask God to grant us power over the necks of the Crusaders and the Apostates, and grant us the means to massacre the enemies of The Faith.¹

Anonymous author calling himself “The Brother of Him that Obeys God,” in the 17 April 2004 issue of the Al Qaeda online military magazine *Mu’askar al-Battar (Al-Battar Training Camp)*

Is It Time to Designate Coast Guard Special Operations Forces?

No previous paper has been published that explored the concept of designating existing Coast Guard special purpose forces as SOF. Strategic leaders have written a considerable body of literature that addressed “The U.S. Coast Guard’s National Security Role in the 21st Century”² as well as the impacts of the 11 September terrorist attacks on various niches within the national security community, but no one has asked whether or not the Coast Guard--as the military, multimission, maritime “lead federal agency” for maritime homeland security--ought to integrate its efforts with those of USSOCOM, the supported Combatant Commander in the GWOT, and if so, then to what degree.

In June of 2001, four Coast Guard officers authored an article entitled, “The Coast Guard Goes Expeditionary,” published in *Proceedings*. These officers suggested a similar reorganization of Coast Guard special purpose forces (as opposed to multimission forces such as cutters and stations): Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Teams (TACLETs, with their Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDET)), Port Security Units, Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON and the proposed “HITRON West”), the

Special Missions Training Center, and the National Strike Force (or elements thereof)-- the same units considered herein along with the special purpose forces created since 11 September 2001 (original and “enhanced” versions of the Maritime Safety and Security Teams (MSSTs)). These officers suggested that an “Expeditionary Operations Command (EOC)” serve as the parent administrative command and act as force provider directly to the supported Coast Guard commander, lead federal agency, or regional combatant commander. They did not plug this EOC into any higher-echelon organization, DOD or otherwise.³ The similarity of approach suggests merit in consolidating the Coast Guard special purpose forces under a major command that acts as a forces command, policy shop, doctrine house, standardization authority, and budget advocate.

In considering whether to establish Coast Guard SOF, it was necessary to review applicable policies.

Governing Policies

The Department of Defense (DOD) has promulgated two terms that define the question in its simplest state:

special operations. Operations conducted in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to achieve military, diplomatic, informational, and/or economic objectives employing military capabilities for which there is no broad conventional force requirement. These operations often require covert, clandestine, or low visibility capabilities. Special operations are applicable across the range of military operations. They can be conducted independently or in conjunction with operations of conventional forces or other government agencies and may include operations through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces. Special operations differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets. Also called SO.⁴

special operations forces. Those Active and Reserve Component forces of the Military Services designated by the Secretary of Defense and specifically

organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. Also called SOF.⁵

The issue then, in its simplest state, is whether Coast Guard special purpose forces conduct or could conduct special operations and therefore whether such forces ought to be designated as SOF by the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security. The effects of designating Coast Guard SOF must be considered within the context of national-level policy, which pigeonholes counterterrorism actions into homeland security and combating terrorism (overseas).

The National Strategy for Homeland Security. “The strategic objectives of homeland security in order of priority are to: Prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; reduce America’s vulnerability to terrorism; and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.”⁶ To achieve these goals, the strategy identified “six critical mission areas: intelligence and warning, border and transportation security, domestic counterterrorism, protecting critical infrastructure, defending against catastrophic terrorism, and emergency preparedness and response.”⁷ Regarding vulnerability, the strategy says, “Unless we act to prevent it, a new wave of terrorism, potentially involving the world’s most destructive weapons, looms in America’s future. It is a challenge as formidable as any ever faced by our nation.”⁸

National Security Presidential Directive Nine (NSPD-9) and The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism. NSPD-9 is classified, but the unclassified strategy has four overarching goals: “Defeat Terrorists and Their Organizations; deny sponsorship, support, and sanctuary to terrorists; diminish the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit; and defend U.S. citizens and interests at home and abroad.”⁹

Presidential Decision Directive 39 (PDD-39) and Presidential Decision Directive 62 (PDD-62), signed by President Clinton in 1995 and 1998, respectively, established the basic construct for the nation's existing and best-case operational response to terrorist attacks at the close of the twentieth century. Under these policies, the Attorney General through the FBI exercised Lead Federal Agency responsibility to manage terrorist incidents.¹⁰ Anyone with any involvement in the matter over the last 20 years can recite these policies without thought or effort. Numerous sources did just that during the course of the research for this thesis, as if the matter had been comprehensively thought out and required no review in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks. It is clear, however, that the law and policy signed into effect since that date accept that PDD-39 and PDD-62 do not fully account for post-11 September realities.

Homeland Security Presidential Directive Five (HSPD-5). HSPD-5, signed 28 February 2003, established a uniform "national incident management system."¹¹ Under HSPD-5,

The Secretary of Homeland Security is the principal Federal official for domestic incident management. Pursuant to the Homeland Security Act of 2002, the Secretary is responsible for coordinating Federal operations within the United States to prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. The Secretary shall coordinate the Federal Government's resources utilized in response to or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other emergencies if and when any one of the following four conditions applies: (1) a Federal department or agency acting under its own authority has requested the assistance of the Secretary; (2) the resources of State and local authorities are overwhelmed and Federal assistance has been requested by the appropriate State and local authorities; (3) more than one Federal department or agency has become substantially involved in responding to the incident; or (4) the Secretary has been directed to assume responsibility for managing the domestic incident by the President.¹²

HSPD-5 also specifically states that the Attorney General and FBI now lead only the criminal investigative portion of terrorist incident preparation and response.¹³

National Security Presidential Directive 41 (NSPD-41)/Homeland Security

Presidential Directive 13 (HSPD-13). NSPD-41 and HSPD-13 are the same document, signed 21 December 2004, governing U.S. maritime security policy. The following unclassified excerpts make some of the relevant points:

It is the policy of the United States to take all necessary and appropriate actions, consistent with U.S. law, treaties and other international agreements to which the United States is a party, and customary international law as determined for the United States by the President, to enhance the security of and protect U.S. interests in the Maritime Domain.¹⁴

The United States must deploy the full range of its operational assets and capabilities to prevent the Maritime Domain from being used by terrorists, criminals, and hostile states to commit acts of terrorism and criminal or other unlawful or hostile acts against the United States, its people, economy, property, territory, allies, and friends, while recognizing that maritime security policies are most effective when the strategic importance of international trade, economic cooperation, and the free flow of commerce are considered appropriately.¹⁵

These actions must be undertaken in a manner that facilitates global commerce and preserves the freedom of the seas for legitimate military and commercial navigation and other legitimate activities as well as civil liberties and the rights guaranteed under the Constitution.¹⁶

HSPD-13 directs that the Secretaries of Homeland Security and Defense draft and submit within 180 days of 21 December 2004 a “National Strategy for Maritime Security” that details “an over-arching plan to implement this directive and address all of the components of the Maritime Domain, including domestic, international, public, and private components. It shall further incorporate a global, cross-discipline approach to the Maritime Domain centered on a layered, defense-in-depth framework that may be adjusted based on the threat level.”¹⁷

One of the most important requirements and effects of HSPD-13 is the development of:

a comprehensive National Maritime Security Response Plan to ensure seamless United States Government response to maritime threats against the United States. The plan, at a minimum, shall reflect lead agency roles and responsibilities, including recommendations regarding changes to existing policy, including those reflected in PDD-39 and PDD-62, in the following areas: 1) maritime security response and counterterrorism operations; 2) maritime interception operations; 3) prevention and detection of, and response to, the mining of U.S. ports; 4) detection, interdiction and disposition of targeted cargo, people, and vessels; and 5) attacks on vessels with U.S. citizens aboard or that affect U.S. interests anywhere in the world.¹⁸

HSPD-13 has cast aside the assumptions of America's late-twentieth-century CT response capability, directed a review of government-wide operational capabilities, and accepted that Lead Federal Agency designations may change. Given that some DOD SOF have important roles in supporting PDD-39 and PDD-62, it seems elemental that if the Coast Guard's responsibilities were to increase as a result of the HSPD-13-directed review, the Coast Guard increasingly may be involved in work currently carried out by DOD SOF.

Is the Coast Guard a Combat Force?

Before considering the issue of Coast Guard participation in special operations, some may find it necessary to first consider whether the Coast Guard participates in combat operations or high-risk law enforcement missions.

In most strategic communications published by the U.S. Coast Guard, including every press release from Coast Guard Headquarters, one finds the following statement: "The U.S. Coast Guard is a military, maritime, multi-mission service within the Department of Homeland Security dedicated to protecting the safety and security of America." Every military member of the Coast Guard carries an "Armed Forces of the United States [and] Geneva Conventions Identification Card." Title 10, *U.S. Code*,

Section 801 defines “military” as “any or all of the armed forces.” The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* defines the adjective “military” as, “of or relating to soldiers, arms, or war,” and “armed forces” as, “the combined military, naval, and air forces of a nation.”¹⁹ DOD defines “military capability” as “the ability to achieve a specified wartime objective (win a war or battle, destroy a target set).”²⁰ Since there is no provision in the English language for a military service that does not engage in combat, the Coast Guard’s only claim as a “military” organization lies in its readiness and capability to go to war. It has done so in every major war the nation has fought.

From the First Years of the Republic
to the “World Wars”

The Coast Guard was founded in 1790 as a seagoing customs service under the Department of the Treasury. The Coast Guard’s military character was born in the period between end of the War of Independence in 1783 and the beginning of the Quasi-War with France in 1798 when it served as the nation’s only navy. Acts of Congress in 1790, 1797, and 1799 indexed Revenue-Marine pay to that of the Army and Navy, authorized the use of Revenue Cutters for naval service, and subjected officers and crew to the rules of military discipline. As foreign interdiction of U.S. shipping became acute, the President and Congress directed the Revenue-Marine to fight the naval battles of the undeclared war with France until a new program of battleship construction could be completed. As depicted in Figure 1, the Coast Guard again conducted combat operations in the War of 1812, when it comprised nearly half the U.S. naval fleet.

When war was declared on England in 1812, the United States' small maritime service faced a powerful navy of 600 warships. At the outbreak of the war, the United States could only muster 16 naval vessels and about a dozen cutters for coastal defense. The capture of the *Dart* was one of the most

impressive captures by a revenue cutter. When the Dart--which had already seized between 20 and 30 American ships--arrived in Providence with its latest prizes, Captain John Cahoon offered the services of the revenue cutter *Vigilant* to challenge the enemy vessel. After sunset, the sloop Dart was located off the east end of Block Island. *Vigilant* fired one broadside and boarded Dart. Actions such as the *Vigilant's* capture carried on the cutter service's military activities throughout the War of 1812 and helped establish the traditions of today's Coast Guard.²¹

According to the Coast Guard historian, “augmenting the Navy with shallow-draft craft evolved into a continuing wartime responsibility. During the last two centuries, cutters have been used extensively in ‘brown water’ combat.”²²



Figure 1. *The Defeat of the Privateer Dart* by Dean Ellis

Source: <http://www.uscg.mil/community/Art%20Program/exhibit3/e30002a.htm>

In World War I, a German U-Boat sank the Cutter *Tampa* with all hands while on ocean convoy escort. Cutters sank U-Boats in World War II. Signalman Douglas Munro,

USCG, earned the Medal of Honor at Guadalcanal by engaging the enemy with a machine gun while placing his landing craft between the enemy position and a group of Chesty Puller's Marines evacuating their overrun position in other landing craft of Munro's group.

Is There Historic Precedent for Coast Guard Participation in Special Operations?

Coast Guard wartime service has not been limited to "augmenting the navy." According to the Coast Guard Historian, "The Coast Guard has traditionally performed two roles in wartime. The first has been to augment the Navy with men and cutters. The second has been to undertake special missions, for which peacetime experiences have prepared the Service with unique skills."²³ Figure 2 depicts an early direct action mission wherein a LEDET-style force from the Cutter *Diligence* "seizes contraband gold" from the French Privateer Francois Henri Hervieux near Brunswick, North Carolina in 1793.²⁴



Figure 2. *Captain William Cooke Seizes Contraband* by John Thompson
Source: <http://www.uscg.mil/community/Art%20Program/exhibit3/e30012a.htm>

The Greenland Patrol

The Greenland Patrol is an example where the Coast Guard performed both wartime roles in combination: augmenting naval forces with cutters and employing Coast Guard expertise in arctic operations. From April 1941 until the end of World War II, the Coast Guard-pure Task Force 24.8 was tasked “to defend Greenland and specifically to prevent German operations in Northeast Greenland.” Then-Commander Edward “Iceberg” Smith, captain of the Cutter *Northland*, led a force of six cutters with their three reconnaissance planes and the indigenous Greenland Sledge Patrol, “a contingent of intrepid Eskimos and Danish hunters who spent the war patrolling the coastal regions on dog sleds.” In addition to its naval engagements, this task force raided clandestine German weather and radio stations ashore, captured their operators, and captured a clandestine insertion and resupply ship, the Norwegian trawler *Buskoe*. This incident began 1 September 1941--three months prior to America’s formal entry into the war--with a report from the Sledge Patrol “that a suspicious-looking party of men had landed near the entrance of Franz Joseph Fjord.” When *Northland* boarded the *Buskoe* on 12 September, the boarding team discovered advanced radio equipment, further interrogated the crew, and learned that they had landed a party ashore with another radio transmitter. “That night one of the *Northland's* officers, LT Leroy McCluskey, went ashore with a party of 12 armed men. They found a supposed hunter's shack and surrounded it while McCluskey kicked in the door.” The team captured three Germans with their radio and codebook.²⁵ Figures 3 through 5 comprise some of the record of these actions.



Figure 3. USS *Northland* (USCG) in Greenland.
Source: http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_greenld.html



Figure 4. A Coast Guard Landing Team Dines On Captured German Rations.
Source: http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_greenld.html



Figure 5. German SOF Captured by Coast Guard Landing Teams on Greenland
Source: http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_greenld.html

Vietnam

On 16 April 1965, the U.S. Navy requested Coast Guard assistance in Vietnam because it then lacked a brown water capability. At 0700 on 20 July 1965, the first eight Coast Guard 82-foot patrol boats “sailed into Danang Harbor,” having observed “distant flashes of artillery fire as they approached the coast of Vietnam.”²⁶ The first elements of Task Force 115, Operation Market Time, had arrived for combat duty. Task Force 115, composed of Coast Guard patrol boats and Navy swift boats, was assigned coastal interdiction missions to prevent North Vietnam from resupplying the Viet Cong. Naval forces also formed Task Force 116, the famous river patrol boats (PBRs) of Operation Game Warden; and Task Force 117, the Mobile Riverine Force, composed of monitor-like troops ships and the Army’s 9th Infantry Division.²⁷ In Figure 6, “a Navy swift boat and the Coast Guard Cutter *Point Banks* enter Kanh Rau Canal, a known Viet Cong area, to broadcast amnesty programs over loudspeakers for the South Vietnamese government.”²⁸

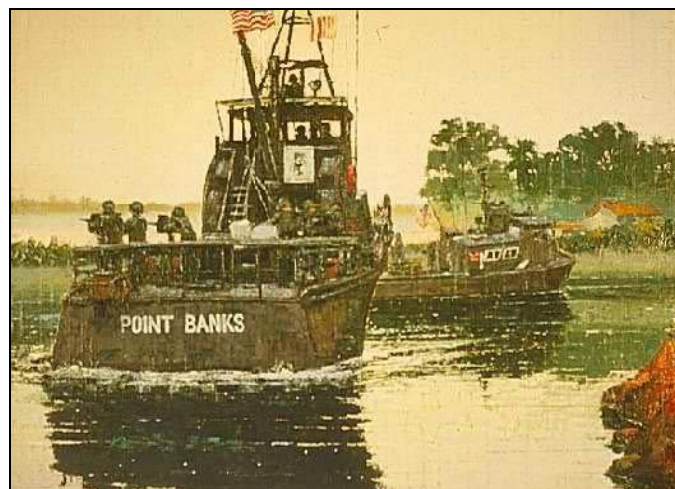


Figure 6. *A War of Persuasion* by Noel Daggett
Source: <http://www.uscg.mil/community/Art%20Program/exhibit1/e10363a.htm>

In his compelling history of Coast Guard operations in Vietnam, Captain Alex Larzelere, USCG (ret.)--who as a Lieutenant (O-3) commanded the 82-foot patrol boats POINT COMFORT and POINT BANKS in Vietnam service--detailed extensive Coast Guard participation in special operations. Although the cutters maintained an incredible 70 percent underway patrol schedule supporting the coastal interdiction missions of Operation Market Time--and were generally the only maritime interdiction forces underway offshore in monsoon season--these ambitious fighters spent much of their 30 percent “down time” routinely infiltrating and exfiltrating Marine Force Reconnaissance and Army Special Forces units into known Viet Cong (VC) strongholds, participating in direct action raids on VC junk bases, conducting psychological operations, and providing naval gunfire support to both conventional and special operations ground forces using their 81mm mortars. Coast Guard patrol boats engaged covert enemy trawlers delivering supplies to VC on the beach, were engaged by both the trawlers and their receiving parties, and synchronized their fires with those of Air Force close air support aircraft. Coast Guard patrol boats earned such a reputation for reliable fire support that they became the naval gunfire force of choice, as reflected in this Marine quoted during operational planning: “Sir, I want Coast Guard WPBs. When I say I got guys in trouble and we need gunfire at this point, I get it. I don’t get a lot of questions about whether I have permission from the province chief or how deep the water is or how far can I go in.”²⁹

On 21 September 1965, the Coast Guard patrol boats were painted a dark, “deck gray” to improve their effectiveness at night. That same day, planning began for the Special Forces raid at Hon Mot.³⁰

On 26 September 1965, cutters POINT COMFORT and POINT GREY embarked a raiding party of thirty-six civilian irregular defense group (CIDG) strikers--Chinese mercenaries serving with the Vietnamese Army--their Vietnamese special forces officers, and two U.S. Army special forces advisors. In total darkness, the two cutters eased in toward shore on 27 September 1965. They stopped when soundings got down to six feet under the keel; the beach was 200 yards away. At 0500, troops climbed down scramble nets into rafts in complete silence, shoved off, and paddled for shore. The cutters slowly backed away, keeping the sound of their stern exhausts to seaward. They stood by at 1000 yards offshore ready to provide gunfire support.³¹

When the raiding party made contact, cutters silenced enemy positions with seven rounds of 81mm mortar fire. The cutters also provided covering fire for the extraction and then direct action mortar fire on the VC junk base.³²

The Coast Guard had other significant roles in Vietnam. It provided port security and mission-critical explosive loading details for the U.S. Army First Logistical Command in Saigon and elsewhere, and members of these units earned combat decorations such as the Silver Star and Purple Heart. The Coast Guard installed and maintained the LORAN-C system that allowed for all weather air and marine navigation and fire support.

Coast Guard pilots flew combat search and rescue with the Air Force in Southeast Asia, under an inter-service exchange program. Most of the time the pilots were assigned to the 37th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, at Danang. They flew Sikorsky HH-3F "Jolly Green Giants" [and HH-53C "Super Jolly Green Giants"³³] in some of the most dangerous operations undertaken during the war [including the NEO-style rescue at Quang Tri, 1972³⁴]. One Coast Guardsman, LT Jack Rittichier, was killed when his helicopter was shot down during an attempt to pull an American from enemy-held territory. Some 8,000 Coast Guardsmen served in Vietnam. Seven lost their lives and 59 were wounded. Although research is incomplete, it has been verified that through 1970, Coast Guardsmen received the following awards: 12 Silver Stars, 13 Legion of Merit medals, 13 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 114 Bronze Stars, 4 Air Medals, 151 Navy Commendation Medals, 27 Army Commendation Medals, five Coast Guard Commendation Medals, 43 Navy Achievement Medals, 66 Purple Hearts, 53 Vietnamese Navy medals and 15 Presidential Unit Commendations.³⁵

How is it that such superlative combat skills and an unmatched reputation for reliable NGFS have all but disappeared from the service? Quite simply, they were allowed to. All of the Navy boat forces generated during Vietnam stayed on after the war and became today's Special Boat Teams. In contrast, most of the Coast Guard material in Vietnam was given to the South Vietnamese and subsequently captured by the North.³⁶ The Coast Guard apparently made no effort whatsoever to retain the warfighting skills it had developed with blood, sweat, and tears over the course of 10 years in Vietnam.

Current Operational Environment

In 1993, a two-ship formation air assaulted from Trinidad, Bolivia deep into the heart of the Amazon Basin on a raid to find a coca base transshipment site, seize contraband, and arrest suspects. The team of six inserted beyond hearing distance of the UH-1 helicopters and paddled two combat rubber raiding craft down the river to set up for the raid on the remote target house. At the house, two teammates--members of the Bolivian counterdrug forces--gathered further intelligence that the coca base product was hidden in the jungle several hundred meters away. At the follow-on raid, two U.S. DEA agents and the two Bolivian counterdrug policemen assaulted the second house while the two remaining teammates--U.S. Coast Guardsmen of the International Maritime Law Enforcement Team--maintained security with the boats. When the assault team took fire from the house, the two U.S. Coast Guardsmen flanked the house on foot, directed suppressing automatic rifle fire into the house, and helped the team secure the objective. In the fight, four drug traffickers were seriously wounded, including one who sustained a gunshot wound to a lung; the Coast Guardsmen provided emergency medical aid that saved their lives and thus facilitated the justice process for the Bolivian government. The

Bolivians took custody of all suspected drug traffickers and coca base, and the force exfiltrated by helicopter with everything they had brought with them.³⁷

In 1998, Commander, Fifth Fleet (N-31CG) organized and conducted the first-ever Maritime Interception Surge Operations designed to tighten UN sanctions enforcement in response to Saddam Hussein's expulsion of UN weapons inspectors. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs), embarked on USSOCOM Mark Vs and supported by Navy SEAL special reconnaissance, boarded dhows (small freighters typical of the Arabian Gulf) carrying embargoed goods and thus enforced the UN sanctions in the shallowest waters of the Northern Arabian Gulf near the outlets of Iraq's and Iran's Kawr Abd Allah and Shat al Arab waterways.

In 2002, the Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC) transferred tactical control of 13 USSOCOM 179-foot Patrol Coastals (PCs) to the U.S. Coast Guard for maritime homeland security operations outside the nation's major ports. "PCs are used for Naval Special Warfare maritime operations in low-threat environments. [Their primary] purpose is coastal patrol, surveillance, and close-to-shore interdiction operations."³⁸

In 2003, the U.S. Coast Guard deployed six cutters, two PSUs, and two LEDETs-- totaling 1,250 personnel--supporting U.S. Central Command's requirements for unique Coast Guard capabilities in the Northern Arabian Gulf. Coast Guard LEDET 403-- operating from USSOCOM PCs with Naval EOD units--discovered a covert Iraqi mine-laying tug before it was able to deploy its mines. The same LEDET discovered a hidden Iraqi arms cache along the banks of the Kawr Abd Allah waterway. The Coast Guard Cutter *Walnut*, which had deployed with its oil-skimming gear to counter the threat of

maritime environmental terrorism, also conducted maritime interception operations and reset all buoys into the Iraqi port of Um Qasr such that critical humanitarian aid shipments began to flow immediately into the liberated southern cities of Iraq.³⁹ According to a former CIA Baghdad Chief of Station, at least one PSU has conducted combined special operations with Britain's 22 Special Air Service Regiment along the Al Faw Peninsula.⁴⁰

What Historic Conditions Prompted the Army and Navy to Establish
Special Operations Forces, and Do Similar Conditions
Exist Today for the Coast Guard?

All SOF (even new SOF generated from old SOF) share a common thread: Conventional forces resisted the formation of new, specialized forces for new missions of an unconventional nature. Once they were generated, SOF generally stagnated for the entire time they were controlled by conventional forces. The exceptions are accounted for by direct presidential interest in specific SOF to meet specific mission requirements.

The histories of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), Army Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and USSOCOM in their formative years are replete with examples of how, in response to the formation of unconventional forces in their midst, commanders of large, conventional forces manifested their lack of appreciation or outright disdain for unconventional forces. Admiral Nimitz and General MacArthur refused to allow the OSS to operate within their geographic areas of responsibility throughout World War II, even though the ranks of its special operations division had been filled by soldiers and navy divers.⁴¹ “One of the most consistent and outspoken opponents of OSS was Major General George V. Strong, Chief of Army G-2 (Intelligence),”⁴² who obviously had hoped to protect the fiefdom of Army Intelligence.

The histories of these forces also share the advocacy of a corps of military “true believers” at the O5-O8 levels allied with powerful political figures. For the OSS it was President Franklin D. Roosevelt who directed General George C. Marshall to “give [General] Bill Donovan a little elbow room to operate in.” President Eisenhower and General McClure established the Army’s Psychological Warfare Center and 10th Special Forces Group in 1952.⁴³ President Kennedy’s interest in counterinsurgency warfare paved the way for the “Green Beret,” for which Army Special Forces renamed the Psychological Warfare Center the JFK Special Warfare Center. President Kennedy also motivated the Navy to morph some of its Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs) into Navy SEALs in 1962.⁴⁴ President Reagan revived and expanded Special Forces after their post-Vietnam gutting, again for the specific purpose of challenging Communist insurgencies.

In the aftermath of special operations failures at Desert One and Grenada, Senators Sam Nunn and William Cohen sponsored the legislation establishing the U.S. Special Operations Command against the counterweight of the Defense Department.⁴⁵

What Can the Coast Guard Do for the Congress,
the President, the Attorney General, SECDHS,
SECDEF, Ambassadors, USSOCOM and
Theater SOCs that Existing SOF
Cannot Do?

The United States Congress has vested the Coast Guard with very broad military and law enforcement authority.

Title 14, *U.S. Code*, Section 1 (14 USC § 1)
Establishment of Coast Guard

The Coast Guard as established January 28, 1915, shall be a military service and a branch of the armed forces of the United States at all times. The Coast Guard shall be a service in the Department of Homeland Security, except when operating as a service in the Navy.⁴⁶

Title 14, *U.S. Code*, Section 3 (14 USC § 3)
Relationship to Navy Department

Upon the declaration of war or when the President directs, the Coast Guard shall operate as a service in the Navy, and shall so continue until the President, by Executive order, transfers the Coast Guard back to the Department of Homeland Security. While operating as a service in the Navy, the Coast Guard shall be subject to the orders of the Secretary of the Navy who may order changes in Coast Guard operations to render them uniform, to the extent he deems advisable, with Navy operations.⁴⁷

Title 14, *U.S. Code*, Section 89 (14 USC § 89)
Law Enforcement

(a) The Coast Guard may make inquiries, examinations, inspections, searches, seizures, and arrests upon the high seas and waters over which the United States has jurisdiction, for the prevention, detection, and suppression of violations of laws of the United States. For such purposes, commissioned, warrant, and petty officers may at any time go on board of any vessel subject to the jurisdiction, or to the operation of any law, of the United States, address inquiries to those on board, examine the ship's documents and papers, and examine, inspect, and search the vessel and use all necessary force to compel compliance. When from such inquiries, examination, inspection, or search it appears that a breach of the laws of the United States rendering a person liable to arrest is being, or has been committed, by any person, such person shall be arrested or, if escaping to shore, shall be immediately pursued and arrested on shore, or other lawful and appropriate action shall be taken; or, if it shall appear that a breach of the laws of the United States has been committed so as to render such vessel, or the merchandise, or any part thereof, on board of, or brought into the United States by, such vessel, liable to forfeiture, or so as to render such vessel liable to a fine or penalty and if necessary to secure such fine or penalty, such vessel or such merchandise, or both, shall be seized.

(b) The officers of the Coast Guard insofar as they are engaged, pursuant to the authority contained in this section, in enforcing any law of the United States shall:

(1) be deemed to be acting as agents of the particular executive department or independent establishment charged with the administration of the particular law; and

(2) be subject to all the rules and regulations promulgated by such department or independent establishment with respect to the enforcement of that law.⁴⁸

Title 14, *U.S. Code*, Section 143 (14 USC § 143)
Treasury Department

Commissioned, warrant, and petty officers of the Coast Guard are deemed to be officers of the customs and when so acting shall, insofar as performance of the duties relating to customs laws are concerned, be subject to regulations issued by the Secretary of the Treasury governing officers of the customs.⁴⁹

Title 19, *U.S. Code*, Section 1589a (19 USC § 1589a)
Enforcement Authority of Customs Officers

Subject to the direction of the Secretary of [Homeland Security], an officer of the customs may--

(1) carry a firearm;

(2) execute and serve any order, warrant, subpoena, summons, or other process issued under the authority of the United States;

(3) make an arrest without a warrant for any offense against the United States committed in the officer's presence or for a felony, cognizable under the laws of the United States committed outside the officer's presence if the officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the person to be arrested has committed or is committing a felony; and

(4) perform any other law enforcement duty that the Secretary of [Homeland Security] may designate.⁵⁰

Title 46, *U.S. Code*, Section 70106 (46 USC § 70106)
Maritime Safety and Security Teams

(a) IN GENERAL.--To enhance the domestic maritime security capability of the United States, the Secretary shall establish such maritime safety and security teams as are needed to safeguard the public and protect vessels, harbors, ports, facilities, and cargo in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States from destruction, loss or injury from crime, or sabotage due to terrorist activity, and to respond to such activity in accordance with the transportation security plans developed under section 70103.

(b) MISSION.--Each maritime safety and security team shall be trained, equipped, and capable of being employed to--

(1) deter, protect against, and rapidly respond to threats of maritime terrorism;

(2) enforce moving or fixed safety or security zones established pursuant to law;

(3) conduct high speed intercepts;

(4) board, search, and seize any article or thing on or at, respectively, a vessel or facility found to present a risk to the vessel or facility, or to a port;

(5) rapidly deploy to supplement United States armed forces domestically or overseas;

(6) respond to criminal or terrorist acts within a port so as to minimize, insofar as possible, the disruption caused by such acts;

(7) assist with facility vulnerability assessments required under this chapter; and

(8) carry out other security missions as are assigned to it by the Secretary.⁵¹

What Can USSOCOM Do for the Coast Guard?

Nothing has been written specifically on this subject, but much has been written on what USSOCOM does for Army, Navy, and Air Force SOF. USSOCOM has transformed DOD SOF from the overlooked, under-funded, under-appreciated forces of the 1970s and 1980s into today's "force of choice."

Unlike any other combatant commander, USSOCOM has so-called "service-like," Title 10 authorities to develop a Program Objective Memorandum (a DOD budget instrument) and acquire SOF-specific materiel. Whereas the Navy receives its funding through Major Force Program Two (MFP-2), and the Air Force via MFP-4, Nunn-Cohen

and amplifying “Sense of Congress” legislation authorized MFP-11 specifically to remove SOF budgeting from the normal service chains of command.⁵²

In his 1992 study at the Naval War College, Captain Bruce Stubbs found that Navy admirals on the whole were more inclined to reject the Coast Guard’s roles in any form of warfare, while non-Navy combatant commanders were more likely to appreciate Coast Guard contributions across the spectrum of operations.⁵³

For Which SOF Essential Tasks Might Coast Guard
Special Purpose Forces be Especially Suited?

To be viable, Coast Guard special operations contributions should flow naturally from their statutory missions and accumulated expertise. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 specifies five homeland security missions for the Coast Guard:

1. Ports, waterways, and coastal security
2. Defense readiness
3. Drug interdiction
4. Migrant interdiction
5. Other law enforcement, including prevention of foreign fishing vessel incursions.

Because of these missions, the Coast Guard has always worked to counter the unconventional, transnational threats posed by non-state actors. Terrorist organizations, drug and migrant trafficking organizations, and organized crime all follow insurgent organizational and operational models. Preparing for this fight at home has made the Coast Guard a key asset in Security Assistance/Foreign Internal Defense programs around the world. Moreover, the Coast Guard’s engaging in these missions abroad

significantly improves its capabilities to run these missions at home by providing its teams with real-world operational expertise in a variety of contexts not available in domestic operations.

Coast Guard leaders have identified the five strategic objectives of the Maritime Homeland Security Strategy:

1. Prevent terrorist attacks within, and terrorist exploitation of, the U.S. Maritime Domain.
2. Reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism within the U.S. Maritime Domain.
3. Protect U.S. population centers, critical infrastructure, maritime borders, ports, coastal approaches, and the boundaries and seams between them.
4. Protect the U.S. Marine Transportation System while preserving the freedom of the Maritime Domain for legitimate pursuits.
5. Minimize damage and recover from attacks that may occur within the U.S. Maritime Domain as either the lead federal agency or a supporting agency.⁵⁴

To achieve these objectives, Coast Guard leaders further identified six "Maritime Strategy Elements":

1. Increase Maritime Domain Awareness
2. Conduct Enhanced Maritime Security Operations
3. Close Port Security Gaps
4. Build Critical Security Capabilities
5. Leverage Partnerships to Mitigate Security Risks
6. Ensure Readiness for Homeland Defense Operations.⁵⁵

Likewise, SOF leaders have written about the impacts of 11 September on their activities. "A sea change occurred on 11 September 2001, and the importance of SOF to national defense became paramount."⁵⁶ Most SOF today are deployed to, are preparing to

deploy to, or have just returned from Iraq or Afghanistan.⁵⁷ Members of Congress have called for a rapid doubling or even tripling of their numbers.⁵⁸ Yet such remarks contradict the essential SOF truths:

1. Humans are more important than hardware.
2. Quality is better than quantity.
3. Special operations forces cannot be mass produced.
4. Competent special operations forces cannot be created after emergencies occur.⁵⁹

These truths have stood the tests of time. They reflect the lessons learned in many successes and failures of special operations over the history of warfare. SOF must only be expanded deliberately with care for enforcing the same high standards that are their hallmark today.

¹“The Brother of Him that Obeys God” (pseudonym), Stephen Ulph and Christopher Heffelfinger, translators, “Anti-Ship Warfare and Molotov Cocktails at the Siege of Acre, 1190,” *The Terrorism Monitor* 2, No. 9 (6 May 2004; accessed 18 November 2004), 1-4; Available from <http://www.jamestown.org>.

²Specifically, “The U.S. Coast Guard’s National Security Role in the 21st Century” is a paper written by Captain Bruce Stubbs, USCG, for the Naval War College. Admirals Collins and Loy (current and former commandants) and RADM Patrick Stillman also have contributed several articles on this theme.

³Wayne Gibson, Tom Vitullo, Joe DiRenzo, and Craig Peterson, “Coast Guard Goes Expeditionary,” *Proceedings*, 53-57, June 2001, UMI-Proquest, Document ID: 73461599; available from <http://proquest.umi.com/>; Internet; accessed 15 November 2004.

⁴U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-0, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, (12 April 2001 as amended through 30 November 2004, accessed 24 April 2005); Available from http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf

⁵Ibid.

⁶U.S. President, *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, (Washington, DC: 2003), vii.

⁷*Ibid.*, viii.

⁸*Ibid.*, vii.

⁹U.S. President, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, (Washington, DC: 2003), iii.

¹⁰Federation of American Scientists, Presidential Decision Directives [PDD] Clinton Administration 1993-2000. [website] (undated, accessed 3 June 2005); Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd/index.html>.

¹¹U.S. President, *Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-5, Management of Domestic Incidents*, (28 February 2003, accessed 3 June 2005); Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/print/20030228-9.html>

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴U.S. President, *National Security Presidential Directive NSPD-41/Homeland Security Presidential Directive HSPD-13, Maritime Security Policy*, (21 December 1998, accessed 27 March 2005), 2-3; Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nspd/nspd41.pdf>.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁹Merriam-Webster, Inc., *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* (2005, accessed 13 Feb 2005); Available from <http://www.webster.com>.

²⁰U.S. Department of Defense, *DOD Dictionary of Military Terms* (30 November 2004, accessed 13 Feb 2005); Available from <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>.

²¹Dean Ellis, *The Defeat of the Privateer Dart*, object ID 88218, Available from <http://www.uscg.mil/community/Art%20Program/exhibit3/e30002a.htm>.

²²U.S. Coast Guard, *U.S. Coast Guard: A Historical Overview* (April 2003, accessed 13 Feb 2005); Available from http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_USCGhistory.html.

²³Ibid.

²⁴John Thompson, *Captain William Cooke Seizes Contraband*, object ID 88229, Available from <http://www.uscg.mil/community/Art%20Program/exhibit3/e30012a.htm>.

²⁵Ibid; John A. Tilley, *The Coast Guard & the Greenland Patrol* (June 2000, accessed 13 Feb 2005); Available from http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_greenld.html.

²⁶Alex Larzelere, *The Coast Guard at War: Vietnam, 1965-1975*, (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997); 28.

²⁷Thomas J. Cutler, *Brown Water, Black Berets* (Annapolis, MD: US Naval Institute Press, 1988); 137-266.

²⁸Noel Daggett, *A War of Persuasion*, Object ID 87587, Available from <http://www.uscg.mil/community/Art%20Program/exhibit1/e10363a.htm>

²⁹Larzelere, 43.

³⁰Ibid., 54.

³¹Ibid., 55.

³²Ibid., 55-56.

³³Ibid., 146.

³⁴Ibid., 148-149.

³⁵Robert Scheina, *The Coast Guard at War* [website] (Washington, DC: Jan 1999, accessed 14 Feb 2005); Available from http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_CGatwar.html.

³⁶Larzelere, 225-279.

³⁷U.S. Coast Guard, "Jungle Operations: International Drug War Takes CG's IMLET to South America," *Commandant's Bulletin* (Feb 1993), 2-5.

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³⁹Peter Capelloti, "Operation Iraqi Freedom and the U.S. Coast Guard: Interviewee DC3 Nathan Bruckenthal, USCG LEDET 403, TACLET South," *Operation Iraqi Freedom Documentation Project/U.S. Coast Guard Oral History Program*,

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⁴⁰Former CIA Baghdad Chief of Station, interview by author, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 7 April 2005. Attributed with permission.

⁴¹Alfred H. Paddock, "Psychological and Unconventional Warfare, 1941-1952: Origins of a Special Warfare Capability for the United States Army," U.S. Army War College Individual Study Project, Carlisle, PA: USAWC, November 1979, 53; Available from <http://www.fas.org/man/eprint/>; Internet; accessed 9 November 2004.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 51.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 51-53.

⁴⁴Kevin Dockery, *Navy SEALs: A Complete History from World War II to the Present*. (New York: Berkley Books, 2004); 202-207.

⁴⁵USSOCOM, *15th Anniversary History*.

⁴⁶*United States Code*, <http://www.findlaw.com> 27 Feb 2005.

⁴⁷*United States Code*, <http://www.findlaw.com> 27 Feb 2005.

⁴⁸*United States Code*, <http://www.findlaw.com> 21 October 2004.

⁴⁹*United States Code*, <http://www.findlaw.com> 27 Feb 2005. The terms "Treasury Department" and "Secretary of the Treasury" as used here are no longer useful distinctions since both the Coast Guard and Customs (as reorganized) exist within the Department of Homeland Security. SECDHS can delegate relevant Customs authorities to the Commandant of the Coast Guard.

⁵⁰*United States Code*, <http://www.findlaw.com> 27 Feb 2005.

⁵¹U.S. Congress, *Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002* (Washington, DC: Congress, 2002); Available from <http://www.tsa.gov/interweb/assetlibrary/MTSA.pdf>.

⁵²USSOCOM, *15th Anniversary History*, 14.

⁵³Bruce B. Stubbs, "The U.S. Coast Guard's National Security Role in the Twenty-First Century," Center for Naval Warfare Studies Monograph. Newport, RI: NWC, June 1992.

⁵⁴U.S. Coast Guard, *Maritime Strategy for Homeland Security* (Washington, DC: 2002, accessed September 2004); available http://www.uscg.mil/news/reportsandbudget/Maritime_strategy/USCG_Maritime_Strategy.pdf.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶USSOCOM, *15th Anniversary History*, 18.

⁵⁷U.S. Army CGSC, SOF Track, 2004-2005.

⁵⁸Tom Breen, "The 'in-demand' force," *Armed Forces Journal* (January 2005), 26-28.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 18.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This thesis examined how the Coast Guard has tried to address the challenges of the contemporary operating environment. Every time the Coast Guard has added an especially challenging mission to its basket, the Coast Guard has created permanent forces with special mission emphases. Although created ad hoc in response to new threats and missions, each new force--PSU, TACLET-LEDET, Strike Team, HITRON, and MSST--has had similar characteristics that emphasize rapid deployment, high mobility, small team composition, independent operations, and highly specialized training geared toward specific missions (rather than the customary Coast Guard “multimission” approach). The question therefore is whether these forces can serve the nation better if designated as SOF.

To help answer that question, it was useful to examine the formation and employment of U.S. Army Special Forces, U.S. Navy SEALs, DOD special mission units, and the FBI Hostage Rescue Team (HRT). The services and FBI responded to stimuli to create these forces. If the same stimuli were present in Coast Guard’s operational environment, they would be strong evidence supporting the designation of Coast Guard special purpose forces as SOF.

This thesis used qualitative analysis involving elements of grounded theory research and the historical method. The data came from a combination of field research, library sources, and internet sources. Data included in-person, telephonic, and electronic interviews with key strategic leaders and decision-makers, participants in historic events, policy experts, commanding officers, and tactical operators; official government

documents respecting history and current policy; official Coast Guard photographs and commissioned art relics; books written by key historic figures in special operations; master's theses, monographs, and other academic products of the military service schools; and current academic studies on maritime security from industry and academia.

Joint Special Operations University funded field research at the Pentagon and Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, DC; Coast Guard International Training Division, Yorktown, VA; Coast Guard Security Response Team One, Chesapeake, Virginia; and Joint Special Missions Training Center, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The fruits of this research included briefings and interviews on emerging Coast Guard homeland security capabilities as well as the existing, formal relationships and planning mechanisms between DOD and the Coast Guard. By interviewing senior decision makers of various agencies, the author sought to stake out agencies' claims of responsibility, determine how serious these leaders considered the threat to be from maritime terrorism, and assess the total response capability for imminent/emergent terrorist attacks within the U.S. territorial and maritime jurisdiction.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

If you have no capacity for violence then you are a healthy, productive citizen: a sheep. If you have a capacity for violence and no empathy for your fellow citizens, then you have defined an aggressive sociopath--a wolf. But what if you have a capacity for violence, and a deep love for your fellow citizens? Then you are a sheepdog, a warrior, someone who is walking the hero's path. Someone who can walk into the heart of darkness, into the universal human phobia, and walk out unscathed.¹

Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, USA (ret.), *On Combat*

Lieutenant Colonel Grossman attributes the sheepdog analogy to a Marine veteran of Vietnam. The analogy is useful because some Coast Guardsmen need to think long and hard about what it is that Coast Guard cuttermen, aircrews, boat crews, and boarding teams are called by Congress to do in its maritime security role. The Congress has directed them to detect and suppress violations of U.S. law, protect vessels, ports, and facilities from terrorist attack, and “use all force necessary to compel compliance.”² Some violators are more difficult to suppress than others. Some may need to be shot in the face at close range if that is the “force necessary to compel compliance.” From a recent film entitled *Dirty War*, consider the fictional but realistic takedown of the second dirty bomb van by the Anti-Terrorist Branch (SO13) of London's Metropolitan Police Service. Although an ongoing investigation was too late to interdict the first dirty bomb, Scotland Yard identified a second van believed to be en route to another target in London. SO13 used London's security camera network to deploy and vector in CT snipers and street-level response teams. With the suicide bombers obscured from sniper fire, SO13 interdicted the van at street level. A single “civilian” car cut off the van and an operator killed the terrorists instantly in a burst of automatic weapon fire. The bombers,

with their hands on the detonator, expired before they could detonate the second dirty bomb.³ In his essay, “The New Warrior Class Revisited,” Ralph Peters closed with this comment: “A healthy state must cultivate a discriminating appetite for killing.”⁴ Although such a statement may be anathema to a number of good-natured “Coasties” who perhaps have specialized in rescue or other maritime safety missions, its essence is perhaps one of the most important facts that all Coast Guardsmen need to accept regardless of their role in the service or their opinion of its roles and missions: the elected representatives of the people have entrusted the Coast Guard as a service and some members as individuals with the authority of the state to mete out violence to those who need it. The murderers of 11 September 2001 and others since then have demonstrated that there are many in need. Those engaged in maritime security missions are sheepdogs (or German Shepherd Dogs, if one prefers a stronger motif) under authority to interdict, fight, apprehend, maim, and kill the wolves, using all force necessary to stop attacks and protect the people of the United States. For those officers whose careers have focused on more happy-go-lucky types of missions, what they need to understand is this: “the sheepdogs [who are under authority] prepare life-long for the hour of need and they yearn for validation of their training.”⁵ When the battle rages, these men and women run toward the sound of the guns, not away from them. Such was clearly true of patrol boat crews in Vietnam. “The sheep say, ‘Thank God I was not aboard any of the hijacked airplanes on September 11th.’ The sheepdogs say, ‘I wish I had been on one of those planes. Maybe I could have made a difference.’”⁶ The sheepdogs stand into danger out of their sense of duty to protect the flock--*and may God bless them for it.*

The analysis shall proceed from the subordinate questions and conclude with the primary question.

Is the Coast Guard a Combat Force?

Based on the literature review alone, the Coast Guard clearly is a combat force that has gone to war since the first days of the republic.

Is there Historic Precedent for Coast Guard Participation in Special Operations?

In addition to its more well known role in “[augmenting] the navy with men and cutters,”⁷ the Coast Guard has a strong history of contributing to specialized, niche missions in which its predominantly peacetime roles give it expertise, especially in small-unit, low-intensity conflict. The discussion in Chapter Two about the Greenland Patrol, Task Force 115 in Vietnam, counterdrug operations, MIO surge operations, and CT operations seems adequate to answer this question in the affirmative, at least historically.

One of the strongest examples in the current context has been ITD. In the author’s version of the history of this unit (assembled over the years through personal interaction in the field, numerous friends and acquaintances at the unit, and the published articles), ITD began as the Drug Interdiction Assistance Team (DIAT) sometime in the 1980s.⁸ DIAT made *Soldier of Fortune* in the early 1990s and this fact alone offended some of the more genteel and influential among the officer corps. CGHQ changed the unit’s name to the International Maritime Law Enforcement Team (IMLET). This name proved almost as offensive and changed again to International Maritime Law Enforcement Training Team (IMLETT). In 1996, the name changed once more to ITD and that name has survived. The unit’s sole mission since its inception has been Foreign Internal

Defense. Probably ahead of their time, DIAT and IMLET were either famous or notorious (depending on one's outlook) within the Coast Guard for their SOF-like operations, including the 1993 coca raid mentioned in Chapter Three and shown in Appendix B, Figure 11. When the name changed to IMLETT with two Ts, CGHQ gave strong guidance that the unit constrain its activities to training, although field evaluation of host nation operations also was permitted at least as late as 1999.⁹ The unit conducts most of its deployments under the authority and funding of the State and Defense Departments to support host nation Internal Defense and Development programs.¹⁰

In Bolivia, where a high percentage of the world's coca is grown, the ITD works with the Drug Enforcement Agency and U.S. Special Forces to support and train the Diablos Azules (Blue Devils). The U.S.-funded group is a counter-narcotics division of the Bolivian Navy and has [maritime law enforcement] authority over thousands of miles of navigable waterways. The ITD also established the International Waterways Law Enforcement School in Trinidad, Bolivia, where, each year, more than 100 Bolivians and other Latin Americans complete an 8-week [sic] program in riverine operations and law enforcement. In Peru, the ITD is part of a DOD and DEA-led task force. Team members there are assisting the Dinandro, the Anti-Narcotics Division of the Peruvian National Police, and the Peruvian Coast Guard with the establishment of a joint waterways law enforcement school and engineering maintenance facility in Iquitos, Peru. In Panama, the ITD works directly with the Coast Guard liaison at the U.S. Embassy. ITD members serve as advisers to the Panamanian Servicio Maritima Nacional (National Maritime Service), an agency modeled after the U.S. Coast Guard. In 1998 alone, the Panamanian force seized more than 10,000 pounds of cocaine and 19 speed boats. In Haiti, the ITD maintains a year-round presence where the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards have helped Haiti establish a coast guard. Since it formed in 1996, the Haitian Coast Guard--more than 100 members strong--has seized 7,315 pounds of cocaine, 6,712 pounds of marijuana and six speed boats.

In a senseless lack of strategic vision, the Coast Guard cashed in ITD's tremendously successful long-term deployment program--one that amounts to a core competency--for exclusively short-term training missions in more GWOT-friendly countries such as Yemen, where it lacks the depth of long-term personal relationships and moreover, plans

not to develop any. The last long-term training detachment left Bolivia on 30 September 2004.¹¹ ITD's long-term deployment program was not a "\$5 Billion Misunderstanding"¹² like the failed Navy stealth bomber--it was necessary, successful, and cancelled for the lack of 20 people.

ITD, never more than 45 strong, consistently has been among the most selective of Coast Guard units thanks to a degree of extra latitude granted by the CGHQ Office of International Affairs and the Coast Guard Personnel Command. Candidates volunteer and submit applications that include qualifications, experience, physical fitness scores, and command endorsements. The unit screens these applications and enjoys some discretionary say in who is assigned to the unit--more say than most units get. ITD has always been serious about physical fitness, advanced tactical training, and language proficiency, especially in Spanish. Long-term deployers to South America attended at least three months of immersion training in Guatemala and generally scored two/two or better on the State Department language exam.

What Historic Conditions Prompted the Army and Navy to Establish
Special Operations Forces, and Do Similar Conditions
Exist Today for the Coast Guard?

The literature review explained the rise of DOD SOF. Army SF trace their roots to OSS support for the French Maquis insurgency against the Nazis and Vichy French. Later, when President John F. Kennedy emphasized the need to counter the new threat of insurgency and low-intensity conflict as the favorite expansionist tools of Communism, Army SF expanded and the Navy formed a new force from its underwater demolition teams: the Navy SEALs. Smaller in number, Navy SEALs concentrated on direct action and special reconnaissance; as a general rule they did not concentrate on organizing,

training, and leading host nation (i.e., indigenous) forces. When the threat of terrorism arrived in the 1970s, DOD set their CT forces at the top of the special operations food chain. FBI did the same with HRT.

Coast Guard special purpose forces are engaged daily in many of the same missions as DOD SOF using similar constructs of small, specialized teams (usually two to nine people) operating with zero to minimal support from conventional forces. Teams operating in the drug source and transit zones have specialized cultural and language capabilities, although the recent demise of the ITD long-term deployment program threatens serious degradation of that expertise. ITD's sole mission is FID. If, for example, Bolivia or Colombia were to become failed states, Coast Guard special purpose forces have strong relationships with key security forces in those states based on 20 years of continuous FID deployments in six-month intervals, and could even work with those forces in a UW context with a modicum of additional training. Very little imagination is required to envision the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) suddenly in charge of most of Colombia and "the good guys" taking on the role of insurgents.

LEDETs, MSSTs, and PSUs conduct their own operations, but they also conduct a significant amount of FID by training foreign forces and operating with them in a "technical assistance" capacity. In the author's two years with LEDET 103 (1996 to 1998), the team trained or operated with the counterdrug forces of Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, and the Cayman Islands--most on multiple occasions--and that is typical of LEDET operations. On one occasion, four of the team left the Navy ship in Mazatlan and flew by Mexican government aircraft of the Procuraduria General de La

Republica (PGR) to Manzanillo to conduct a combined, interagency operation with two USDEA special agents and perhaps five Mexican officials. In order to mitigate risk of convoy ambush on the ground by the drug cartel, the Mexican officials had established a change of vehicles at a preplanned staging area en route to the site of the operation. This served as a moment of clarity for the author that LEDETs needed better training and equipment. ITD at least had access to Marine Corps training on hostage situations for personnel at high risk of capture.¹³ In the absence of this training or SERE School, LEDET 103 simply did without--not the best way to operate, but that is the reality of unresourced training gaps and senior staffs and commanders who lack experience in LEDET operations. The Chief of Operations Oversight, the TACLET's boss on the Area staff at that point in time, was a career cutter sailor. Some historically have tried to fit the LEDET program into the cutter mold for reasons that vary from a narrow understanding of their mission to well-intentioned attempts to define a LEDET officer career path in a cutter-centric culture, but the fact is that cutters and LEDETs are different types of forces. Cutters are multimission platforms. LEDETs have a narrow mission focus and can operate with or without platforms of any design. From a LEDET's perspective, a platform is little more than their ride to work. When it breaks, find another. Life on a LEDET can be quite dangerous at the hands of an inexperienced command center duty officer thousands of miles in the rear. On one or two occasions, for simple lack of coordination between the Coast Guard command center and the U.S. Embassy, LEDET 103 was not allowed to carry firearms into a foreign country, and upon arrival the Coast Guardsmen found themselves the only unarmed participants. That gives new meaning to the phrase, "alone and unafraid." The teammates worked a hasty contingency plan to

avail themselves of someone else's weapon at the onset of hostilities--not the best way to operate, but if the duty officer in the Pacific Area Command Center has never operated in a foreign country, if the detachment commander has limited experience, and if his training has not kept pace with mission requirements, such is the potential outcome. The theme here is that the Coast Guard has special purpose forces conducting SOF-like missions in SOF-like conditions without a SOF-like approach to organization and training. The multimission approach, appropriate for 95 percent of the Coast Guard, does not adequately prepare special purpose forces for their missions. Multimission commanders, likewise, cannot be expected to have an intuitive understanding of these forces' requirements. Historically, the units have been left to fend for themselves, sometimes with adequate operations and maintenance funding, generally without sufficient funding or infrastructure to support the necessary additional training. It was exactly this state of neglect among SOF and ignorance among the general purpose force commanders that led Congress to legislate USSOCOM into existence.

While the Coast Guard arguably could have created a special operations command at any time in the last 20 or so years with the advent of its various special purpose forces, clearly now, having a Congressional mandate specifically to conduct CT operations (46 USC 70106), such forces must be designated as SOF and organized, trained, and equipped as such. The Coast Guard should not wait for its own version of Desert One to come to this conclusion. Desert One already happened and the lessons are well documented. If DOD thought its primary role were homeland security instead of taking the fight to the enemy, everyone knows they would assign this mission to Navy SEALs, Army Special Forces, and supporting SOF. The enhanced MSST capability is

modeled on some of the most specialized SOF. If FBI or CBP were given the mission, they would use career law enforcement officers and expand their specially-designated tactical teams (such as HRT) to accomplish this mission. That the Coast Guard has not yet fully embraced this model is indicative of how senior multimission commanders have spent their careers; it does not reflect how some Coast Guardsmen have spent their careers since 1982, when the first LEDETs commenced operations. Those officers have only been promoted to about the O-6 level at this point in history.

When one considers that much of the Coast Guard--including all of the “white-hull,” multimission units and all of the special purpose forces--exists expressly to mitigate the threats of non-state actors, and when one further considers the levels of danger and sophistication posed by non-state actors, there is no longer any place for a culture that accepts risk only from the environment and only to pull someone out of the water; that rejects risk from intelligent adversaries who would as soon destroy the entire population of the United States as explode a bomb on the approach of a Coast Guard boarding team. While existing missions dictate that perhaps 95 percent of the Coast Guard can operate at familiar levels of risk, the five percent that make up the special purpose forces must be designated, trained, experienced, and truly comfortable operating at the highest levels of risk, where perhaps millions of lives may depend on the success of a single operation of less than an hour’s duration and the DOD “cavalry” may not come. The choice that leaders may be faced with--and they should be thankful for even this much notice--is to stop an attack with Coast Guard special purpose forces or not to stop it at all.

In sum, the Coast Guard as a service absolutely faces the same conditions that caused DOD to generate SOF: lawlessness and low-intensity conflict undertaken by non-state actors: traffickers in drugs, arms, people, and WMD; terrorists of various ilk; regional insurgents such as the FARC and the GAM; and global insurgents such as Al Qaeda and its allies.

What Can the Coast Guard Do for the Congress,
the President, the Attorney General, SECDHS,
SECDEF, Ambassadors, USSOCOM and
Theater SOCs that Existing SOF
Cannot Do?

Coast Guard special purpose forces number approximately 2,000 active and reserve personnel, over 90 percent of which are operations types. Most units have only a handful of supporters. Most are active component forces; only the Port Security Units are reserve component. Appendix A shows a notional Coast Guard Special Operations Command. Unit definitions from the Coast Guard online fact files are included in the glossary.

The Commander in Chief is the end user of all military and law enforcement forces. Very simply, the Coast Guard gives the Commander in Chief more options than DOD can give him alone. The Coast Guard has unique military and law enforcement authorities, unique expertise beyond that of any DOD force in boarding the full range of commercial and recreational vessels and discerning the legal from the illegal, and the most experience with maritime drug and migrant interdiction operations. Combining Coast Guard strengths with the flexibility and power of SOF gives the President new options across the full range of military and civil operations both within and beyond the U.S. territorial jurisdiction. Military special operations could more easily transition to law

enforcement operations and vice versa without any need of the legal shenanigans envisioned by the FBI to avail themselves of national CT forces. In the counterdrug arena, Coast Guard special purpose forces already have demonstrated their ability to transition seamlessly between military and civil operational control and maintain the Constitutional safeguards necessary for prosecution in the United States. Since federal courts have begun to question the indefinite mass storage of detainees at Guantanamo Bay and elsewhere, there is every reason to suspect that the courts and the American public will demand the criminal prosecution of terrorist suspects caught in or near the United States. Given an attack already in progress, Coast Guard SOF would thus serve what are likely to be the president's top two priorities with respect to homeland security: to stop terrorist attacks and to arrest for prosecution all surviving terrorists, the latter of which also supports the needs of the Attorney General.

SECDEF should strongly support the concepts in this thesis because he currently commands none of the national CT forces despite being saddled with responsibility to coordinate the federal response to terrorist attacks. As a general rule, Coast Guard SOF would work for DOD or the State Department while abroad (as they do already), and for DHS when conducting homeland security missions.

SECDEF, USSOCOM, and SOF units also gain substantially. The Coast Guard can support them by meeting some of the considerable demand for scarce SOF resources. The Coast Guard can give SECDEF a SEAL Team not by creating another SEAL Team, but by committing Coast Guard SOF under USSOCOM operational control where previously a SEAL Team or ODA was the only asset available to meet the need, and where the need may be in shortfall due to prioritization of SOF tasking. For example,

Coast Guard SOF can perform the “global scout” and stability missions in places like PACOM and SOUTHCOM while DOD SOF are concentrated in CENTCOM. To an extent this already happens, but Coast Guard special purpose forces abroad often work in the interagency mode rather than in the joint mode. The interagency has no equivalent of the regional combatant commanders and theater special operations commands. Therefore, Coast Guard special purpose forces often work directly for the country team, completely unintegrated with DOD operations in the same countries which, at least nominally, also support the State Department’s objective, generally, of building legitimate foreign governments’ capabilities to reduce lawlessness and deny sanctuary to terrorists within their borders. Aligning Coast Guard special purpose forces with USSOCOM would integrate those forces and their operations with the theater SOCs and promote unity of effort, one of the six basic principles of Military Operations Other Than War.¹⁴ Unlike conventional component commanders who work in terms of brigades and strike groups--thousands of people and billions of dollars in assets--theater SOCs are inherently comfortable working at team-sized resolutions. Further, the Coast Guard can augment theater SOC staffs with officers who have operational experience with the special purpose forces, but who desperately need experience in time-sensitive operational planning in order to translate that experience into the most effective, time-sensitive, homeland security planning. Every staff officer the Coast Guard contributes to the undermanned theater SOC staffs increases staff support to fielded SOF without pulling a SEAL, SF, or special tactics officer off the teams to do so.

Some have said that NORTHCOM may need a theater SOC to execute its homeland defense missions.¹⁵ Since the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for

Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD--SO/LIC) and the Naval Special Warfare Command have both declared policies of “focusing on overseas threats,”¹⁶ assigning SOF to a “SOCNORTH” would require a reduction in their overseas commitments. And, although DOD would disagree, assigning routine homeland security missions to existing DOD SOF necessarily invokes issues of Posse Comitatus. The Coast Guard can offer DOD an out for both problems. Since it is hard to envision the need to infiltrate SOF by minisub into or near the United States, USSOCOM could largely meet any future needs that NORTHCOM might have for maritime SOF by using Coast Guard SOF instead of Naval Special Warfare. This is fully consistent with Constitutional principles and the expectation of the public, as well as the politically powerful maritime industry, that they not interact with SEALs or Special Forces teams on any frequent basis whatsoever.

Since the Navy and Marine Corps have never designated an active component naval special operations aviation capability, there is a niche potentially available to Coast Guard HITRON flyers. Although the Army’s 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR) does some over-water aviation,¹⁷ maritime operators working in the maritime environment, if given the choice between two equally competent aircrews, are more comfortable flying with pilots who are primarily maritime flyers.¹⁸

For U.S. Ambassadors and their country teams, affiliating with USSOCOM those Coast Guard teams already deployed and conducting security assistance/foreign internal defense, counterdrug, counterterrorism, and counterinsurgency operations best achieves unity of command and unity of effort with deployed SOF engaged in the same missions. For USSOCOM and SOF units, Coast Guard special operations officers could follow

their operational tours with tours at theater special operations commands (TSOCs) and joint special operations task forces (JSOTFs)--these critically understaffed entities could benefit significantly from the added manpower, and the experience Coast Guard officers would gain could not be replaced by 10 such tours in domestic homeland security planning cells. Finally, USSOCOM and SOF would gain from habitual relationships that Coast Guard teams have established in countries around the world--some of which have limited or no contact with Defense Department assets. The Coast Guard has better access in some countries and thus can provide additional access for SOF should the need arise.

In a general sense, the SOF officers in the CGSC Class of 2005 have agreed that Coast Guard special purpose forces have the potential to contribute significantly to the SOF community. Commander, Special Operations Command--Pacific (SOC--PAC) recently commented that the relocation of JIATF West with PACOM and SOC--PAC has great potential for synergistic effects.¹⁹ Nearly all Coast Guard special purpose forces have over 15 years' experience in maritime interdiction operations in the Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) South and West Areas of Responsibility (AORs). The tactical problems in these AORs--illicit trafficking in people, weapons, and drugs over vast bodies of water, multiple international boundaries, and small island chains--are so similar to the "War on Terror" tactical problems in Southeast Asia that SOCOM and Special Operations Command--Pacific (SOC--PAC) would be foolish not to take advantage of Coast Guard expertise. The reality is that most Theater SOCs have more special operations work than SOF to do it, and Coast Guard special purpose forces would be using their existing capabilities fully in line with service values and traditions to

mitigate some of that risk. Integrating these capabilities with those of SOF only sweetens the pot for both SOF and the Coast Guard.

At the same time, proponents of one government program often encounter resistance from proponents of other government programs competing for scarce resources. Within the SOF community, the potential for resistance to designating Coast Guard SOF likely will be greater where the Coast Guard fails to educate DOD SOF commanders on what factors make Coast Guard special purpose forces inherently unique and therefore a valuable addition to DOD SOF. Many within SOF think they have the right formula for success and simply need more of it. For example, since user demand for 160th SOAR support significantly outpaces its capacity,²⁰ Army SOF commanders likely would prefer expanding the 160th to designating a Coast Guard SOF air component. While the 160th is generally acknowledged as having the best existing rotary wing capability in special operations aviation, Coast Guard pilots bring their own expertise in the form of large numbers of operational over-water flying hours, much of it in extremely bad weather, and much of it in single-aircraft missions. Interdicting 52,600 of the 240,000 pounds of illegal drugs seized by the Coast Guard in Fiscal Year 2004,²¹ HITRON likely flies more small boat interdiction missions than anyone on earth. Similarly, an Army soldier may view a Coast Guard LEDET as simply a less capable version of a SEAL platoon. Even though LEDETs today lack some of the more exotic special warfare capabilities such as joint targeting or the SEAL delivery vehicle (and may never have a need for such capabilities), LEDETs have much of the ship-boarding expertise along with their own inherent expertise in matters of great importance to special operations: smuggling of people and contraband, piracy, legitimate maritime commerce,

legal documents, providing technical assistance to host nation prosecution efforts, language skills (mostly Spanish at present), and cultural understanding. They are similar, but not the same. Once the Coast Guard accepts the SOF construct and begins to build operators to that standard, then synergies are bound to appear even where today they might not be predicted. The key is to avoid the more tempting, taxonomic approach that pigeonholes Coast Guard special purpose forces in terms of DOD “equivalents.”

What Can USSOCOM Do for the Coast Guard?

At the most urgent and basic level, what the Coast Guard needs from USSOCOM is an adaptation of the special operations ethos for Coast Guard special purpose forces, which focuses on the worth of a few mature, highly trained, and discriminate operators who can use soft and kinetic power at the proper place and time; facilitates time-sensitive planning; and enables small teams to achieve strategic effects beyond their size and capability in conventional terms. The Coast Guard will realize these benefits in direct proportion to its commitment to contributing the unique expertise, capabilities, authorities, and access of its special purpose forces to the special operations fight.

Historically, the Coast Guard-Navy relationship served as the only real avenue of approach into DOD power circles. Although the Coast Guard’s relationship today with Navy flag officers seems to be healthy by virtue of the continuing “National Fleet” concept, the Navy frankly has a spotty track record in supporting the Coast Guard’s role in the joint force. Historically the Navy has bought major weapons systems on major cutters, but there has been some hesitation to renew this commitment via Deepwater. The Navy only requested Coast Guard participation in Vietnam because it lacked the coastal patrol capability necessary to deny sea lines of communication between North Vietnam

and the Viet Cong.²² The Navy helped to prevent the use of Coast Guard patrol boats in Desert Storm and influenced USSOCOM's decision to buy the 170' Patrol Coastals.²³ Although Navy admirals on other occasions (such as Operation Iraqi Freedom) have sung the Coast Guard's praises, the overall record indicates that, of all flag and general officers, Navy admirals historically have constrained Coast Guard options in the joint force more than the general officers of other services.²⁴ Intuitively, it seems that the Coast Guard would be wise to nurture symbiotic relationships with other power players in DOD. Recall that the Center for Naval Analyses made such a recommendation in 1997.²⁵ The cuttermen surely are at risk of heart failure in considering the notion, but 14 USC 2 and subservience to the Navy are pre-Goldwater-Nichols vestiges. Obviously, the Navy and Coast Guard should be natural allies with non-redundant forces, and Coast Guard multimission forces are likely to work for a Navy-manned maritime component command in any sizeable joint task force. However, if 14 USC 2 were reworked to reflect the realities of the joint force, the Coast Guard should be able to secure its own funding for its own major weapons systems that meet the needs of all shades of combatant commanders. The Navy-Coast Guard relationship thus far has largely manifested itself along the lines of conventional force relationships. USSOCOM, strongly Army but inherently joint and possessing its own service-like characteristics, seems like a wise choice precisely because it is both unconventional and extra-naval.

By contributing its special purpose forces to USSOCOM as the supported combatant commander in the global counterinsurgency, the Coast Guard would gain a critical ally within DOD that understands the key contributions made by small, specialized teams. Conventional land and naval forces dwarf the Coast Guard, and even

more so its specialized teams, by orders of magnitude. Yet USSOCOM, which commands roughly 40,000 people, is very similar in size to the Coast Guard. With such an ally as USSOCOM, the Coast Guard could solidify its combat roles (both in conventional and special operations) and gain a powerful advocate within DOD to help out when the Navy is less inclined to do so.

Another critical requirement is training. By means of an agreement signed 10 May 2005, the Coast Guard and USSOCOM already have recognized the untapped potential in this form of interaction. Rather than reinventing the wheel as it is prone to do, the Coast Guard has recognized that SOF have learned some hard lessons the hard way and have created the best training available for certain types of operations. USSOCOM has authorized direct liaison between its Service Component Commands, the Joint Special Operations Command and the Coast Guard to support the training of maritime security forces.²⁶ A second-order effect will likely be the education of both Coast Guard and SOF officers on each other's roles and missions.

Further along the commitment continuum, the Coast Guard as a full joint partner in USSOCOM could gain access to Major Force Program 11 (MFP-11) funding, which funds all SOF-specific training and equipment. Not only is this funding stream important, but so is the highly qualified Special Operations Acquisition and Logistics Center (SOAL). This is a specialized logistics force dedicated to the rapid fielding of equipment that meets the unique needs of special operators. Examples of Coast Guard equipment that could fall within MFP-11--and therefore external to the Coast Guard budget--include all HITRON materiel, all MSST and SRT materiel or modifications beyond the service-adopted standard platforms, all PSU materiel, all vertical insertion (fast-roping) materiel,

the TACLET/MSST canine programs, and the considerably greater ammunition allowances and associated ranges and shoot houses. If the Coast Guard had designated SOF, MFP-11 would fund all overseas operations of Coast Guard SOF where USSOCOM or the theater SOCs had operational control. The Coast Guard would continue to pay the personnel and administrative costs for its designated SOF, but SOCOM would equip, train, and operate them as SOF.

MFP-11 funding comes with a string: the Coast Guard must be willing to assign operational control of designated SOF to USSOCOM like the Army, Navy, and Air Force already have. SOCOM is not going to fund these teams at any significant level without the authority to assign them as necessary to execute SOCOM missions, particularly the global counterinsurgency. Since Coast Guard and SOCOM objectives abroad have abundant overlap, this should not be an insurmountable obstacle. Much of what these Coast Guard forces do overseas is Foreign Internal Defense (FID), a USSOCOM-identified core task for SOF. Whether FID addresses a counterterrorism or counterdrug threat is immaterial. Together, counterterrorism, counterdrug, and their FID derivatives probably account for 90 percent or more of the activity of Coast Guard special purpose forces overseas. If SOCOM would not agree to provide Coast Guard SOF to JIATF South and JIATF West for counterdrug operations (which themselves are FID supporting the global counterinsurgency when the work is conducted as technical assistance to host nation forces), then surely the Coast Guard and USSOCOM could agree on a fixed-percentage force apportionment between SOCOM and non-SOCOM missions, and fund these teams at an equivalent percentage. Each commander can pay for his own operations; equipment and facilities can be funded according to the fixed-percentage

agreement. Thus, even on a percentage basis, MFP-11 could provide funds in the millions of dollars that the Coast Guard would not have to budget for or, historically, not budget for.

Working for the theater SOCs also would give Coast Guard special purpose forces something they have never had: responsive theater logistics support including the intra-theater airlift that Air Force special operators provide for USSOCOM in its service-like capacity. The increased survivability inherent in being “plugged in,” “on the grid,” and party to SOF personnel recovery plans should be obvious, and this is capability that the Coast Guard by itself could never replicate. This makes long-term deployments in remote regions considerably more palatable from a risk management perspective.

Some additional considerations bear on the issue of counterdrug operations. The conventional Navy may never have been the right force to assign to this mission. In the author’s counterdrug experience, many of the Navy officers considered it a distracter from their core warfighting missions. This suspicion is corroborated by the difference in funding readily apparent between the counterdrug deployers and the “real” Navy. Most of the Navy counterdrug deployers of the 1990s and early 2000s have been or soon will be decommissioned. The real motivation for assigning Navy surface combatants to counterdrug operations in the final years of the Cold War likely had more to do with building the 600-ship Navy and scaring the Soviet Union than with properly executing the counterdrug mission. Properly resourced, the drug war should have meant newer, more capable Coast Guard cutters and aircraft; Coast Guard LEDETs training and operating at a SOF level and even conducting combined and joint counterdrug operations with SOF air, maritime, and ground units; and a SOF-generated, unconventional

campaign plan with more creative tasking than something akin to, “Sit in this box and radiate the ship’s position until the next port call.” The counterdrug JIATFs have become a model for success probably because they combined--slowly, over 15 years--the capability of DOD with the mindset and skill sets of federal law enforcement. Nonetheless, if Navy surface combatants continue to support counterdrug operations, SOCOM could still provide Coast Guard SOF to the counterdrug JIATFs under the rubric of SOF support to conventional forces.

Perhaps most importantly, by affiliating some of its forces with USSOCOM and conducting some of its overseas activities under the auspices of the theater SOCs and their JSOTFs, Coast Guard SOF would become truly formidable in the execution of their domestic homeland security duties. Coast Guard officers would gain valuable expertise in planning and executing asymmetric, unconventional operations with the best special operators in the world, and then could exert leadership in planning for such events as the G8 Summit or Olympics in the United States. By conducting regular overseas deployments in support of the TSOCs, Coast Guard SOF would gain the critical ethos, experience, and vetting needed to succeed in domestic homeland security operations. The first time MSSTs face off against an intelligent, reactive adversary ought not to be at the Republican or Democratic National Conventions in “Hometown, USA.” It used to be that Coast Guard forces had more operational experience than DOD forces, but ongoing special operations since 11 September 2001 have increased exponentially “the art of the possible” with respect to tactical operations. Every day that Coast Guard maritime security forces do not see real terrorists is a lost opportunity, not only to make them more effective against terrorists, but in planning and executing advanced tactical operations.

Although the Coast Guard cannot deploy the majority of MSSTs overseas at once, neither can it afford to keep them all at home and simply hope that they will be victorious in the nation's hour of need. In the words of former Army Chief of Staff Gordon R. Sullivan, "Hope is not a method."²⁷

For Which SOF Essential Tasks Might Coast Guard
Special Purpose Forces Be Especially Suited?

The Coast Guard brings with it an inherent legitimacy because it has no power to destroy other nation-states. Therefore, the Coast Guard is a natural choice for the shaping operations in the global counterinsurgency, which the United States neglects at its own great peril. Much of DOD SOF has been redirected from the shaping zone to the decisive, or kinetic, zone. One could even argue that these descriptors are reversed. Since DOD SOF and conventional forces have been challenged to kill or capture (indefinitely) the current generation of radical-Islamist insurgents, no leader should expect that America can kill or capture its way to a better future. For those already radicalized, that may be the only solution, but if the next generation is allowed to grow up in the absence of effective governmental institutions, food, water, sanitation, and economic activity, there may be too many of them. Thus, helping foreign governments establish their own effectiveness and legitimacy--preconditions of economic prosperity--is likely much more decisive than killing current enemies. These factors have made the Civil Affairs teams decisive in post-Taliban Afghanistan.²⁸

The Coast Guard currently operates in the shaping zone by training foreign Coast Guards; combating the trafficking of human beings, drugs, weapons, and other contraband; and enforcing public safety on the water in places like the Horn of Africa,

where on 17 March 2005, the Cutter *Munro* assaulted a Thai fishing vessel and detained three Somali hijackers armed with automatic weapons and demanding \$800,000 ransom for the ship's officers they held hostage.²⁹ However, the Coast Guard is severely hampering its effectiveness by avoiding the risk and expense of operating in the special operations context. Many countries--including Arab countries, Indonesia, and Malaysia--want help but do not want the brand recognition and resultant political upheaval that comes with overt U.S. assistance. At least one Coast Guard PSU already has conducted covert-style port security operations in conjunction with host nation forces in a CENTCOM country. They wore no uniforms and the host nation did not admit the presence of US forces in that role.³⁰ The Coast Guard should think beyond mere port security to how such operations and access can be exploited to further benefit the nation.

The Coast Guard gets away with much under the guise of interagency, but these examples clearly are special operations that should be coordinated with and supported by the Theater SOCs if for no other reason than risk mitigation (e.g., C4ISR and egress plans), but probably also for funding and unity of effort. The Coast Guard can field the ultimate low-profile SOF because they number so incredibly few in comparison to even DOD SOF.

Soft power in the shaping zone depends on credible kinetic power in decisive operations. Coast Guard forces must walk the walk with their host nation counterparts or the whole thing is a sham. Simply exchanging smiles and handshakes after a week in the classroom is not good enough. Effective relationships are built only on prolonged interaction under the stress of operational conditions. Coast Guard kinetic power is derived of its people, its platforms, its small arms and larger ordnance, its C4ISR assets,

the will to use them, and its popular and legal mandates to use force against those who would violate the law and threaten public safety.

For this reason, the Coast Guard must reassess its decision regarding long-term FID deployments. While it likely is more appropriate for operational units such as LEDETs, MSSTs, and PSUs to execute the operations that ITD and its predecessors pioneered (under the auspices and with the support of theater SOCs), the Coast Guard desperately needs to continue long-term FID deployments because they provide critical tactical skills and experience for its people. Although ITD's 45 members are barely 1/1000th the total active duty force, at least 22 percent of the first-generation MSST commanding officers had ITD experience. That pool of experience will shrink by 22 percent unless long-term FID deployments are reinstated immediately. Some may counter that MSSTs will grow this experience and they may, but they will not learn these skills in New York Harbor. Anyone who thinks that expelling ignorant boaters from established security zones compares with fighting narco-guerillas does not understand the nonstate actors who threaten the free world. Yet fighting narco-guerrillas is very similar to fighting terrorists. Fighting pirates in Africa and Southeast Asia is very similar to fighting terrorists. Some percentage of Coast Guard special purpose forces should be deployed constantly overseas in support of special operations and intelligence collection. The place for Coast Guard maritime security forces to learn their trade--to really learn it against intelligent and hostile adversaries--is overseas. When they do it in the United States, they need to get it right the first time. That is how overseas deployments help the Coast Guard in its homeland security role

For the global counterinsurgency, the long-term deployment program sets conditions, denies sanctuary, deters terrorists, reassures allies, provides early warning; and maintains the personal relationships that are critical for access into the region as it begins to inflame. With DOD committed decisively to CENTCOM, the Coast Guard is missing key opportunities to mitigate risk for the U.S. government in the maritime domains of South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Table 1 is the author’s translation of the Coast Guard special purpose forces’ current soft and kinetic capabilities into the SOF essential tasks.

Table 1. Existing Coast Guard Capabilities in SOF Essential Tasks	
SOF Essential Tasks	Coast Guard Capabilities
Counterterrorism (CT)	•
Counter Proliferation (CP)	•
Special Reconnaissance (SR)	
Direct Action (DA)	•
Unconventional Warfare (UW)	•
Information Operations (IO)	
Psychological Operations (PSYOP)	
Foreign Internal Defense (FID)	•
Civil Affairs Operations (CAO)*	•
*in the context of maritime issues such as civilian port authorities, mariner licensing, and fisheries management, which ground-pounding CA forces totally lack.	

Source: http://www.socom.mil/Docs/2003_2004_SOF_Posture_Statement.pdf

Is it Time to Designate Coast Guard Special Operations Forces?

Perhaps one of the most telling indicators supporting the designation of Coast Guard SOF is the recent debate between Captain Bruce Stubbs, USCG (retired) and Vice Admiral Terry Cross, USCG, both respected Coast Guard leaders. Captain Stubbs argued that the multimission construct is too expensive and precludes the specialization necessary for an effective CT capability. The Coast Guard, he wrote, should focus on CT operations and, presumably, out-source non-homeland security missions. Vice Admiral Cross countered that it was exactly the multimission construct that enabled the Coast Guard to turn on a dime and assume lead agency authority and responsibility for maritime homeland security. He wrote further that the nation certainly could not afford two Deepwater programs. Meanwhile, the same problem continues: these leaders regard the Coast Guard as one block in the same way that other Service leaders viewed their Services each as one block--before Congress carved out a chunk of each Service called SOF. The reality is this: both leaders are right and both objectives can be achieved using the SOF construct for a small percentage of Coast Guard forces.

Effective Security Requires Prevention, Detection, and Response

It should be obvious that the object of Maritime Domain Awareness cannot be merely to watch the attack as it unfolds. Having knowledge of an attack 30-60 minutes ahead of the news networks, while laudable, cannot define success for the government in achieving its principle objectives: “to insure domestic Tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.”³¹ Security expert Bruce Schneier labeled Chapters 11 and

12 of his book, *Beyond Fear*, respectively, “Detection Works Where Prevention Fails” and “Detection is Useless without Response.” One analogy he uses is the common safe. The safe is a preventative barrier. The alarm provides detection, and guards or police make up the response force. Federal security requirements reinforce this “triad” of systems, as Schneier calls it, by requiring the use and regular exercise of each of the three components to safeguard weapons, cash, and classified material.

In tackling the issues of Maritime Homeland Security to date, DHS has placed considerable efforts on prevention--systems that run in the background to deny terrorists their “avenues of approach” and “freedom of maneuver” in Army parlance. Examples include US Visit and other passport and visa initiatives; Customs and Border Protection’s (CBP’s) Container Security Initiative and Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT); the Transportation Security Administration’s improvements in commercial airline baggage and personnel screening as well as airport and cockpit physical security; and the Coast Guard’s 96-hour Notice of Arrival (NOA), National and Inland Rivers Vessel Movement Centers, and permanent security zones around critical infrastructure.³² Likewise, Congress and the President have directed and resourced CIA and FBI to improve detection by stepping up HUMINT collection, intelligence sharing, and the integration of criminal databases and terrorist watch lists. The Coast Guard has established a headquarters office dedicated to improving Maritime Domain Awareness (i.e. detection). Some of these measures combine some functions of prevention and detection, but none of them is a SEAL Platoon or a SWAT Team taking down terrorists.

DHS has implemented at least two triad-based systems--the department’s color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System and the Coast Guard’s Maritime Security

Conditions--but the increased presence of basic patrol officers on foot, mounted, and afloat to match increases in the threat posture brings with it only a modest increase in response capabilities: one cop watching a bridge or one boatcrew observing infiltration into a port facility might stop that part of a terrorist operation, but neither would likely stop the larger group or interdict its operations. In many scenarios of imminent or in-progress attacks, arguably, the best response function such officers can serve is as reconnaissance for a more powerful response force.

In the area of Maritime Security Response, the successes to date include the establishment of 14 Maritime Safety and Security Teams (including one “enhanced” version) in the nation’s critical ports and a modest improvement in response boats at multimission Coast Guard boat stations. However, it is important to note that much of the collective wisdom in Coast Guard Headquarters sees the MSST as predominantly a preventive measure: if terrorists see the bright-orange boats with the mean-looking machine guns, hopefully that will dissuade them from hitting the particular target the boat is sitting in front of, and so the MSST should never have to fire a shot in anger. To their credit, MSSTs take their response mission very seriously. Having the will to use force is every bit as important as having the means. There are two major factors, however, that make the MSST an inherently limited Maritime Security Response asset. The first cannot be overcome: the MSSTs are absolutely necessary in protecting critical infrastructure and high-value naval and military assets. This mission--predominantly boat against boat with a limited human against human role--makes them most effective in preventing or interdicting USS COLE-type attacks and in boarding merchants in compliant and non-compliant modes. In the spate of MSST commissioning ceremonies since 2001, DHS, the

Coast Guard, and members of Congress have frequently referred to MSSTs as “maritime SWAT teams.”³³ This capability provides a critical layer of (mostly defensive) security, but five terrorists on deck firing automatic weapons or rocket-propelled grenades changes the equation entirely. That revelation, learned by the FBI in Waco, is what prompted the Bureau to stratify its SWAT capabilities as depicted in Appendix A, Figure 8, into basic SWAT, enhanced SWAT, and the Hostage Rescue Team. So too would armed opposition to the initial boarding seriously threaten the successful outcome of an MSST operation employing only noncompliant tactics, techniques, and procedures. What is lacking in most major seaports is that additional layer of security that can be provided only by a firehouse-style force-in-being capable of responding to terrorist attacks regardless of the level of resistance--up to and including the capability to conduct an opposed boarding at night to render safe special nuclear materials. Appendix A, Figure 9 shows how the Coast Guard might stratify its emerging homeland security capabilities in terms of CT response capability, including both the FBI methodology and the DOD concept of habitual relationships.

Coast Guard SOF in the Close Fight

Most of the preceding analysis has dealt with Coast Guard SOF in the deep fight. With Naval Special Warfare protecting us predominantly over the horizon, there is a clear need for maritime SOF in the homeland, and this is where Coast Guard SOF would predominantly fulfill their kinetic use of force roles. On 21 December 2004, President G. W. Bush signed Homeland Security Presidential Directive 13, which requires the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security to conduct a comprehensive review of maritime security and to draft a “National Strategy for Maritime Security.” The president

has recognized that existing policies and capabilities are not adequate to counter today's threats. HSPD-13 in fact invites the Secretaries to recommend appropriate changes to the lead federal agency (LFA) assignments outlined in the existing national CT policies as delineated in Presidential Decision Directives 39 and 62.³⁴ With statutory maritime law enforcement authority dating back to 1790, port security authority dating back to 1917, maritime CT authority from 2002, and the preponderance of operational air and maritime security forces in the homeland and the ability to command and control them, the Coast Guard should be assigned LFA for Maritime Security Response and properly resourced to execute the mission.

In my research, the Enhanced MSST, or Security Response Team (SRT), comes very close to that desired layer of SOF response capability the nation requires to protect itself at knife-fighting distances on last-minute intelligence. Not yet even an officially recognized unit, SRT-1 has been an incredible success. The unit concept received broad support from the interagency at the National Security Council. The Coast Guard hired contractors with critical experience on the national CT forces to train this new unit. By the time SRT-1 had deployed for its third National Special Security Event, the Republican National Convention, SRT-1 had earned the trust and respect of the U.S. Secret Service Counter-Assault Team (CAT). SRT-1 has provided operational support to the Secret Service with several critical capabilities, not least of which is inner-perimeter protection for the principals, including the president, with CAT in contingency evacuation plans.³⁵

Unfortunately the SRT concept has upset the apple cart at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C., which is very comfortable with its existing fiefdoms,

power structures, and budget authorities. The SRT concept embodies a new type of unit that requires cross-program authority in order to effectively execute its missions. To work, SRT requires new Coast Guard policies in manning, aviation and boat force risk tolerance, weapons, and training that probably are not appropriate for multimission forces. The sense at SRT-1 and the Coast Guard Special Missions Training Center is that headquarters program managers would prefer to have their programs and authorities undisturbed. In one example, Marine Safety and Operations could not agree on staffing the SRT with an organic CBRNE capability, so seven members of the Coast Guard's National Strike Force³⁶ disappeared from SRT in February 2005 with the expiration of their temporary orders. Lacking an appreciation of the increased risk inherent in CT operations and the resulting need to "push the envelope" in training, SRT critics foamed at the mouth when SRT boats and helicopters experienced safety mishaps. What used to be organic aviation assets were pushed out to the nearest air station. What is unclear now is whether this is simply a "baby step" back to the familiar stable of conventional air station operations. Reporting to a non-SOF boss whose primary requirement is to support SAR, how long can SOF aviation assets expect to remain dedicated for SOF missions? In DOD, when SOF had to get helicopter aviation assets from the conventional units, the result was the disaster at Desert One. In order to meet both SRT's need for dedicated aviation and the need for aviation safety oversight and training, the Coast Guard should establish a special operations aviation command. This was one of the key recommendations of the Holloway Commission following Desert One and resulted in establishment of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment of the U.S. Army.

In addition to upsetting the competition among programs, the SRT concept runs counter to the sensibilities of many members who have worked hard to shape the Coast Guard's image as a lifesaving (read, SAR) service, despite the fact that 95 percent of the Coast Guard will carry on as they do today even if the Coast Guard creates an official SOF capability. Interestingly, Los Angeles SWAT considers itself a lifesaving unit and so do DOD SOF. The motto of Army Special Forces is "De Oppresso Liber," which translates, "To Free the Oppressed." All of the SOF officers in this author's experience volunteered for SOF in order to make the world a better place. Had the Coast Guard the opportunity to kill the 11 September terrorists in order to save 3,000 lives, would it have done so? The Coast Guardsmen who delivered the Marines on Iwo Jima would have. The Coast Guardsmen who pounded Vietcong junks with Army Special Forces would have. This business of lifesaving is simply a matter of perspective.

Counterargument: Maritime Security Response
Is Someone Else's Job

Even when there is agreement on the need for enhanced maritime security response capabilities, there may not be agreement on where to put them. People tend to default to FBI, for example. Although the FBI has enjoyed brand recognition as the LFA for counterterrorism (due in no small measure to its own marketing), FBI has no sustained presence in the maritime domain. There are but three entities in the federal government that have any considerable maritime security presence: the Navy, the Coast Guard, and the Air and Maritime Operations (AMO) wing of DHS Customs and Border Protection (CBP). A final option might be the states (some of which have state or municipal marine patrols), but doing so prevents commanders from surging the capability

for national and regional requirements, degrades integration into national CT planning, and prevents the teams from engaging in overseas combat operations, which is the only true indicator, short of an attack on the homeland, that this force will work when called on.

Clearly, DOD possesses the best existing capability in the U.S. government to conduct opposed boardings and to render safe special nuclear material. Some of this capability is even arrayed to support domestic homeland security. Nonetheless, DOD has been very careful to emphasize that their focus is on overseas threats and that law enforcement agencies should focus on homeland security.³⁷ It seems clear that the converse of this statement is this: DOD would rather not be saddled with requirements to stage its best capabilities throughout the United States to respond to imminent homeland security threats. DOD special operations and technical assistance forces are either forward-deployed around the world taking the fight to the enemy, have just returned from that mission, or are preparing for their next mission in that fight. If the answer to high-end homeland security needs is DOD, then most of their capability would have to be redeployed from overseas assignments to support homeland security. Few in federal government support such a strategy. In accordance with DOD's history and expressed desires, their strength lies in the "forward regions."³⁸ How many simultaneous homeland security incidents would overwhelm the existing, inward-focused capability? Once this capability is committed, there is no further strategic reserve for any follow-on events. In a phone interview for this project, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, Mr. T. K. Custer, put it this way: in the "forward regions," where DOD is the predominant force best positioned to respond, DOD--via the conventional navy or naval

special warfare--should take the lead and respond. In the “approaches” to the homeland, where there is a more even mix of DOD and Coast Guard assets, the “firstest with the mostest” rule should apply. Finally, in the homeland itself, where the Coast Guard has the strongest maritime presence of any government entity, there the Coast Guard should have the LFA responsibility for maritime security response. The policy also should allow the rare exception where, even in the homeland or the forward regions, a non-LFA asset should respond if it is best positioned and able to respond in time to make a difference. “If Al Qaeda succeeds in attacking us, it will not be because we tripped over our own interpretation of law and policy.”³⁹

The notion that FBI should have the lead for maritime counterterrorism is fraught with inconsistency. Combined with current national policy, that would make the U.S. Coast Guard, one of the armed forces, the LFA for maritime homeland security except in really dangerous scenarios, at which point the civilian-manned FBI would step in. Unfortunately, absurdity is not always a disqualifier for proposed federal policies. The factors favoring FBI are its brand recognition; its singular focus on security, law enforcement, and intelligence operations; and its assertiveness in using its authority and capability. Conversely, the extent to which the Coast Guard and its leaders lack these qualities is the single greatest risk factor to implementing a successful Coast Guard SOF or CT capability. When it comes to exercising Coast Guard authorities, some Coast Guard leaders display all the confidence of an adolescent girl uncomfortable with adulthood. Fortunately, this factor is really the only one that favors FBI and disfavors the Coast Guard, and the latter’s emerging advanced law enforcement competency program may well balance the scales. In an interesting comment on federalism, the Constitution

delegated most land-based police power to the states. According to its own website, the FBI, not formed until 1908, has always been first an *investigative* vice a “cops on the beat” type of agency, whereas in the maritime domain, the Coast Guard has since 1790 functioned as a patrolling, federal, maritime, police power using “all necessary force to compel compliance.” Any who doubt this fact should read up on the Coast Guard’s battles with Jean Lafitte and his merry band of pirates in the Gulf of Mexico during the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ These facts notwithstanding, the FBI has continually pursued greater kinetic police power, including air and maritime capabilities. Witness the bank robbery squads, the field division SWAT Teams, the regional “enhanced” or “super” SWAT teams, and the Hostage Rescue Team complete with helicopters and rigid-hull inflatable boats. PDD-39 in fact assigned FBI the LFA responsibilities for CT in international waters, apparently based on HRT, a single unit of 91 special agents in Quantico, Virginia on a four-hour recall.⁴¹ Interestingly enough, HRT is listed as an “investigative program.” Consider for a moment the FBI’s capability to field a “sustained maritime presence”⁴² from zero to hundreds or even thousands of miles offshore. Next consider their capability to command and control such a force. Finally, consider the expertise of the average FBI special agent in maritime affairs. As phenomenal an investigative agency as the FBI is, it may be time to say they have enough on their plate. Were Congress to press them into maritime security service, the FBI would mount an impressive campaign to acquire maritime resources: boats (or even ships), aircraft, sensors, command and control systems, and logistics systems--something that looks an awful lot like the existing Coast Guard and its Deepwater recapitalization program. The federal government already has a maritime law enforcement agency, and that agency is

the Coast Guard. All that remains is for the Coast Guard senior leadership to step up to the plate, acknowledge the service's responsibility as the nation's primary maritime law enforcement agency, and accept whatever risks that entails. Failing this, there may well be a maritime division of the FBI in the nation's future, and the likelihood is high that Coast Guard maritime law enforcement officers would flock to man it.

The remaining alternative among existing federal agencies is the AMO wing of CBP. In the author's experience, its maritime enforcement officers are first investigative agents who must also work a day shift and turn over cases for prosecution. Their boats, among the "coolest" and fastest on the water, are predominantly short-range, short-duration assets that are used to support casework, not to dominate the maritime domain; their command and control capability is quite limited; and the agency has never mounted a large, synchronized operation in the maritime domain without Coast Guard or JIATF assistance. Finally, one must admit that AMO never would have been born had the Coast Guard remained in the Treasury Department alongside U.S. Customs during the early years of the drug war. Properly resourced, non-redundant, and properly emphasizing maritime law enforcement, the Coast Guard would have developed an AMO-like capability in the 1980s under Treasury leadership. As Secretary Chertoff conducts his department-wide review of organizations and operations, AMO's boat forces and maritime patrol aircraft may be vulnerable considering Coast Guard preeminence in the maritime domain.

Maritime security response and consequence management operations likely will require dispersed, simultaneous, and sustained operations on the scale of the Mariel Boatlift or *Exxon Valdez* response operations. Only the Coast Guard can mount such

operations in the homeland on a moment's notice. To be more effective, the Coast Guard simply needs LFA authority for maritime security response and correlating, full-spectrum capabilities.

Counterargument: There Is No Money

No discussion of this sort is complete absent fiscal considerations. In general, homeland security funding has increased insignificantly compared to the need, and the scale of Coast Guard SOF is very small. According to Steven Flynn, “new federal outlays for homeland security” since 11 September 2001 amount to four percent of the defense budget--not exactly an indicator that the government is serious about homeland security.⁴³ Considering the apportionment of federal spending shown in figure 7, that means four percent of a defense budget today that is less than 50 percent of what it was in 1962 as a percentage of spending.

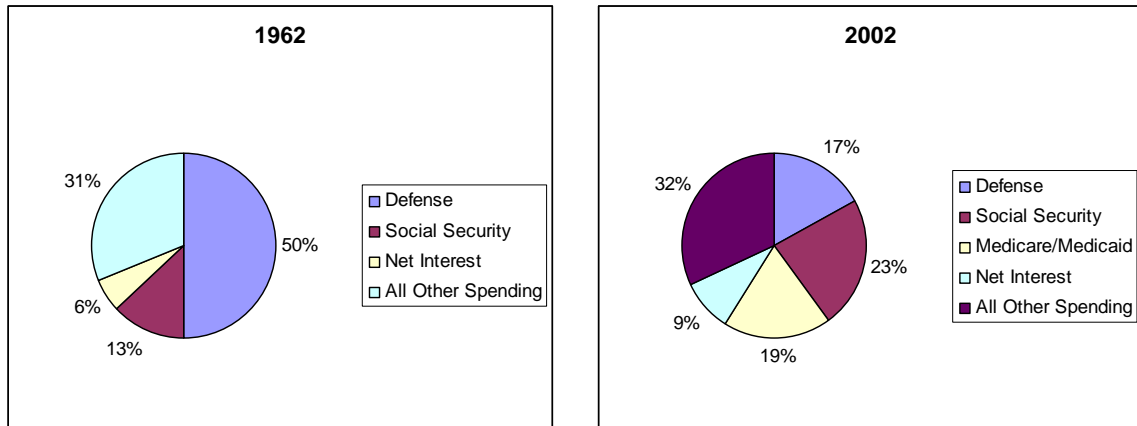


Figure 7. “Composition of Federal Spending by Budget Function”
 Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cghome/hscek/img2.html>

In fiscal year 2005, defense appropriations totaled \$391 billion while homeland security appropriations totaled \$40.7 billion.⁴⁴ Can DHS imagine a budget even 25 percent of DOD's budget? Can Coast Guard admirals imagine a 50 percent increase in manpower? CIA leaders can.⁴⁵ For the Coast Guard, that would equal 20,000 additional active duty members, nearly as many people as the Air Force fired in 2005 to buy aircraft. Fortunately, most of the forces considered herein already exist. While some programs such as SRTs, HITRONs, and LEDETs may require expansion to do their jobs effectively, the same is true whether or not they are designated as SOF. If formed today, the Coast Guard SOC would own about 2900 people already on the payroll. The expansions proposed herein likely would add another 500 to 600 people, depending on the troop-to-task analysis. Since most of the people are paid for, the main perceived drawback with designated SOF may be that their training and equipment could be more expensive per person than that of the multimission forces because of the greater emphasis on building cohesive teams of more mature and capable operators focused on specific missions. Such arguments fail to account for the high systems costs of Coast Guard multimission units--standard boats, aircraft, and major cutters in particular--and the years of training invested into the typical coxswain, officer of the deck, engineer officer, or aviator. In SOF, the operator is always the most important system. This drives the requirement for closed-loop personnel assignment policies, which adds some expense. MFP-11 theoretically could offset much of the operational cost of Coast Guard SOF. The Coast Guard should further engage USSOCOM in areas of mutual interest precisely because the potential for additional funding could be significant.

Another fiscal issue is the reality of political will. Although the SRT is expensive due to its dedicated air and boat forces, the SRT is also the only unit in the Coast Guard that has the potential to conduct national-level missions such as counterterrorism against a WMD threat. That is a mission that captures the attention of national decision makers and the public in a way that Deepwater likely never will, because it operates primarily far offshore, where there is a dearth of American citizens. However critically important Deepwater recapitalization is for the Coast Guard, the program is simply a tough sell. On the other hand, ask the Congressional delegations from the powerful coastal states whether their major cities and ports--New York-New Jersey, Hampton Roads, Los Angeles-Long Beach, San Francisco, Seattle, and others--ought to have pre-positioned, maritime CT units that can stop simultaneous nuclear attacks and they will form a coalition to ensure each other's needs are met. General Downing has said that the nation needs more of this capability than what it has in DOD. He also said that if the Coast Guard were to take on this mission, it would have "real power and a real budget."⁴⁶ Find the money for a robust SRT capability, make the Coast Guard a critical asset in national-level missions, and the Coast Guard will have more breathing space and allies for programs like Deepwater and Rescue21.

A final fiscal comment regards the relationship of CT capability to what GAO calls "results-oriented government" arising from the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993.⁴⁷ In short, there is none. In an interview, Kathy Kraninger, former Assistant to the Secretary of Homeland Security for Policy and now on the staff of the Senate Homeland Security Governmental Affairs Committee, mentioned that some people in government have questioned whether the original, much less enhanced, MSSTs

have been worth their cost. While understandable, this is a flawed criticism. Military operations are not business operations. The United States and its allies spent billions of dollars on nuclear munitions to win the Cold War but never engaged in nuclear warfare. Few doubt the free world would have survived without them. How many did the country actually need? It is impossible to measure. Similarly, the United States rarely has used unconventional warfare to overthrow hostile regimes, yet incalculable was its value in toppling the Taliban in less than 60 days and accomplishing what the Soviet Union failed to do in 10 years. When Al Qaeda launches a spectacular maritime attack against the United States, the millions of people at risk in the coastal communities (or their survivors) are going to ask, “Mr. President, Honorable Senator, where were you on maritime security? We all knew this would happen. You were supposed to protect us. What did you do to keep my family alive?” Midwest farmers will ask, “Mr. President, Honorable Senator, how can it be that we cannot ship our grain to market? What happened to the ports?” Retailers large and small will ask, “Mr. President, Honorable Senator, how can it be that we have nothing to sell? What happened to the ports?” New England and California power companies will ask, “Mr. President, Honorable Senator, how can it be that we have no fuel for winter? What happened to the ports?” Not least, the combatant commanders will ask, “Admiral Commandant, how can it be that the retaliatory ground forces are barricaded in garrison? What happened to the strategic seaports of embarkation?” This is the fundamental problem of the insurance buyer: if the consequences of the catastrophic event are unacceptable, then whatever its likelihood, the wise insure against it. Few appreciate the value of insurance when the bill is due; far fewer can afford to face disaster uninsured.

¹Dave Grossman and Loren W. Christensen, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and Peace*, (Belleville, Illinois: PPCT Research Publications, 2004), 177.

²14 USC 89

³Daniel Percival, director, *Dirty War* (Warner Home Video, 2005), DVD; United Kingdom. Metropolitan Police Service. *Anti-Terrorist Branch*. [website] (undated, accessed 16 May 2005); Available from <http://www.met.police.uk/terrorism/index.htm>

⁴Ralph Peters, "The New Warrior Class Revisited," ed. Robert J. Bunker, *Beyond Baghdad* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2003), 59.

⁵David Grossman, lecture to CGSC SOF Track, 17 December 2004.

⁶Ibid.

⁷U.S. Coast Guard, Office of the Historian, "U.S. Coast Guard: A Historical Overview," [website] (April 2003, accessed 15 January 2005); Available from http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_USCGhistory.html.

⁸This date is also supported by the author's electronic interview with ADM Paul A. Yost, USCG (ret.), 26 February 2005.

⁹Pailliotet and Phelan.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Matthew Creelman, interview by author, Yorktown, VA, 25 January 2005.

¹²James Perry Stevenson, *The \$5 Billion Misunderstanding: The Collapse of the Navy's A-12 Stealth Bomber Program* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001).

¹³Todd Haviland, e-mail to author, 2 March 2005.

¹⁴U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-07: Military Operations Other Than War* (16 June 1995, accessed 30 April 2005), viii; Available from http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp3_07.pdf.

¹⁵Otis W. McGregor, "Command and Control of Special Operations Forces Missions in the US Northern Command Area of Responsibility," Master's Thesis, NPS, March 2005; and CGSC SOF Track course, "Theater SOCs," 31 March 2005.

¹⁶T. K. Custer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, telephone interview by author, CGSC, 17 March 2005; David McCracken, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, interview by author, Pentagon, 25 January 2005; Commander Bill Wilson, Naval Special Warfare Command, interview by author, CGSC, 17 March 2005.

¹⁷U.S. Army pilot associated with the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, conversation with author, CGSC, 20 April 2005.

¹⁸Bill Wilson, lecture to CGSC SOF Track and interview by author, 17 March 2005.

¹⁹David Fridovich (Commander, Special Operations Command—Pacific), video-tele-conference with SOF Track, CGSC, 9 May 2005.

²⁰U.S. Army, CGSC SOF Track, December 2004-May 2005. The need to increase SOAR capacity was a recurring theme throughout the year.

²¹U.S. Coast Guard, “Coast Guard Crew Has Smugglers in their Sights,” [website] (12 October 2004, accessed 14 May 2005); Available from <http://www.d7publicaffairs.com/>; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Press Secretary, “27 Tons of Cocaine Seized From Two Vessels In Pacific,” [website] (27 September 2004, accessed 14 May 2005); Available from <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?content=4046>.

²²Larzelere, 13-14.

²³Paul A. Yost, interview by author, 24 February 2005.

²⁴Stubbs, xxx.

²⁵W. Seth Carus and Thomas J. Hirschfeld, *Coast Guard Future Direction Study: Capstone Support Analysis*, Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, 1997.

²⁶Bryan D. Brown (Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command), lecture to CGSC SOF Track, 21 April 2005, and e-mail to author, 10 May 2005.

²⁷Gordon R. Sullivan and Michael V. Harper, *Hope Is Not a Method*, New York: Times Books, 1996.

²⁸COL Walter Herd, former Commander of CJSOTF—Afghanistan, lecture to CGSC SOF Track, 17 February 2005.

²⁹U.S. Fifth Fleet Public Affairs, “Coalition Maritime Forces Intercept Hijacked Vessel,” [website] (Bahrain, 18 March 2005); Available from http://www.news.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=17550

³⁰Capt. Steve Ohms, USCGR, e-mail to author, 8 November 2004.

³¹U.S. Constitution, Preamble, [website] (17 September 1787, accessed 24 April 2005); Available from <http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/data/constitution/preamble/>.

³²CRS Report, *Maritime Security: Overview of Issues* (9 August 2004).

³³Tom Ridge, Remarks to the National Association of Counties (Washington, DC: 3 March 2003), Available from <http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=44&content=490&print=true>; U.S. Coast Guard, Since September [website] (Miami, FL: 4 June 2003, accessed 1 June 2005), Available from http://www.uscg.mil/d7/d7m/since_september_11.htm; Patty Murray, Murray Helps Commission Marine "SWAT Team" for Puget Sound Security [website] (Seattle, WA: 3 July 2002, accessed 1 June 2005), Available from <http://murray.senate.gov/news.cfm?id=189075>; Charles Schumer, Schumer Launches New Coast Guard "SWAT Team" For New York [website] (New York, NY: 12 September 2003), Available from http://schumer.senate.gov/SchumerWebsite/pressroom/press_releases/PR02026.html.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 4-5.

³⁵Gerard Williams and Eric Grabins, focus group with the author, 26 January 2005.

³⁶The Coast Guard National Strike Force is a HAZMAT outfit using Incident Command System terminology; it has nothing to do with DOD strike concepts.

³⁷T. K. Custer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense, telephone interview by author, CGSC, 17 March 2005; David McCracken, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, interview by author, Pentagon, 25 January 2005; Commander Bill Wilson, Naval Special Warfare Command, interview by author, CGSC, 17 March 2005.

³⁸Custer.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Irving H. King, *The Coast Guard under Sail: the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service 1789-1865* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 1989); Irving Crump, *Our United States Coast Guard Academy*, (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1961).

⁴¹U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Investigative Programs: Critical Incident Response Group," [website] (undated, accessed 24 April 2005); Available from <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/isd/cirg/tact.htm>.

⁴²Custer.

⁴³Steven Flynn, *America the Vulnerable: How Our Government is Failing to Protect Us from Terrorism* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 2.

⁴⁴U.S. President, “President Signs Defense Bill” [website] (5 August 2004, accessed 1 June 2005); Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/08/20040805-3.html>; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, “Fact Sheet: Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2005” [website] (18 October 2004, accessed 1 June 2005); Available from http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/press_release/press_release_0541.xml.

⁴⁵U.S. President, Memorandum for the Director of Central Intelligence (23 November 2004, accessed 1 June 2005); Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/11/20041123-5.html>.

⁴⁶Wayne A. Downing, lecture to CGSC SOF Track, 15 April 2005.

⁴⁷U.S. General Accounting Office, *Results-Oriented Government* (Washington, DC: March 2004, accessed 1 June 2005); Available from <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0438.pdf>.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Is the Coast Guard a Combat Force?

The Coast Guard has always been a combat force. The Coast Guard's status as an armed force depends on its continued mandate, will, and capability to go to war. In the fullness of time, historians may conclude that the DOT and post-Vietnam era fostered elements of culture anomalous to the great heritage of the service.

Is There Historic Precedent for Coast Guard Participation in Special Operations?

The historical record demonstrates that small, deployed Coast Guard units have participated in special operations at least as far back as the run-up to World War II, which is about the time the United States established its first official special operations units. Coast Guard units have sought out opportunities to participate, they have been tasked to do so by higher headquarters, and they have supported, at a minimum, requests for supporting and direct action roles in the operations of U.S. Army Special Forces, U.S. Navy SEALs, and U.S. Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance units.

What Historic Conditions Prompted the Army and Navy to Establish SOF and Do Similar Conditions Exist Today for the Coast Guard?

The SOF Community recognizes the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) as the first U.S. government organization that conducted "real" special operations. It comprised the national intelligence functions carried on by today's CIA and the unconventional

warfare (UW) functions of today's Special Forces. In UW, Special Forces support an insurgency to overthrow a hostile regime, such as the Nazis or the Taliban. The opposite side of the UW coin is Foreign Internal Defense (FID), where America may use all of its national power to assist a friendly regime in suppressing insurgency and lawlessness. Presidents Kennedy and Reagan expanded SOF in response to the threat and successful use of Communist insurgency around the globe. SOF then expanded and morphed to specialize in CT operations.

What Can the Coast Guard Do for the Congress,
the President, the Attorney General, SECDEF,
SECDEF, Ambassadors, USSOCOM
and Theater SOCs that Existing
SOF Cannot Do?

As concerns operations and intelligence, this thesis and the coursework for the special operations track at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College suggest that Coast Guard special purpose forces have critical authority, expertise, and capabilities to contribute to the SOF community and national intelligence collection effort across the continuum of operations. Coast Guard operators and marine safety personnel, as a result of their training and experience, simply view some types of information differently than operators and collectors without that experience. They add a unique layer of analysis and interpretation for planning and executing operations and intelligence gathering. The new warfighting paradigm for the non-state actor holds that finding the enemy is harder than fixing him, destroying him, or removing him from the battlefield, and the Coast Guard's core competencies since 1790 have included discerning legitimate from illegitimate activities among civilians on the water, and affecting both activities through a variety of lethal and nonlethal means using inherently legitimate state powers of law, regulation,

search, seizure, and violence. The organizations currently conducting operations in the covert and clandestine realms simply do not have the same access or visibility on maritime issues that the Coast Guard has, and moreover, they cannot expect to have it without Coast Guard help. From the strategic to the tactical level, the Coast Guard can help these organizations fill in some of their “unknown unknowns,” as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld calls them.

What Can USSOCOM Do for the Coast Guard?

USSOCOM and SOF can help Coast Guard special purpose forces by sharing its training resources, acquisition expertise, and imbuing Coast Guard teams with the special operations ethos.

Should the Coast Guard commit its special purpose forces to the global counterinsurgency under USSOCOM operational control, USSOCOM could fund these forces’ SOF-specific requirements and thus remove that burden from the Coast Guard budget.

For Which SOF Essential Tasks Might Coast Guard Special Purpose Forces Be Especially Suited?

To recap table 1, the data suggests that existing Coast Guard special purpose forces having existing capabilities in the SOF essential tasks of CT, CP, DA (concentrated on ship boardings, small-boat interdictions, and combined beach, boat, and air interdictions), FID, and maritime aspects of civil affairs (as yet a nonexistent capability in the joint force). Additionally, UW might be considered low-hanging fruit. Recall the contingency scenario involving a future FARC overpowering the legitimate government of Colombia. Coast Guard special purpose forces already conduct

independent FID to such a degree that, with modest additional training in supporting insurgency, they could easily exploit existing relationships and access to conduct successful UW. So much of what SOF do can be summarized as using low-profile forces to stabilize the ungoverned space in the world. There has been a tremendous convergence in the military and law enforcement disciplines since the end of the Cold War. In a nutshell, Coast Guard special purpose forces are specialists against the nonstate actor.

Is it Time to Designate Coast Guard Special Operations Forces?

Service history supports designating Coast Guard SOF, emerging threats demand Coast Guard SOF, and Coast Guard SOF would be fully consistent with law and policy. The term “peacetime” is a term not altogether applicable in today’s operational environment because the level of chaos and instability around the world necessitates commitment of conventional and SOF in continuing, simultaneous theaters for conflicts of lesser intensity than general war. However, many of the Coast Guard’s core missions--counterdrug operations, counterterrorism operations, building foreign Coast Guards (and thus respect for legitimate authority), and even general law enforcement where the host nation lacks an effective capability--are exactly the type of operations to which DOD committed SOF before 11 September 2001, and exactly the type of operations that have made them the force of choice since then. That the threat from terrorism is so acute does not invalidate the need for stability and support operations--rather it underscores the need and makes it more urgent. By selecting, assessing, and training some individuals to the special operations standard, and by designating, organizing, training, and equipping some

Coast Guard units as SOF, the Coast Guard makes itself more relevant to the future by contributing across the full spectrum of capabilities.

At a time when DOD SOF expect full engagement around the world in kill or capture missions, someone must attend to setting the conditions for peace, prosperity, self-determination, and human dignity to take root and flourish, thus denying the global insurgency their “sea in which to swim.” NEWS FLASH: places like Indonesia, Spain, and UAE have been more amenable to U.S. assistance when it does not come with a U.S. flag, large naval blockades, and 24x7 media coverage. Again, the need to operate in denied, politically sensitive or even “politically denied” areas demands the use of SOF. How much more effective the U.S. Coast Guard would be if some of its forces were free to operate out of uniform in nonstandard, foreign-made boats in foreign ports.

The situation whereby the Coast Guard is best able to defend the nation against the maritime spectaculars is also that in which the Coast Guard is most relevant to the joint force, where the Coast Guard offers a full spectrum of capabilities useful in both conventional and special operations.

To summarize the conclusions of this entire effort, the time has come for Coast Guard law enforcement to come of age, for the Coast Guard to acknowledge its military past and reinvigorate that heritage, and to reject the budgeting and cultural failings of the Department of Transportation era with extreme prejudice.

Recommendations

For Further Research

The obvious follow-on research would support the force management analysis required to implement the following recommendations using the standard approach:

Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leader development, Personnel, and Facilities (DOTMLPF).

Further research in the classified realm might examine the concept of designated Coast Guard SOF running low-level source operations in support of military and intelligence operations rather than investigative contexts, including how and where Coast Guard SOF might have an advantage in spotting, assessing, and recruiting sources.

As an arm of civil government, the Coast Guard Marine Safety community may have potential to contribute in the area of maritime civil affairs. Army and Marine Corps civil affairs teams (CATs) assess the needs of communities in terms of drinking water, sewage treatment, schools, hospitals, etc. CATs composed of key Marine Safety competencies may have a lot to offer coastal communities that depend on maritime commerce, industrial safety and hygiene, incident management, port state control, and reliable port operations. There is no naval civil affairs effort and even if they formed one today, it would never have this type of expertise. If the next theater in the global counterinsurgency campaign is indeed the Pacific Rim, this question may pose itself sooner than we are prepared to answer it.

Coupled with the criticality of Maritime Domain Awareness, their expertise also imbues Marine Safety with tremendous untapped potential in the national intelligence effort. Such a suggestion admittedly may seem radical to Marine Safety traditionalists.

Since this research was qualitative, it would be interesting to have a quantitative study along similar lines. These conclusions should be verifiable through survey data. For example, if one were to survey DOD SOF and their most prominent interagency partners (CIA, FBI, and State) about CT and counterdrug (CD) operations, most would likely

respond that they or someone in the existing national community has it covered sea, air, or land; their answers would be expert within the scope of their training and experience. In later questions, ask them how CT or CD operations are impacted by such factors as maritime smuggling of people, arms, drugs, or WMD; 100 percent space accountability; sustainable fisheries management; port infrastructure; mariner and stevedore licensing; cargo manifests; and the characteristics of legitimate commerce in a given region. The existing pool of expertise might shrink precipitously. The author informally asked such questions of representatives from every type of U.S. SOF, a senior FBI Special Agent in Charge, and several CIA operations officers and analysts front-and-center in the GWOT--experts in their fields by every measure. None could answer such questions the way Coast Guard officers answer them, and while that should not surprise anyone, it perhaps ought to concern leaders enough to make some changes.

In his 2005 guidance, the CNO has declared his intent to establish MIO/VBSS as a Navy core competency. Putting that kind of emphasis on VBSS implies either that future naval combatants will spend a considerable portion of their time and energy conducting MIO/VBSS or that the consequences of not having the capability outweigh its expense and opportunity cost. The Coast Guard should consider supporting this effort by establishing a permanent-party Coast Guard Law Enforcement Department Head and Chief Petty Officer on each Navy surface combatant tasked with conducting MIO/VBSS operations as a “core capability.” If one assumes that 200 ships would need MIO/VBSS capability, then the Coast Guard contribution equals 400 bodies. As with the counterdrug concept, this allows the boarding to proceed under combatant commander or law enforcement authority at will, and provides two maritime law enforcement boarding

experts to direct the ship's MIO/VBSS training program. If the Coast Guard continues down the path it began in 1990 (and reinforced in a 1997 agreement) of doffing VBSS chores to the Navy, it will continue to minimize its relevance to combatant commanders. In Vietnam, the Navy picked up small boat capabilities that later became SOF. In the 1980s, Customs expanded from a port-of-entry service into having significant air and maritime counterdrug platforms. In the 1990s, the Coast Guard refused to accept full responsibility for the MIO/VBSS mission in the Northern Arabian Gulf despite significant DOD encouragement (a fumbled touchdown pass if ever one was thrown to the Coast Guard). Not only that, but the Coast Guard spent a lot of time and money training the Navy how to do boardings. Now, the Coast Guard faces a real threat of being squeezed out of the military MIO/VBSS mission altogether, even though it has superior capability and expertise to the tune of 137 boardings every day. While it makes sense from a capacity standpoint for naval combatants to be able to conduct MIO/VBSS, the low cost of integrating Coast Guard expertise and authority makes equal sense.

Finally, further research may be warranted on why FBI and DEA remain in the Department of Justice. *The National Strategy for Homeland Security* mentions FBI no fewer than 60 times. As one FBI supervisory special agent has said, "DHS was given all of the responsibility for homeland security and none of the power." The Attorney General and U.S. Attorneys have responsibility for all U.S. prosecutions brought by all U.S. law enforcement agencies--why the special relationship with FBI and DEA? INS and Border Patrol were transferred from Justice to DHS. The Coast Guard's counterdrug mission was specifically legislated as a homeland security mission. Obviously, FBI and DEA are among the crown jewels of the Department of Justice, but this command relationship is

unnecessary for the agencies to do their jobs; other law enforcement agencies for years have existed outside Justice. Further, this command relationship may prevent FBI from maintaining its new preventive emphasis on homeland security and returning to its prior emphasis on cases referred to the U.S. Attorneys for prosecution.

Operations

1. Decisively engage planners at US Pacific Command and SOC--Pacific now to commit cutters, aircraft, LEDETs, PSUs, and/or MSSTs to the coming fight in the Pacific Theater of the global counterinsurgency. Do not wait for them to ask.
2. Engage USSOCOM and Theater Special Operations Commands now to explore where they may have needs that can be met by existing Coast Guard special purpose forces. Get in the fight.
3. Task Coast Guard LEDETs to carry on the ITD's (and its predecessor organizations') former Long-term Deployment and Operational Evaluation programs in Haiti and South America. Expand into Southeast Asia. These missions align with the SOF concept of "global scouts," which are forces that keep their fingers on the pulse of their regions, provide early warning, and act decisively when called on to secure the nation's interests around the world. No mission is purely counterdrug or counterterror. Lawlessness, like the cockroach, thrives in the absence of authority. With the Seventh SF Group, Navy SEALs, and ITD refocusing on other regions, one can almost hear the rush of air brought on by the sudden depressurization of South America. Everywhere the Coast Guard can improve stability is one less place the likes

of Al Qaeda are free to operate. Internally, the Coast Guard cannot afford to shut down this key proving ground for officer and enlisted alike in conducting tactical operations. Generate enough LEDETs in the budget to carry on these missions and maintain average deployment days at 185 per year. Find the money.

Policy

4. Authorize all designated career law enforcement officers to wear a badge and credentials in and out of uniform. This badge might suitably replace the TACLET specialty insignia. The Coast Guard is likely the only agency in the world that tries to enforce law without admitting that it has and needs fulltime law enforcement officers and does so without issuing them badges. As Officers of the Customs by federal law, Coast Guardsmen minimally rate the Customs badge, but honestly rate their own badge by virtue of added Title 14 and other authorities. Many private security guards in fact wear badges on lesser authority. Customs authorizes badges and law enforcement availability pay for even its fixed-wing aircrews, which never interact directly with the public. Coast Guard boarding officers were authorized badges until the late 1980s. If abuse is the reason badges were recalled, then the answer is to establish proper safeguards, not dumb down the system to the fourth grade level. All Coast Guardsmen who work primarily in law enforcement ought to be recognized as legitimate members of their chosen career field. With the Advanced Law Enforcement Qualification program, headquarters has

recognized the issue, but the implementation and real results remain to be seen.

5. Authorize all designated career law enforcement officers to carry weapons off-duty on Coast Guard authority with qualified immunity. The use of deadly force in defense of oneself or others under threat of death or serious bodily injury is an unassailable legal principle, and the first rule of winning a gun fight is having a gun. No legislative changes are required. As Officers of the Customs, the Secretary of Homeland Security can direct Coast Guard commissioned, warrant, and petty officers to carry firearms under the authority granted him by Congress under 19 USC 1589a. Under 46 USC 70106, MSSTs can conduct “other security missions [as assigned] by the Secretary.” DHS can extend its effectiveness in securing America’s way of life by arming its trained fighters at all times--consider air marshals and armed commercial pilots writ large at every waterfront in the nation. Congress specifically *delimited* the authority in 19 USC 1589a from purely Customs duties to “any offense against the United States.” Congress further authorized Customs officers “to perform any other law enforcement duty that the Secretary of [Homeland Security] may designate.” One would think that terrorism and wrongful possession of WMD might be qualifying offenses and the enforcement of public safety a qualifying duty. DHS logo apparel has been a hot seller at Coast Guard exchanges, but how foolish it is to wear such apparel with only one’s good looks, wits, and bare hands to back it up. Imagine a city under radiological or nuclear attack and the local collapse of

civil order. It would be nice if critical Coast Guard members could defend themselves or pass through a police cordon and recall to their units. Secondly, consider all the public functions Coast Guardsmen attend off-duty. In the shadow of 11 September, how can anyone argue against additional trained security free of charge? Recommendations five and six address one of the main reasons that expert maritime law enforcement officers flock to other agencies: the Coast Guard treats them like children, and therefore they themselves and members of other agencies question their status as “real” law enforcement officers. Coast Guard men and women are at least the equals of the employees of other agencies, and there are intelligent policies to mitigate the risks. If the local fish-and-feathers cops can wear their gear at any time and place, then Coast Guard law enforcement officers should be authorized as well. This is about the cheapest retention initiative there is. The Coast Guard may even attract some émigrés back into the service or, better yet, attract more of the best law enforcement talent to begin with.

Reorganization

Interim State

6. Permanently reestablish G-OPC as G-OT, complete with OFCO.
 - a. Designate G-OT as waiver authority for a broad array of cross-program Coast Guard policies as necessary for mission accomplishment.

- b. Establish the Offices of Special Boat Forces and Special Aviation Forces within G-OT. These offices should work closely with G-OCS and G-OCA to establish policy appropriate for SOF.
 - c. The officer selected to serve as G-OT should be someone with EMSST, MSST, PSU, and/or TACLET experience at both the detachment and command level.
 - d. Designate G-OT as Commander, Coast Guard Special Operations Command. Migrate from the G-OT staff construct to that of a Major Command. Until it has a command relationship with USSOCOM, this command should report to the Assistant Commandant for Operations.
7. Permanently establish EMSST/SRT full operating capability as rapidly as possible, complete with OFCOs. Find the money.
8. Reprogram HITRON as the Coast Guard Special Operations Aviation Command (SOAC) and procure permanent airframes and paint schemes peculiar to their mission. SOAC should be a force provider for SRTs and other commands requiring full spectrum Airborne Use of Force capabilities. SOAC numbered special aviation detachments should be forward-based at Coast Guard Air Stations near, and share customer-focused relationships with, their supported SRTs. Collocation with Coast Guard Air Stations should be designed to maximize economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of aviation logistics support and flight safety oversight.

9. Reprogram each SRT as a Special Operations Group. Establish Special Boat Forces as subordinate commands with Commanding Officers or Officers in Charge who are screened for command of SOF.
10. The Commandant of the Coast Guard signs an MOU with Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command having the following components:
 - a. Operations Support. USSOCOM may request Coast Guard SOF for worldwide deployment at any time via the established Request for Forces process. Such forces integrate with JSOTFs under the JIATF construct.
 - b. Staff Support. The Coast Guard establishes permanent staffs or liaison officers at USSOCOM, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), the Naval Special Warfare Command, and the Theater SOCs. Coast Guard special operations staff personnel support standing and ad-hoc Joint Special Operations Task Forces during major operations, whether or not the Coast Guard has participating SOF. The three primary functions of this recommendation are to build personal relationships within the SOF community, to give something back to the SOF community of immediate and lasting value, and for Coast Guard SOF officers to learn the arts of deliberate and time-sensitive operational planning.
 - c. Special Relationship with NSW Development Group (NSWDG). USSOCOM authorizes NSWDG to support Coast Guard EMSST training, research, and development. An exchange program authorizes

small numbers of Coast Guard EMSST personnel to work in a TAD/TDY status with NSWDC and vice versa in such roles as might be approved by the unit commanders.

- d. Support relationship with the Special Operations Acquisition and Logistics Center. Initial acquisition efforts would be funded by the Coast Guard, but procured by SOAL.
- e. Support relationship with the U.S. Army Psychological Applications Directorate, U.S. Army Special Operations Command. Psychological screening is a critical component of proper selection and assessment into SOF. Due to the autonomy and authority entrusted to special operators, DOD screens the members of its critical special operations units. Psychological screening is also mandatory in the selection processes for every major federal law enforcement agency and many city police departments. At a minimum, these agencies have created a standard of care that the Coast Guard has failed to keep up with. More likely, such pervasiveness indicates actual merit. Colonel Morgan Banks has offered his expertise in helping the Coast Guard establish a psychological screening program.

Desired End State

- 11. Maintain all interim state recommendations not overtaken by desired end state recommendations.
- 12. The Secretary of Homeland Security signs an MOU with the Secretary of Defense having the following components:

- a. SOF Designation. The Secretaries of Homeland Security and Defense designate all Coast Guard forces assigned to G-OT as SOF.
- b. Service Component Command. The Secretary of Defense designates the Coast Guard Special Operations Command (G-OT) as a service component command of U.S. Special Operations Command. All command and support relationships are carried out in accordance with 10 USC 167.
- c. Command and Control Mechanisms. The Secretaries establish the conditions under which DOD and DHS exercise operational and tactical control of SOF operating under Coast Guard military and law enforcement authorities.
- d. Coast Guard augmentation of Naval Special Warfare Elements.
Recognizing that Naval Special Warfare assets will always have the best available collection of capabilities for getting to a maritime-accessible target, the desirability in some cases of prosecuting terrorists in the United States or foreign countries consistent with legal principles, and the need for some SEAL capabilities to filter back into Coast Guard SOF, USSOCOM should develop protocols to augment SEAL Teams and Special Boat Teams with Coast Guard SOF in the way that Air Force combat controllers augment ODAs. Such augmentation will necessarily be based on extremely high operational competency and interpersonal skills. At least in the beginning, personnel augmenting NSW elements should be the most selectively

screened. A successful NSW augmentation program would give the president and the attorney general additional options to exercise maritime law enforcement authority under Titles 14, 18, or 46, *U.S. Code*.

GLOSSARY

Civil Affairs. Designated Active and Reserve component forces and units organized, trained, and equipped specifically to conduct civil affairs activities and to support civil-military operations. Also called CA. (JP 1-02)

Civil Affairs Activities. Activities performed or supported by civil affairs that (1) enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities in areas where military forces are present; and (2) involve application of civil affairs functional specialty skills, in areas normally the responsibility of civil government, to enhance conduct of civil-military operations. (JP 1-02)

Clandestine Operation. An operation sponsored or conducted by governmental departments or agencies in such a way as to assure secrecy or concealment. A clandestine operation differs from a covert operation in that emphasis is placed on concealment of the operation rather than on concealment of the identity of the sponsor. In special operations, an activity may be both covert and clandestine and may focus equally on operational considerations and intelligence-related activities. See also covert operation. (JP 3-05.1)

Coast Guard Special Purpose Forces. The author uses this term to describe collectively the Coast Guard EMSST/SRT, TACLETs, LEDETs, MSSTs, PSUs, ITD, SMTC, HITRON, and National Strike Force. Special purpose forces differ from Coast Guard multimission units in that they are organized, trained, and equipped to accomplish a much narrower mission set than Coast Guard cutters, boat stations and air stations, and most focus on the maritime security role.

Combat Search And Rescue. A specific task performed by rescue forces to effect the recovery of distressed personnel during war or military operations other than war. Also called CSAR. (JP 1-02)

Counterterrorism. Operations that include the offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, preempt, and respond to terrorism. Also called CT. (JP 1-02)

Covert Operation. An operation that is so planned and executed as to conceal the identity of or permit plausible denial by the sponsor. A covert operation differs from a clandestine operation in that emphasis is placed on concealment of identity of sponsor rather than on concealment of the operation. (JP 1-02)

Danger Close. In close air support, artillery, mortar, and naval gunfire support fires, it is the term included in the method of engagement segment of a call for fire which indicates that friendly forces are within close proximity of the target. The close proximity distance is determined by the weapon and munition fired.

Enhanced Maritime Safety And Security Team. Coast Guard EMSSTs support the Lead Federal Agency, Combatant Commander, or Coast Guard Incident Commander by providing a rapid-response, direct-action team for opposed boardings in ports

and the maritime approaches. Also called EMSST, Security Response Team, or SRT. (SRT focus group)

Foreign Internal Defense. Participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency. Also called FID. (JP 3-05)

Homeland Defense. Protection of US sovereignty, territory, domestic population, and critical defense infrastructure against external threats and aggression. The Department of Defense is responsible for homeland defense. (*Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support*)

Homeland Security. A concerted national effort to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur. The Department of Homeland Security is the lead federal agency for homeland security. (*National Strategy for Homeland Security*)

Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace. An analytical methodology employed to reduce uncertainties concerning the enemy, environment, and terrain for all types of operations. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace builds an extensive database for each potential area in which a unit may be required to operate. The database is then analyzed in detail to determine the impact of the enemy, environment, and terrain on operations and presents it in graphic form. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace is a continuing process. Also called IPB. (JP 1-02)

Law Enforcement Detachment. The Coast Guard officially established the LEDET program in 1982. The first LEDETs operated directly under Groups and Districts, where they served as law enforcement specialists, conducting training and local operations. In 1986, Public Law (P.L.) 99-570 specifically authorized the establishment of billets for active duty USCG personnel to carry out drug interdiction operations from naval surface vessels provided by DOD. Since *Posse Comitatus* strictly prohibits DOD personnel from directly engaging in law enforcement activities, LEDETs were tasked with operating aboard USN ships to investigate contacts and conduct boardings in accordance with USCG policy and directives. In accordance with P.L. 99-570, LEDETs were to deploy on U.S. Navy (USN) "ships of opportunity", transiting or operating in areas frequently used by illegal drug traffickers. In 1988, P.L. 100-456 made it a requirement that USCG law enforcement personnel be assigned to each appropriate USN surface vessel that transits a drug interdiction area. The 1989 National Defense Authorization Act designated the DOD as the lead agency of the Federal Government for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime trafficking of illegal drugs into the United States or any of its Commonwealths, Territories, or Possessions. In turn, the Coast Guard was designated the lead agency for the interdiction and

apprehension of illegal drug traffickers on the high seas. In order to meet these statutory responsibilities, the DOD deploys surface assets to drug interdiction areas, making ships available for direct support of USCG law enforcement operations (G-OPL via www.uscg.mil). Coast Guard LEDETs are subordinate units of TACLETs. Standing LEDETs number seven to nine people, but ad hoc teams may be formed with two or more people. LEDETs also conduct maritime interdiction operations pursuant to UN resolutions, foreign internal defense, and any other mission that requires specialized maritime law enforcement skills. Also called LEDET.

Line of Communications. A route, either land, water, and/or air, that connects an operating military force with a base of operations and along which supplies and military forces move. Also called LOC. (JP 1-02)

Maritime Domain. All areas and things of, on, under, relating to, adjacent to, or bordering on a sea, ocean, or other navigable waterway, including all maritime related activities, infrastructure, people, cargo, and vessels and other conveyances. (NSPD-41/HSPD-13)

Maritime Domain Awareness. The effective understanding of anything associated with the global maritime domain that could impact the security, safety, economy, or environment of the United States. Also called MDA. (HSPD-13/NSPD-41)

Maritime Safety and Security Team. MSSTs were created in direct response to the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, and are a part of the Department of Homeland Security's layered strategy directed at protecting our seaports and waterways. MSSTs provide waterborne and shoreside antiterrorism force protection for strategic shipping, high interest vessels and critical infrastructure. MSSTs are a quick response force capable of rapid, nationwide deployment via air, ground or sea transportation in response to changing threat conditions and evolving Maritime Homeland Security (MHS) mission requirements. Multi-mission capability facilitates augmentation for other selected Coast Guard missions. MSST personnel receive training in advanced boat tactics and antiterrorism force protection at the Special Missions Training Center located at Camp Lejeune, NC (www.uscg.mil).

Naval Coastal Warfare. Coastal sea control, harbor defense, and port security, executed both in coastal areas outside the United States in support of national policy and in the United States as part of this Nation's defense. Also called NCW. (JP 3-10)

Naval Special Warfare. A designated naval warfare specialty that conducts operations in the coastal, riverine, and maritime environments. Naval special warfare emphasizes small, flexible, mobile units operating under, on, and from the sea. These operations are characterized by stealth, speed, and precise, violent application of force. Also called NSW. (JP 3-05)

Naval Special Warfare Forces. Those Active and Reserve Component Navy forces designated by the Secretary of Defense that are specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. Also called NSW forces or NAVSOF. (JP 3-05.2)

Port Security Unit. Coast Guard Port Security Units (PSUs) are [company-sized] Coast Guard units staffed primarily with selected reservists. They provide waterborne and limited land-based protection for shipping and critical port facilities both INCONUS and in theater. PSUs can deploy within 24 hours and establish operations within 96 hours after initial call-up. Each PSU has transportable boats equipped with dual outboard motors, and support equipment to ensure mobility and sustainability for up to 30 days. Every PSU is staffed by a combination of reserve and active duty personnel. PSUs require specialized training not available elsewhere in the Coast Guard. Coast Guard Reservists assigned to Port Security Units must complete a Basic Skills Course at the Special Missions Training Center in Camp Lejeune, NC. In addition to their most recent support of homeland security operations around the country, PSUs were deployed to the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Storm in 1990, to Haiti during Operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, back to the Middle East to provide vital force protection for U.S. Navy assets following the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, and again to protect Iraqi critical infrastructure and other operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003 to the present (G-OPD via www.uscg.mil).

Posse Comitatus Act (18 USC 1385). A Reconstruction-era criminal law proscribing use of Army (later, Air Force) to "execute the laws" except where expressly authorized by Constitution or Congress. Limit on use of military for civilian law enforcement also applies to Navy by regulation. In December 1981, additional laws were enacted (codified 10 USC 371-78) clarifying permissible military assistance to civilian law enforcement agencies--including the Coast Guard--especially in combating drug smuggling into the United States. Posse Comitatus clarifications emphasize supportive and technical assistance (e.g., use of facilities, vessels, aircraft, intelligence, tech aid, surveillance, etc.) while generally prohibiting direct participation of DOD personnel in law enforcement (e.g., search, seizure, and arrests). For example, Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) serve aboard Navy vessels and perform the actual boardings of interdicted suspect drug smuggling vessels and, if needed, arrest their crews). Positive results have been realized especially from Navy ship/aircraft involvement (G-OPL via www.uscg.mil).

Security Assistance. Group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, as amended, or other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives. Also called SA (JP 1-02).

Security Response Team (SRT). Coast Guard SRTs support the Combatant Commander, Lead Federal Agency, or Coast Guard Incident Commander by providing a rapid-response, direct-action team for opposed boardings in ports and the maritime approaches. Also known as Enhanced Maritime Safety and Security Team or EMSST.

Service Component Command. A command consisting of the Service component commander and all those Service forces, such as individuals, units, detachments, organizations, and installations under that command, including the support forces that have been assigned to a combatant command or further assigned to a subordinate unified command or joint task force. (JP 0-2)

Special Boat Team. US Navy forces organized, trained, and equipped to conduct or support special operations with patrol boats or other combatant craft. Also called SBT. (JP 1-02)

Special Forces. US Army forces organized, trained, and equipped to conduct special operations with an emphasis on unconventional warfare capabilities. Also called SF. (JP 1-02)

Special Mission Unit. A generic term to represent a group of operations and support personnel from designated organizations that is task-organized to perform highly classified activities. Also called SMU. (JP 3-05.1)

Special Nuclear Material. Defined by Title I of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 as plutonium, uranium-233, or uranium enriched in the isotopes uranium-233 or uranium-235 (<http://www.nrc.gov/materials/sp-nucmaterials.html>).

Special Operations. Operations conducted in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to achieve military, diplomatic, informational, and/or economic objectives employing military capabilities for which there is no broad conventional force requirement. These operations often require covert, clandestine, or low visibility capabilities. Special operations are applicable across the range of military operations. They can be conducted independently or in conjunction with operations of conventional forces or other government agencies and may include operations through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces. Special operations differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, mode of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets. Also called SO. (JP 3-05)

Special Operations Command. A subordinate unified or other joint command established by a joint force commander to plan, coordinate, conduct, and support joint special operations within the joint force commander's assigned operational area. Also called SOC. See also special operations. (JP 3-05)

Special Operations Forces. Those Active and Reserve Component forces of the Military Services designated by the Secretary of Defense and specifically organized, trained, and equipped to conduct and support special operations. Also called SOF. (JP 1-02)

Tactical Law Enforcement Team (TACLET). Coast Guard TACLETs as organized today are the command and support elements responsible for six to nine standing LEDETs. TACLETs report to either the Atlantic or Pacific Area Commander (3-star).

Terrorism. The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological. (JP 1-02)

Unconventional Warfare. A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported, and directed in varying degrees by an external source. It includes, but is not limited to, guerrilla warfare, subversion, sabotage, intelligence activities, and unconventional assisted recovery. Also called UW (JP 3-05).

Unconventional Warfare Forces. US forces having an existing unconventional warfare capability.

Weapons Of Mass Destruction. Weapons that are capable of a high order of destruction and/or of being used in such a manner as to destroy large numbers of people. Weapons of mass destruction can be high explosives or nuclear, biological, chemical, and radiological weapons, but exclude the means of transporting or propelling the weapon where such means is a separable and divisible part of the weapon. Also called WMD. (JP 1-02)

APPENDIX A

A NOTIONAL COAST GUARD SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND AND SUPPORTING CT CONSTRUCTS

This organization is adapted from USSOCOM Service Component Commands.

The Commander must be a flag officer to participate in the Coast Guard Strategic Leadership Counsel and to be considered a peer with the other services' equivalents.

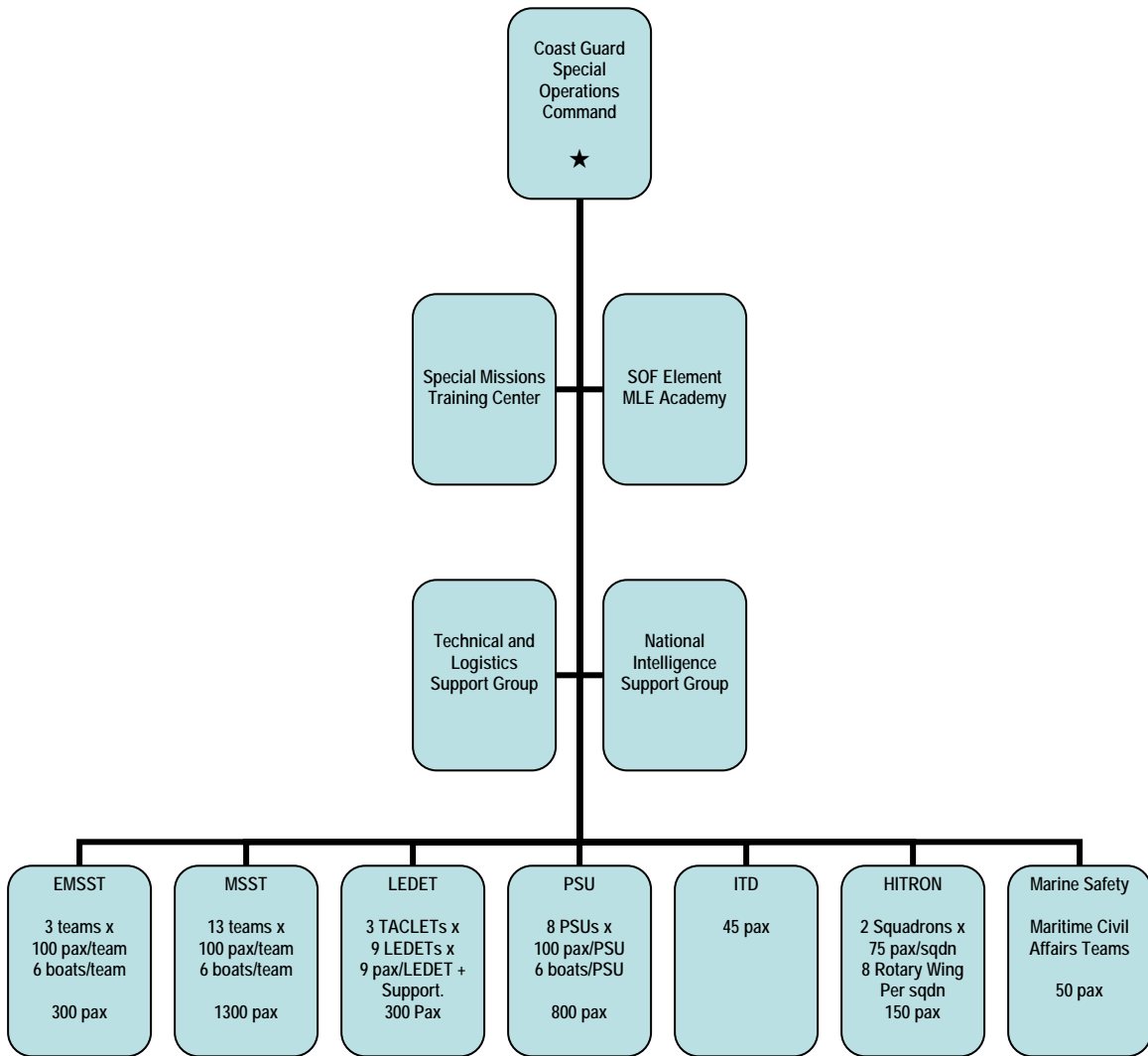


Figure 8. Notional Coast Guard Special Operations Command

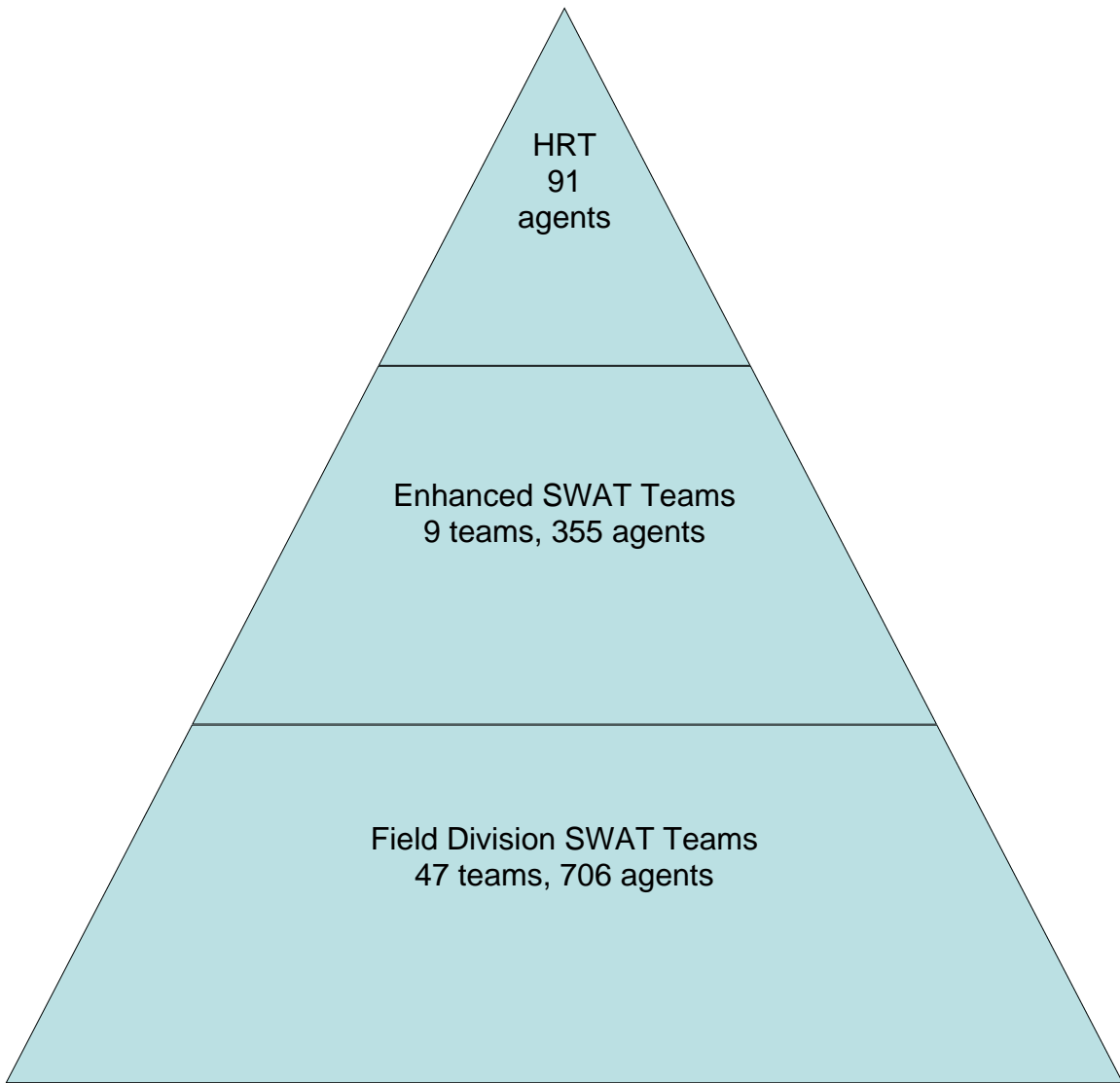


Figure 9. “FBI Tactical Assets”
Source: 1997 GAO/NSIAD-97-254 *Combating Terrorism*

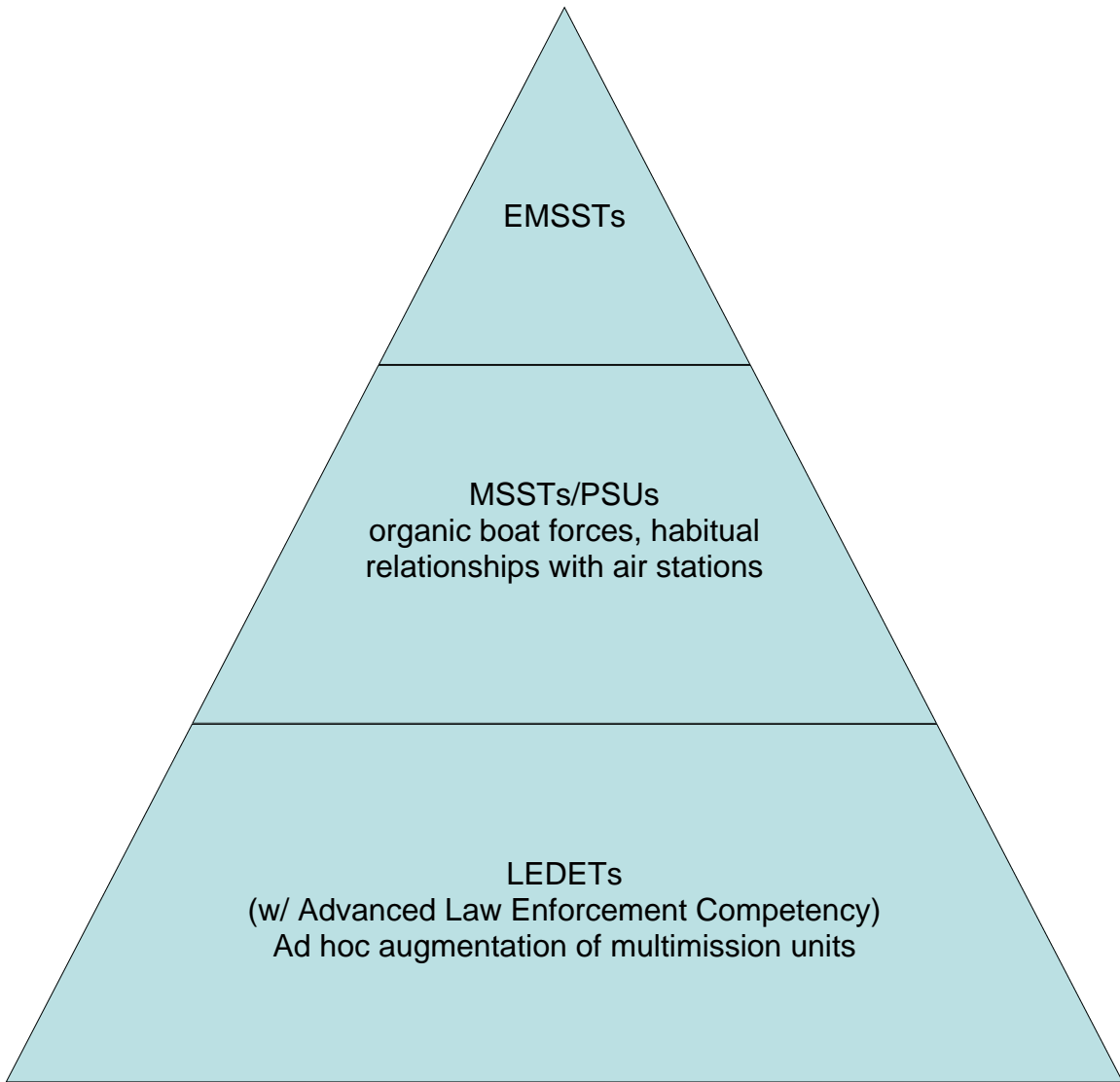


Figure 10. Notional Coast Guard Stratification for CT Resourcing

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The author found much of the best information on Coast Guard operations in photographs and captions. Figures 11 to 41 are included for those who may not be familiar with Coast Guard operations. Unless otherwise noted, all photographs and captions were found on the Coast Guard's visual imagery database at <http://cgvi.uscg.mil>. Some captions were edited for clarity, format, and accuracy.



Figure 11. Bolivia (1 November 1992)--A six-man boat team composed of personnel from the USCG, USDEA, and Bolivian National Police insert by helicopter into the Amazon Basin for counterdrug operations.

Source: USCG photo by PA1 Dave Silva



Figure 12. Caribbean Sea (29 January 2004)-- A Coast Guard HITRON MH-68A helicopter, embarked on the Tampa, located a 45-foot "go-fast" boat carrying cocaine.
Source: USCG photo,
<http://www.d7publicaffairs.com/>



Figure 13. Caribbean Sea (3 September 1999)--Warning shots from a HITRON helicopter's machine gun rip across the ocean in front of fleeing smugglers.
Source: Coast Guard photo



Figure 14. Miami, FL (12 April 1999)-- Another of HITRON's tight shot groups can be seen on this engine disabled on the move by an aviation gunner using a .50-caliber precision rifle.
Source: USCG photo by PA2 Jeff Hall.



Figure 15. Camp Lejeune, NC (5 March 2003)--Special Missions Training Center students get a taste of the OTH-RHIB's capabilities as they practice high speed boat tactics to chase down an OPFOR boat full of instructors.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Zachary A. Crawford.



Figure 16. Caribbean Sea (8 October 2004)--With guns drawn, Cutter *Gallatin*'s boarding team approaches suspected smugglers on a 40-foot "go-fast" boat later found to be carrying 3,880 pounds of cocaine.

Source: U.S. Coast Guard photo by PA2 Donnie Brzuska, <http://www.d7publicaffairs.com>



Figure 17. Caribbean Sea (4 October 2004)--Having removed the suspects and cocaine, Coast Guard gunners set ablaze a "go-fast" found laden with drugs.

Source: USCG photo by PA2 Donnie Brzuska



Figure 18. Honolulu, HI (7 January 1994)
Coast Guard Strike Team members enter Motor Vessel *Astra Peak* to determine the extent of the pesticide spill.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Cameron Hardy.
<http://cgvi.uscg.mil> and
<http://www.rivermedia.com/>



Figure 19. New York, NY (30 December 2003)--In response to the mayor's request for support during an increased terror alert, Petty Officer Brett Patterson mans an M-240 machine gun for a homeland security patrol around New York City.
Source: USCG photo PA2 Mike Hvozda



Figure 20. Miami, FL (17 September 1999)—A LEDET offloads five tons of cocaine from the 250-foot Panamanian Motor Vessel *Castor*.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Selvia Olivera



Figure 21. New York, NY (24 September 2001)-- Atlantic Strike Team monitors air quality and coordinate equipment and personnel wash-downs amid the rubble of the 11 September World Trade Center attacks.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 William Barry



Figure 22. Houston International Airport (18 February 2005)--Petty Officer Don Warden and his partner, Cora, exercise MSST 91104's explosive detection capability. Source: Coast Guard photo by PA3 Andrew Kendrick, <http://www.d8publicaffairs.com>.



Figure 23. San Francisco, CA (8 October 2004)--MSST 91103 from San Pedro, California trains to seize control of non-compliant motor vessels entering or transiting U.S. ports, waterways, and coasts. Source: Coast Guard photo by PA3 Brian Leshak.



Figure 24. Los Angeles, CA. (8 April 2004)--MSST 91103 detachment en route Catalina Island for M-240B gun qualifications. Source: USCG Photo by PA3 Dave Hardsty



Figure 25. Brunswick, GA (4 June 2004)--Chief Warrant Officer Mike Spute, USCG, hangs on while the boat moves him to the next bridge support. Divers from Coast Guard MSST 91108 and Navy EOD Unit 2 inspected infrastructure for explosive devices prior to the G-8 Summit on Sea Island. USCG photo by PA3 Robert Nash



Figure 26. New York, NY (19 September 2002)--Seen here patrolling the Hudson River, MSSTs are C-130-deployable units with specialized training and capabilities. Source: USCG photo by PA1 Tom Sperduto





Figure 27. Camp Lejeune, NC (24 June 2002)--Members of MSST 91101 fire non-lethal munitions at a mannequin simulating the operator of a “go-fast” boat.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Scott Whitney



Figure 28. Los Angeles, Calif. (2 February 2005)--A shooter from MSST 91103 fast-ropes to the deck of Cutter *George Cobb* for training.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Dave Hardesty



Figure 29. Port Au Prince, Haiti (23 April 2004)--A boat from MSST 91104 speeds along the Haitian coast hunting for illegal activity such as drug smuggling. U.S. Coast Guard forces have patrolled these waters since March 2004 in support of Multinational Interim Force-Haiti stability operations.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Andrew Kendrick



Figure 30. Port Au Prince, Haiti (16 April 2004)--USCG Petty Officer 3rd Class Robert Orchard (r) plays an attacker for Lindor Malachie (l), Haitian Coast Guard, who has just been pepper sprayed for training. Orchard is a law enforcement petty officer and medical corpsman for MSST 91104, which is training members of the Haitian Coast Guard.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Andrew Kendrick



Figure 31. Umm Qasr, Iraq (11 March 2004)--Royal Marine Rory MacPherson, 22, (l) and DC2 Brian Callon, 33, (c) of USCG LEDET 203 plan to search a 250-foot container ship suspected of oil smuggling while a member of the newly formed Iraqi Riverine Patrol Service (IRPS) assists with shipboard security. Source: USCG photo by PA1 Matthew Belson



Figure 32. Arabian Gulf (7 December 2003)--U.S. Coast Guard LEDET 405 member, BM3 Christopher Jones, 24, (l), teaches combatives to members of the Bahrain and U.S. Navies during training held on the U.S.S. *Philippine Sea* (CG 58). Source: USCG photo by PA2 Matthew Belson.



Figure 33. Umm Qasr, Iraq (20 April 2003--Members of Coast Guard Port Security Unit 313 patrol the Port of Umm Qasr, Iraq. PSUs helped to secure Iraqi ports, waterways, and oil terminals in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and since have conducted combined operations with UK 22 Special Air Service. Source: USCG photo by PA1 Tom Sperduto.



Figure 34. Northern Arabian Gulf, Iraq (20 May 2003)--U.S. Coast Guard LEDET 203, operating from USS *Chinook* (PC-9), query and board vessels in the Arabian Gulf to check for illegal weapons and fleeing members of the Saddam Hussein regime. Source: USCG photo by PA1 John Gaffney



Figure 35. Camp Pendleton, CA (11 December 2004)--A member of PSU 311, Coast Guard Petty Officer Jose Espinoza, from Santa Tecla, El Salvador prepares for a patrol at the School of Infantry.
Source: USCG photo by PA3 Dave Hardesty.

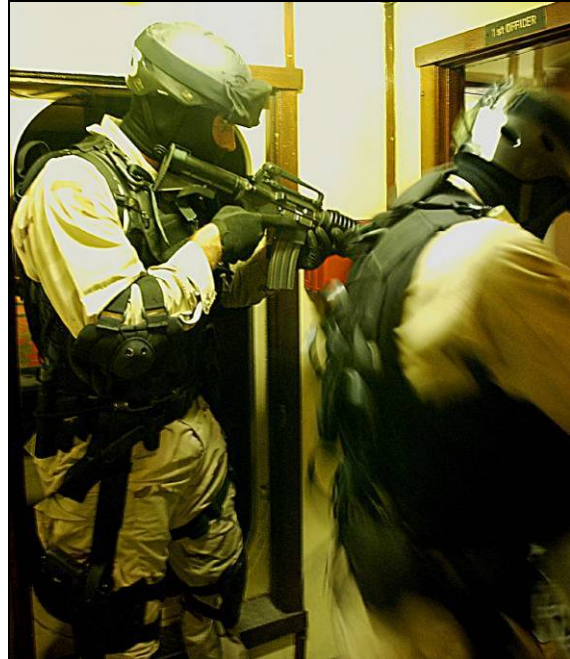


Figure 36. Arabian Gulf (31 December 2003)--Members of the U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 405 search a merchant vessel for possible terrorists and hidden compartments used to smuggle Iraqi oil.
Source: USCG photo by PA1 Matthew Belson.



Figure 37. Northern Arabian Gulf (7 March 2003)--Petty Officer 1st Class Timothy A. Beard, 36, of Port Security Unit 313 stands watch on Iraq's Mina al Bakr oil terminal in the Northern Arabian Gulf.
Source: USCG photo by PA1 Tom Sperduto



Figure 38. Gulf Of Aden, North Africa (17 March 2005)--A helicopter from HMS *Invincible* and small boats from USCGC *Munro* cover the Coast Guard boarding team as it seizes custody of a hijacked Thai fishing vessel, Somali hijackers, and automatic weapons.
Source: USCG photo by OS2 Cleavon Roberts



Figure 39. U.S. East Coast (Summer 2004)-- U.S. Coast Guard Security Response Team One (SRT-1), an enhanced MSST, conducts an opposed boarding exercise during work-ups for the Republican National Convention and Presidential Security Detail. Source: USCG photo provided by SRT-1.



Figure 40. U.S. East Coast (Summer 2004)-- Naval Special Warfare Forces have helped the SRT to learn the tactics, techniques, and procedures appropriate for opposed boardings. Source: USCG photo provided by SRT-1.



Figure 41. Virginia (Summer 2004)--Speed, shock, and discriminate use of force are essential components of counterterrorism operations. Operators must be fit, mature, adaptive, and of sound judgment--not by accident, but by design. Source: Coast Guard photo provided by SRT-1.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

Included here are the texts of in-person, telephonic, and electronic interviews conducted as part of the research. Those interviewed either submitted their responses in written form or had the opportunity to review summaries of their interviews.

Department of Homeland Security

Kathleen Kraninger, Assistant to the Secretary for Policy (2002-2005)
Senate Homeland Security Governmental Affairs Committee Staff
(April 2005--)

At the time of initial contact, Ms. Kraninger served as the Chief of Staff. During my research, she began her service on the staff of the Senate Homeland Security Governmental Affairs Committee. Following are my notes from our telephone interview, dated 19 April 2005.

Question. In your professional estimation, would you define the major threats to U.S. maritime security as:

Predominantly national or transnational?

Predominantly conventional or unconventional?

Answer: Non-state actors.

Question. Does maritime terrorism within U.S. maritime jurisdiction constitute a threat to national security?

Answer: Yes, by smuggling nuclear and radiological devices through ports or targeting ports, small boat attacks (USS COLE style), and divers. Also, chem/bio attacks can be mounted using materials that the target population has brought to the scene. They don't always have to be imported.

Question. If so, is it a threat your organization is concerned about?

Answer: Yes, both DHS and Congress are concerned. Much of the effort since 9/11 has been “in the weeds.” We need more strategic thinking on homeland security issues.

Question. If so, what resources, if any, are you dedicating to the problem?

Answer: Deployment of radiation detection equipment (but not enough and need more overseas or en route rather than at domestic ports), TWIC/access controls, CSI, CTPAT, and supply chain security, maritime security regime under MTSA/ISPS, Maritime Domain Awareness, Deepwater.

Background. The U.S. and other nations have structured their military counterterrorism (CT) forces as elite special operations forces (SOF) with the best people, training, and equipment, e.g., US Army Special Forces, US Navy SEALs, and British Special Air & Boat Services. Similarly, American law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels have established Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams to counter terrorism, drug trafficking, and other high-risk missions in the domestic realm.

Question. Do these examples offer useful models to develop new Special Operations Forces?

Answer: Yes, we should look more closely at this.

Background. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 currently prohibits active component DOD forces from enforcing law on the civil population of the United States absent a presidential declaration or order.

Question. Do you see the administration, Congress, and the public as willing to overturn Posse Comitatus and provide DOD Special Operations Forces (Army Special Forces & Navy SEALs) the blanket/recurring legal authority to conduct offensive or defensive counterterrorism operations within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S.?

Answer. Using the military is not the way the United States wants to go.

Question. Given a post-9/11 maritime security threat within the maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the U.S., is it better/faster/more effective to use forces with standing law enforcement authority—sufficiently organized, trained, and equipped—or to rely on a legal mechanism that requires presidential-level coordination to involve DOD special operations forces?

Answer: The Coast Guard, with both military and law enforcement authority, is well positioned to ask for this mission. The EMSST concept should be further developed. NSSEs are fairly rare, so the cost/benefit analysis on that alone may not work. Also, what is the career path for these people? Is this force sustainable?

Question. What if we used them overseas as well as at home, either in direct support of military operations or in foreign internal defense?

Answer: As far as I know, there has not been a strategic look at using MSSTs or EMSSTs for overseas missions such as Foreign Internal Defense. Building the capacity of friendly nations is a major concern in government and it has a lot of support. On the other hand, it would be controversial to use homeland security forces abroad because then you have lost that capacity at home. It might be done on a reimbursable basis. Government is applying resources to build overseas capacity. Who we send to do the training also sends a message. It should not be DOD doing all the training.

Background. One of the key concepts of the *National Security Strategy* is to “[defend] the United States, the American people, and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders” (6).

Question. Is it possible and feasible to destroy 100% of the transnational terrorist threat with overseas, offensive, military operations? In spite of the GWOT, does there remain a credible, maritime terrorist threat to the U.S.?

Answer: No.

Background. The United States must safeguard 95,000 miles of coastline and 3.3 million square miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which includes much of the nation’s critical infrastructure for the energy sector.

Question. If the U.S. received a credible, specific threat of an imminent, maritime terrorist event involving WMD in or via the marine transportation system, the territorial sea, or the EEZ, who should be the lead federal agency for maritime security response? Who would counter the threat? Is it a law enforcement matter, a military matter, or both?

Answer: The Coast Guard is arguably best positioned to be the lead federal agency for maritime security response. FBI is arguing for it. ICE Air & Maritime Ops also wants to play.

Question. What keeps you awake at night?

Answer: No single threat scenario keeps me awake, BUT...another attack is coming for sure. Prevention is worthy of attention, but when the attack comes, what is the interagency response capability, the communications? What is the psychology of the country? Are Americans ready to see the next 9/11? I am reassured because we have great people on the ground. The solution may not come from Washington. The first responders have better training now than before 9/11.

Michael F. White, Jr., Directorate of
Border and Transportation Security

Commander Michael White, USCG (ret.) currently serves on the DHS Staff in the Border and Transportation Security Directorate. His portfolio includes traditional customs, immigration, and border issues, but not the Coast Guard, since the Commandant of the Coast Guard reports directly to the Secretary. Mr. White gave thoughts from both his Coast Guard and BTS perspectives in this electronic interview dated 13 April 2005.

Position/Authority and Dates Held: Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Station Cape Disappointment 1995-1998; Commander, US Military Group, Trinidad and Tobago 1998-2001; Deputy Commander, Group Seattle 2001-2004.

Question. In your professional estimation, would you define the major threats to U.S. maritime security as:

Predominantly national or transnational?

Predominantly conventional or unconventional?

Question. Does maritime terrorism within U.S. maritime jurisdiction constitute a threat to national security?

Answer: Yes...but so does Maritime Terrorism ANYWHERE.

Question. If so, is it a threat your organization is concerned about?

Answer: Yes.

Question. If so, what resources, if any, are you dedicating to the problem?

Answer: DHS/BTS is focusing efforts of its agencies to detect maritime terrorist activity through information screening and manned/unmanned surveillance of the border regions.

Background. The U.S. and other nations have structured their military counterterrorism (CT) forces as elite special operations forces (SOF) with the best people, training, and equipment, e.g., US Army Special Forces, US Navy SEALs, and British Special Air and Boat Services. Similarly, American law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels have established Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams to counter terrorism, drug trafficking, and other high-risk missions in the domestic realm.

Question. Do these examples offer useful models to develop new Special Operations Forces?

Answer: Potentially. However, the organizational construct of police SWAT teams and the DOD SOF units, their manner of routine employment, alert schedule, and training schedules need to be assessed against the USCG culture, DHS resource environment, and the hierarchy of needs for day to day missions within the Coast Guard.

Background. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 currently prohibits active component DOD forces from enforcing law on the civil population of the United States absent a presidential declaration or order.

Question. Do you see the administration, Congress, and the public as willing to overturn Posse Comitatus and provide DOD Special Operations Forces (Army Special Forces and Navy

SEALs) the blanket/recurring legal authority to conduct offensive or defensive counterterrorism operations within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S.?

Answer. The *DOD Strategy for Civil Support* carefully skirts the intent of *Posse Comitatus*. Law enforcement and national defense are not the same. I believe DOD SOF units could be employed to counter terrorists inside the U.S. without violating the act. A more limiting factor is the unavailability of DOD SOF units due to their OCONUS responsibilities.

Question. Given a post-9/11 maritime security threat within the maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the U.S., is it better/faster/more effective to use forces with standing law enforcement authority--sufficiently organized, trained, and equipped--or to rely on a legal mechanism that requires presidential-level coordination to involve DOD special operations forces?

Answer: Only if their operational capabilities are truly comparable.

Background. In *The National Security Strategy*, President Bush has said that the Global War on Terror “will be fought on many fronts against a particularly elusive enemy over an extended period of time” (11). Given current and projected force levels, it is highly likely that the bulk of the national counterterrorism force will remain decisively engaged overseas, and that their presence in the U.S. will be limited to rest, refit, and reconstitution for further overseas deployments. Moreover, the force remaining in the United States will not be a robust force postured and ready to conduct counterterrorism operations within the United States.

Question. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes, see above.

Background. One of the key concepts of *The National Security Strategy* is to “[defend] the United States, the American people, and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders” (6).

Question. Is it possible and feasible to destroy 100 percent of the transnational terrorist threat with overseas, offensive, military operations? In spite of the GWOT, does there remain a credible, maritime terrorist threat to the U.S.?

Answer: No.

Background. The United States must safeguard 95,000 miles of coastline and 3.3 million square miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which includes much of the nation's critical infrastructure for the energy sector.

Question. If the U.S. received a credible, specific threat of an imminent, maritime terrorist event involving WMD in or via the marine transportation system, the territorial sea, or the EEZ, who should be the lead federal agency for maritime security response? Who would counter the threat? Is it a law enforcement matter, a military matter, or both?

Answer:

1. It depends. Lead DHS agency for Maritime Security is USCG. Lead Federal Agency for Terrorism Investigations is FBI. Maritime Homeland Defense is DOD's job, and Border Security belongs to CBP. Current efforts to craft *The National Strategy for Maritime Security* seek to determine the answer to this question.

2. The counter to the threat would be based on its nature...whether it needs to be stopped in the offshore approaches, interdicted, or controlled during entry.

3. It is a national security issue.

Question. If you expect the U.S. Coast Guard to respond to such an event, and assuming that a WMD event is important enough to stop regardless of the level of opposition mounted by terrorists, are opposed boardings a mission within the capability of the larger Coast Guard forces -i.e., can cutter or station boarding teams develop and maintain an effective counterterrorism assault capability and still perform their primary missions, including other homeland security activities (MARSEC requirements), law enforcement, and rescue?

Answer: Cutter, yes...but at the cost of other missions. Stations? No. Are "opposed boardings" a realistic scenario?

Question. Are noncompliant and opposed boardings mainly within the realm of specialized Coast Guard forces such as LEDETs, PSUs, MSSTs, or EMSSTs?

Answer: No. They could also be conducted by the VBST's located at several major ports. Arguably, the VBST's who do not deploy, operate boats, work with dogs, divers, or Right of Visit boardings, might be the resource with the most commercial vessel expertise and time to train up. Their single focus is boardings (except those corrupted/co-opted into the "Sea Marshal" mentality).

Question. In your estimation, are opposed boardings a current Coast Guard capability or is there a capability gap that needs to be corrected? I.e., if you accept the Navy SEAL approach to opposed boardings as worthy of emulation within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S., are any current Coast Guard forces the equals of Navy SEALs in terms of their opposed boarding capability? Or is there a gap to which we must apply resources? How would you organize the effort if tasked to do so?

Answer: Definitely NOT a current CG capability and not a high priority gap. How many have we had to pass off to DOD? No Coast Guard units are the equivalent of SEALs...no matter what they say. Possibly. Instead of 14 MSST's we need four EMSST-like units...that spend 300 days a year training and the other 60 days on an alert status. These units would NOT be available for routine "cop on the beat" patrols or high-visibility, low-threat events like Tall Ships, SeaFair, whatever.

Question. If you do not see the Coast Guard as the primary response force for an active maritime terrorist threat within U.S. maritime jurisdiction, then what service or agency should be designated lead federal agency for maritime security response? Do they have an effective capability? What does it look like? Where is it?

Answer: Define "Maritime Security Response." Is that an "opposed boarding?" Is it bad guys on a cruise ship who we don't want to enter the U.S.? Is it a container of concern on a cargo

vessel otherwise engaged in legitimate trade? Is it an unknown vessel approaching the U.S. and not communicating? Why bother boarding? Why not just destroy the vessel if it's under the control of the bad guys?

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict

Colonel David McCracken, SF, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Acting Director, Special Operations
and Counterterrorism

Colonel McCracken, USA (ret.) currently serves in a civilian capacity. The author interviewed Mr. McCracken because of his expertise in SOF policy and the visibility he has on SOF issues. Following are the notes from the interview, conducted 25 January 2005 in the Pentagon.

Mr. McCracken said that the predominant threats to the United States today are transnational and unconventional in nature, and that maritime security was a serious concern. ASD/SO-LIC has the lead for overseas counterterrorism using SOF, while ASD/HLD has the lead for DOD policy on domestic counterterrorism operations. Mr. McCracken views federal law enforcement agencies (including the Coast Guard) as having the clear lead role in domestic counterterrorism, with DOD SOF supporting in only worst-case scenarios. Mr. McCracken referred me to the key players at ASD/HLD involved in the Coast Guard's EMSST project, Mr. T. K. Custer, Mr. Rudy Cohen, and Mr. Chris Connell. These are the same people the author was referred to by Mr. Mike Kichman at Coast Guard Headquarters (G-OPC).

Mr. McCracken supports the enhanced maritime counterterrorism concept advanced by the Coast Guard within the context of domestic operations, i.e., homeland security. The concept as he sees it is that DOD SOF focus on the problem as far away from the homeland as possible, where the terrorist threat gathers. Federal law enforcement agencies focus on imminent threats to

the homeland. Somewhere in between, there is a hand-off issue, perhaps at the outer limits of NORTHCOM's area of responsibility.

Mr. McCracken said there is no interest in his office to amend Posse Comitatus to allow DOD SOF to operate domestically without a requirement to get presidential approval. He said he was unaware of any such efforts by any other organization.

When asked about overseas requirements for maritime security-related foreign internal defense (FID) in order to deny safe havens for terrorists, Mr. McCracken said we need to apply the same combination of forces that we use for our complete, integrated maritime defense package at home, including brown-water Naval forces, Naval Special Warfare (SEALs/SWCCs), and U.S. Coast Guard forces.

When asked whether there ought to be a Coast Guard component of the U.S. Special Operations Command using the same model as the Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC) or the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), Mr. McCracken said it was an interesting question that he had never considered before. After some thought, he said that it was a good idea, but might be "a bridge too far" due to the complex command and support relationships that would be required, since the USCG does not report to DOD. In order for it to work, USSOCOM needs directive authority over its component commands and the forces there assigned.

When asked how the Coast Guard might achieve CT competency at the same level as DOD CT forces without the relationships enjoyed by NSWC or USASOC with USSOCOM, Mr. McCracken said the author had identified a key issue. To overcome that challenge, he suggested a robust exercise program along the lines of the 1999 West Wind exercise, a comprehensive WMD scenario that involved 2000 participants from DOD, FBI, LAPD, LASD, and other agencies. Mr. McCracken said that America needs an equally robust exercise program abroad, and pointed to the Joint Interagency Coordination Group at the combatant commander level as a venue that

could be resourced by respective agencies to develop such a program. He also mentioned that the embassy country teams need to manage security assistance programs to meet the needs of their respective countries. On several occasions, Mr. McCracken mentioned the critical need for an “integrated consortium” of capabilities working to defeat the terrorist threat at home and abroad. He suggested the possibility of drawing on the JIATF concept used successfully in counterdrug operations.

Mr. McCracken is a veteran of TF Black (Army SOF component), Operation Just Cause, Panama, 1989, but he was unable to comment on TF White’s operations.

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense
for Homeland Defense

T. K. Custer, Deputy Assistant Secretary
of Defense for Homeland Defense

Mr. Custer provided the author with a telephone interview. Following are the notes from the interview, dated 17 March 2005.

Question. In your professional estimation, would you define the major threats to U.S. maritime security as:

Predominantly national or transnational?

Predominantly conventional or unconventional?

Answer: The term of art in use now is state and non-state actors. Non-state actors clearly represent the gravest current threat, but we also must remain vigilant about potential state adversaries in the future.

Question. Does maritime terrorism within U.S. maritime jurisdiction constitute a threat to national security? If so, is it a threat your organization is concerned about? If so, what resources, if any, are you dedicating to the problem?

Answer: There are two primary maritime threat vectors: one being an act of terrorism perpetrated in the maritime domain or aboard a maritime platform, and the other being the use of the maritime transportation system to ship WMD into an inland area using intermodal transport. The concept we are working on divides the world into three zones: “the forward regions,” where DOD presence is the rule and Coast Guard presence is the exception, “the approaches,” where there is a more even mix of DOD and USCG capability, and “the homeland,” where Coast Guard presence is the rule and DOD presence is the exception [operationally speaking].

Question: The U.S. and other nations have structured their military counterterrorism (CT) forces as elite special operations forces (SOF) with the best people, training, and equipment, e.g., US Army Special Forces, US Navy SEALs, and British Special Air and Boat Services. Similarly, American law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels have established Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams to counter terrorism, drug trafficking, and other high-risk missions in the domestic realm. Do these examples offer useful models to develop new Special Operations Forces?

Answer: The short answer is yes, but the “SOF” name paradigm is problematic. A lot of people have it in their heads that the term “special operations” means one certain thing or another. What you are asking is, “Do we need additional capability to conduct close-in, opposed boardings in all weather, day or night, using selective targeting and highly discriminate use of force.” Clearly that answer is yes. The FBI does not organize, train, or equip any sustained maritime forces or command-and-control capability--that is the realm of the Navy and Coast Guard.

Question: The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 currently prohibits active component DOD forces from enforcing law on the civil population of the United States absent a presidential declaration or order. Do you see the administration, Congress, and the public as willing to overturn Posse Comitatus and provide DOD Special Operations Forces (Army Special Forces and Navy SEALs) the blanket/recurring legal authority to conduct offensive or defensive counterterrorism operations within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S.?

Answer: We do not have a problem with Posse Comitatus. Al Qaeda is not going to score one against the U.S. on account of anyone tripping over Posse Comitatus. The president will determine that the matter is either a law enforcement or national security matter and we will act appropriately.

Question. Given a post-9/11 maritime security threat within the maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the U.S., is it better/faster/more effective to use forces with standing law enforcement authority--sufficiently organized, trained, and equipped--or to rely on a legal mechanism that requires presidential-level coordination to involve DOD special operations forces?

Answer: Whoever can get their "firstest with the mostest" will counter the threat. Worst case, we'll launch fighters.

Question. In the National Security Strategy, President Bush has said that the Global War on Terror "will be fought on many fronts against a particularly elusive enemy over an extended period of time" (11). Given current and projected force levels, it is highly likely that the bulk of the national counterterrorism force will remain decisively engaged overseas, and that their presence in the U.S. will be limited to rest, refit, and reconstitution for further overseas deployments. Moreover, the force remaining in the United States will not be a robust force postured and ready to conduct counterterrorism operations within the United States. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Answer: I disagree about the robustness of the force. DOD has a robust response option and a mission to stop terrorism in all domains. But DOD has only one response option and it really must be kept as the strategic reserve. Once we launch it, it is gone. Suppose you move from a single-threat scenario to a multiple-threat scenario. If you decide that the next threat is more severe, then to recock, reposition, and relaunch the DOD forces--that is problematic. Further, there are many threat scenarios that do not require the full extent of these capabilities. We need to build up, fill in, and round out the low- to mid-level threat response options up to and including some overlap for the most severe threats and the most capable forces.

Question: One of the key concepts of *The National Security Strategy* is to "[defend] the United States, the American people, and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders" (6). Is it possible and feasible to destroy 100 percent of the transnational terrorist threat with overseas, offensive, military operations? In spite of the GWOT, does there remain a credible, maritime terrorist threat to the U.S.?

Answer: We absolutely cannot plan on destroying all threats overseas. The more dominant we become on land, the more Al Qaeda will seek to attack us in the maritime domain, which still affords people the ability to live and work anonymously.

Question: The United States must safeguard 95,000 miles of coastline and 3.3 million square miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which includes much of the nation's critical infrastructure for the energy sector. If the U.S. received a credible, specific threat of an imminent, maritime terrorist event involving WMD in or via the marine transportation system, the territorial sea, or the EEZ, who should be the lead federal agency (LFA) for maritime security response? Who would counter the threat? Is it a law enforcement matter, a military matter, or both?

Answer: Designating the LFA on land is easier and more useful because of the population density and the density of response assets. People like the LFA concept because it pins responsibility on someone in advance of an incident. In the maritime domain the issue is more difficult. What is clear is that DOD and USCG have the ONLY forces capable of doing it. However, the density of DOD and USCG operational forces varies depending on where in the world you are. The policy needs to reflect this variation. Generally, the Coast Guard should respond to threats within zero to 200 miles from the U.S., unless there is a DOD asset closer or a DOD asset has the preferred capabilities and is able to respond in time to make a difference. Conversely, beyond 200 miles, DOD generally should respond, unless a Coast Guard asset is closer or has the preferred capabilities.

Question: How would the command and control work?

Answer: NORTHCOM and the Coast Guard Commandant have signed an MOU that provides for "chopping" (i.e., transferring operational control of) Coast Guard assets immediately to NORTHCOM if needed for HLD missions. We are hoping to establish a reverse agreement SECDEF to SECDEF that allows for the immediate transfer of Navy assets to the Coast Guard area commanders (vice admirals) to support HLS missions, including drug and migrant interdictions.

Question. One of the problems of improving maritime security response is the fact that maritime terrorist attacks in the United States, thankfully, are rare. In keeping with constitutional principles, an opposed boarding response force is not something we should launch on the "mom and pop" boater simply to exercise the force. Therefore, even if we build a great response force, it may be used so rarely that we are not able to establish significant confidence in knowing it will work. Nonetheless, it would be exceedingly important that it worked when called on.

Answer: You overlook something. One of the benefits that a Coast Guard CT force could provide is that of visible deterrent. Let it board ships occasionally as a matter of routine. That will put the word out on the street that this capability exists. DOD SOF cannot do this because the potential for compromising national security capability is too great.

U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters (CGHQ)

The author submitted requests for interviews with SECDHS, Deputy SECDHS, and Coast Guard flag officers, all of which ultimately were unsuccessful.

Commandant's Office of Homeland Security Operations and Tactics (G-OPC)

The author visited G-OPC at CGHQ on 24 January 2005, and spent about six hours in briefings and interviews on emerging Coast Guard homeland security capabilities and initiatives. The author interacted chiefly with Mr. Mike Kichman, LCDR Jose Rodriguez, Mr. Jim Sanny and Mr. Barney Owens.

The Coast Guard has briefed a package of enhanced maritime security capabilities to both the National Security Council and the Homeland Security Council. The concept of operations has received broad support from the White House as well as interagency and joint partners, including FBI and DOD. They have recognized a gap that this capability can fill. This package is known as the Commandant's "Enhanced Maritime Safety and Security Team" (EMSST) concept. The EMSST is intended to provide the interagency with additional capability, particularly for National Special Security Events, up to and including opposed boardings. Specific doctrine, organization, training, equipment, and its relationship to existing counterterrorism capabilities are sensitive and/or classified.

G-OPC has hired several contractors with considerable special operations experience to develop a strategic plan for the office; tactical doctrine; and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs).

G-OPC (O-6 level) started out as G-OT (O-7 level), and after many months still has not received an Operating Facility Change Order (OFCO) officially establishing the office. Some people inside and outside the office doubt whether the office will continue to exist. Some of the former-SOF contractors are concerned about their reputations within the community if the Coast Guard were to balk after going this far with the project. The Coast Guard probably would never see this level of support again. There is considerable cultural and bureaucratic resistance to the EMSST concept in some offices within Coast Guard headquarters. In addition, the high percentage of contractors within G-OPC who are mission-focused but lack experience in the mysterious ways of CGHQ has been a source of friction. However, G-OPC is learning and marching forth with a purpose.

One person said that General Daily of the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) had offered “special operations peculiar modified” (SOPMOD) Blackhawk helicopters to support Coast Guard maritime security forces. Later interviews with General Brown did not reinforce this assertion. [My observation--it certainly follows that brilliant white and international orange may not be the best colors for the CT mission. Low-observable paint, countermeasures, communications, and other features would be major improvements. Although law enforcement markings are required by law, some aircraft and vessels probably should be marked in such a way that the markings are only seen when energized or, say, within 100 yards of the target. Such assets must be able get themselves to within 100 yards of the target at the time and place of the commander’s choosing.]

Another OPC staffer mentioned that Congress had denied FBI requests to expand its air force. After a brief search, I found a 2003 Washington Post article saying that fixed wing

surveillance accounts for 90 percent of FBI air missions. Congress denied the FBI's request for two Blackhawk helicopters and demanded that the FBI submit a strategic plan for its aviation program. Some of this information is corroborated in the FBI's FY03 budget request testimony on www.fbi.gov. Subsequent testimony did not mention aviation assets.

Permanent funding for SRT-1 initial operating capability (IOC) and EMSST/SRT full operating capability (FOC) has not been identified. Debate seems to center on whether to reprogram existing forces toward this effort and regenerate the previous forces in future budget years, or to protect existing forces and stand up the EMSST capability in future budget years. [More than likely, a decades-old siege mentality ("hold what you have; nothing new is coming") among the various programs at Coast Guard Headquarters factors into this process. Additionally, some leaders may resist what they perceive as a new (perhaps even inappropriate) direction for the Coast Guard. Others would counter that the need to train highly competent tactical law enforcement forces has existed at least since the Coast Guard began counterdrug operations in the 1970s and 80s. The primacy, urgency, and risk inherent in CT operations may finally give the maritime law enforcement program the focus and resources it requires.]

Commandant's Office of International Affairs (G-CI)

From: Caruolo, Charles LCDR
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2005 10:08 AM
To: Russ Bowen
Subject: RE: ITD Question (corrected copy)

Russ,

I would be glad to provide my comments to your questions below. I am going to be TAD for the next couple of weeks, so my response may be delayed.

I can tell you briefly that it was a COMDT directed initiative and it was directly related to an increased demand for ITD services that made us take a critical look at the benefit of having LTT's in place's w/o any stated objectives or goals. Also, post 9/11 the priorities of the nation changed, hence the reallocation of our ITD assets was inevitable. I'll elaborate more while I'm TAD.

I do have one question: you mention an OpEval program that the ITD had? I have not seen any documentation that outlines what *operations* the International *Training* Team might have been a part of and was wondering if you had any first hand knowledge or background on the authorities that would have allowed training teams to participate in operations. Thanks.

r/

Charlie

From: Russ Bowen On Behalf Of Bowen, Russ LCDR
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2005 12:19 AM
To: Caruolo, Charles LCDR
Subject: ITD Question (corrected copy)

LCDR Caruolo,

I am doing some research for my master's thesis at the Army Command and General Staff College. I found out from CDR Creelman that G-CI has ended ITD's long-term deployment programs in Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru. I'm wondering if you or someone in the office could give me the background on the decision by answering these questions:

Who exactly made the decision and when?

What were the issues that led to the decision (pros/cons, gains/risks, assets/liabilities)?

Was the decision based on any request by the Attorney General, State Dept, host nations, DEA, etc.?

Was the decision made in consultation with any interagency or joint partners, such as JIATF-S, SOUTHCOM, SOCOM, etc.? If so, which ones?

Were any risk-mitigation strategies considered as an alternative to ending the program? E.g., training solutions, C2, contingency planning, etc.?

What was the analysis on long-term impacts? E.g.:

1. Strategic U.S. access in the region via ITD's established footprint, personal relationships, etc.
2. Combined impacts of ITD's withdrawal and diversion of 7th Special Forces Group assets from SOUTHCOM to CENTCOM missions.
3. Spanish language proficiency in the Coast Guard.
4. Coast Guard corporate proficiency in tactical operations.

Benefits to other programs. E.g., by my count at least 22 percent of the "1st-round draft picks" for MSST commanding officers had served with DIAT/IMLET/ITD and had

OpEval experience (LCDRs Rodriguez, Thompson, and Ortiz, not counting LT Nagy as an MSST team leader). Not bad for a unit that makes up 1/1000th of the Coast Guard. Other ITD personnel have gone on to intelligence and embassy staff positions that benefit immensely from their first-hand experience in the ITD OpEval program.

Replacements to fill the experience gap created by ending the program.

Your help would be much appreciated. I should be able to incorporate any responses I get by the end of March, but sooner is definitely better. My research will be most credible if the person who made the decision responds to the questions (G-CI?), but a staff response for the office would work as well.

v/r,

LCDR Russ Bowen, USCG
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College

Naval Special Warfare Command

Commander Bill Wilson, USN (NSW)

According to its website, the mission of the Naval Special Warfare Command “[to provide] vision, leadership, doctrinal guidance, resources and oversight to ensure component maritime special operations forces are ready to meet the operational requirements of combatant commanders” website (http://www.navsoc.navy.mil/navsoc_missions.asp). The author requested an interview with the Commander, Deputy Commander, or Operations Officer, Naval Special Warfare Command. Commander Wilson, of the NSWC operations staff, provided the following response on 16 February 2005. He also presented a brief on NSW current operations to the CGSC SOF Track and followed up with the author on 17 March 2005.

Question: In your professional estimation, would you define the major threats to U.S. maritime security as:

Predominantly national or transnational?

Predominantly conventional or unconventional?

Answer: Most likely threat will be criminal. Most dangerous threat will be transnational with WMD.

Question: Based on your response to Question 1, does maritime terrorism within U.S. maritime jurisdiction constitute a threat to national security?

Answer: Yes.

Question: If so, is it a threat your organization is concerned about?

Answer: The US Navy is focusing on this. NSW is focused on other threats.

Question: If so, what resources, if any, are you dedicating to the problem?

Answer: None.

Question: The U.S. and other nations have structured their military counterterrorism (CT) forces as elite special operations forces (SOF) with the best people, training, and equipment, e.g., US Army Special Forces, US Navy SEALs, and British Special Air and Boat Services. Similarly, American law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels have established Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams to counter terrorism, drug trafficking, and other high-risk missions in the domestic realm. Do these examples offer useful models to develop new Special Operations Forces?

Answer: There is no effort to develop “new” SOF that I know of.

Question: The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 currently prohibits active component DOD forces from enforcing law on the civil population of the U.S. Do you see the administration, Congress, and the public as willing to overturn Posse Comitatus and provide DOD Special Operations Forces (Army Special Forces and Navy SEALs) the legal authority to conduct offensive or defensive counterterrorism operations within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S.?

Answer: There are legal exemptions to the Posse Comitatus Act and they are more likely than a blanket exemption to policy or law.

Question: In *The National Security Strategy*, President Bush has said that the “Global War on Terror” “will be fought on many fronts against a particularly elusive enemy over an

extended period of time.” Given current and projected force levels, it is highly likely that the bulk of the national counterterrorism force will remain decisively engaged overseas, and that their presence in the U.S. will be limited to rest, refit, and reconstitution for further overseas deployments. Moreover, the force remaining in the United States will not be a robust force postured and ready to conduct counterterrorism operations within the United States. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Answer: Yes, and there exists an opportunity to develop new capabilities within USN, USCG and Law Enforcement Agencies to thwart this emerging threat.

Question: One of the key concepts of the National Security Strategy is to “[defend] the United States, the American people, and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders.” Is it possible and feasible to destroy 100 percent of the transnational terrorist threat with overseas, offensive, military operations? In spite of the GWOT, does there remain a credible, maritime terrorist threat to the U.S.?

Answer: The threat exists and homeland defense will/should include maritime defense in depth with USN, USCG in defense of LOCs and critical chokepoints and harbors.

Question: The United States must safeguard 95,000 miles of coastline and 3.3 million square miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which includes much of the nation’s critical infrastructure for the energy sector. If the U.S. received a credible, specific threat of an imminent, maritime terrorist event involving WMD in or via the marine transportation system, the territorial sea, or the EEZ, who do you see as the response force? Who would counter the threat? Is it a law enforcement matter, a military matter, or both?

Answer: Both, again refer back to defense in depth with a collaborative effort between USN, USCG, and LEA.

Question: If you expect the U.S. Coast Guard to respond to such an event, is counterterrorism a mission within the capability of the larger Coast Guard forces--i.e., can cutter

or station boarding teams develop and maintain an effective counterterrorism capability and still perform their primary missions, including other homeland security activities (MARSEC requirements), law enforcement, and rescue?

Answer: I am not familiar with USCG capabilities, but more capability is required within US organizations. One service cannot do it all.

Question: Is counterterrorism a current Coast Guard capability or is there a capability gap that needs to be corrected? I.e., if you accept the Navy SEAL counterterrorism model as worthy of emulation within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S., are any current Coast Guard forces the equals of Navy SEALs in terms of counterterrorism capability? Or is there a gap to which we must apply resources? How would you organize the effort if tasked to do so?

Answer: Does the Coast Guard need anything beyond an opposed boarding capability and specialists who can perform necessary Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) functions in support of the Boarding Teams? You could build a SEAL-like capability, but you may not want to pay the resource and personnel cost to get that capability.

Author's note: Since CT is much broader than opposed boardings, e.g., man-hunting, the question was vague. "SEAL-like" involves a much broader mission set not applicable to Coast Guard missions, e.g. advanced SEAL delivery system, HALO, joint targeting. CDR Wilson helped the author to focus the question on opposed boardings (overt and clandestine) and the necessary supporting arts and sciences, e.g., ISR, planning, command and control, and logistics.

Question: If you do not see the Coast Guard as the primary response force for an active maritime terrorist threat within U.S. maritime jurisdiction, then what service or agency has the ball? Do they have an effective capability? What does it look like? Where is it?

Answer. USN, and USSOCOM, and FBI all have specialized capabilities. Hard to give in-depth answers on the unclas side.

General Wayne A. Downing, U.S. Army (Retired).
Deputy National Security Advisor for
Combating Terrorism, 2001-2002.
Commander, U.S. Special
Operations Command
1993-1996

General Downing addressed the CGSC SOF Track officers on 15 April 2005. During his remarks to the class, General Downing directed this comment at the author: “If you want to be a hero for the Coast Guard, convince them to take on this mission,” in reference to interdicting terrorists and rendering safe all manner of WMD, including nuclear devices. The author made arrangements to further interview the general by e-mail. General Downing provided this electronic interview 22 May 2005.

Question. In your professional estimation, would you define the major threats to U.S. maritime security as:

Predominantly state or non-state actors?

Predominantly conventional or unconventional?

Answer: Today: non-state, unconventional. Future (15-20 years): state and non-state, conventional and unconventional.

Question. Does maritime terrorism within U.S. maritime jurisdiction constitute a threat to national security?

Answer: Definitely.

Question. If so, do you think the resources applied thus far are adequate, even for the close-in scenarios (“knife-fighting” distance)?

Answer: Grossly inadequate.

Question. The U.S. and other nations have structured their military counterterrorism (CT) forces as elite special operations forces (SOF) with the best people, training, and equipment, e.g., US Army Special Forces, US Navy SEALs, and British Special Air and Boat Services. Similarly,

American law enforcement agencies at the federal, state, and local levels have established Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Teams to counter terrorism, drug trafficking, and other high-risk missions in the domestic realm. Do these examples offer useful models to develop new Special Operations Forces?

Answer: Yes. Why reinvent the wheel? These units have developed systems which work for assessment and selection of people; training, retraining and calibration; tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP); and equipment: weapons, ammo, demo, and comms.

Question. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 currently prohibits active component DOD forces from enforcing law on the civil population of the United States absent a presidential declaration or order. Do you see the administration, Congress, and the public as willing to overturn Posse Comitatus and provide DOD Special Operations Forces (Army Special Forces and Navy SEALs) the blanket/recurring legal authority to conduct offensive or defensive counterterrorism operations within the territorial and maritime jurisdiction of the U.S.?

Answer. The President can waive PC whenever he sees fit. I doubt PC would ever be changed because the Executive branch has the all the authorities needed to use federal forces; the key is the political will to use those authorities.

Question. Given a post-9/11 maritime security threat within the maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the U.S., is it better/faster/more effective to uses forces with standing law enforcement authority--sufficiently organized, trained, and equipped--or to rely on a legal mechanism that requires presidential-level coordination to involve DOD special operations forces?

Answer: Absolutely, employ the USCG, for example.

Question. In *The National Security Strategy*, President Bush has said that the Global War on Terror “will be fought on many fronts against a particularly elusive enemy over an extended period of time” (11). Given current and projected force levels and overseas operational

commitments, is the domestic homeland security mission something of a distraction for DOD SOF? Should the nation resource additional capability primarily focused on the homeland?

Answer: The military SOF are over-committed and over-stressed; they definitely cannot do the domestic mission.

Question. One of the key concepts of *The National Security Strategy* is to “[defend] the United States, the American people, and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our borders” (6). Is it possible and feasible to destroy 100 percent of the terrorist threat with overseas, offensive, military operations? In spite of the GWOT, does there remain a credible, maritime terrorist threat to the U.S.? Should the operational response to that threat be better resourced?

Answer: A maritime domestic terrorist threat will likely continue forever. Added to that will be the threat of drugs, illegals, and contraband.

Question. The United States must safeguard 95,000 miles of coastline and 3.3 million square miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which includes much of the nation’s critical infrastructure for the energy sector. If the U.S. received a credible, specific threat of an imminent, maritime terrorist event involving WMD in or via the marine transportation system, the territorial sea, or the EEZ, who should be the lead federal agency for maritime security response? Who would counter the threat? Is it a law enforcement matter, a military matter, or both?

Answer: USCG should be the lead agency supported by the military and others.

Question: If you expect the U.S. Coast Guard to respond to such an event, and assuming that a WMD event is important enough to stop in its tracks regardless of the level of opposition mounted by terrorists, are opposed boardings a mission within the capability of typically-trained conventional forces--i.e., can squad, platoon, or company-sized elements (the size of the average patrol boat, boat station, or high-endurance cutter, of which maybe 25-50 percent would typically operate with the boarding team) maintain an effective counterterrorism assault capability and still

perform their primary missions, which in this case includes other homeland security activities (MARSEC patrol requirements), general law enforcement, and rescue?

Answer: I don't know but I suspect not.

Question. Assuming a highly capable Coast Guard CT assault team interdicted a terrorist WMD event, what should we do with any WMD devices recovered? Should we rely on DOD support or build in capability with a domestic focus?

Answer: One of the greatest contributions the USCG could make is to develop domestic WMD support units to recover, analyze, identify, render safe, and transport by land, sea, and air. This capability takes time, is expensive, but is critically needed because the military cannot do both missions.

Questions. Are CT and WMD response areas in which the Coast Guard and the U.S. Special Operations Command should work together? In what ways? Which subunified commands ought to be involved? What arrangements would be mutually supporting? Should the relationship be limited in scope, or should there be a Coast Guard service component command within USSOCOM? What challenges would be associated? What are the benefits and liabilities to wiring it this way?

Answer: Certainly the military, esp. NSW, should be involved in assisting the stand-up of special USCG units to address heightened threats.

Questions. If you do not see the Coast Guard as the primary response force for an active maritime terrorist threat within U.S. maritime jurisdiction, then what service or agency should be designated lead federal agency for maritime security response? Do they have an effective capability? What does it look like? Where is it?

Answer: it's the USCG.

Questions. One of the problems of improving maritime security response is the fact that maritime terrorist attacks in the United States, thankfully, are rare. In keeping with constitutional

principles, an opposed boarding response force is not something we should launch on the “mom and pop” boater simply to exercise the force. Therefore, even if we build a great response force, it may be used so rarely that we are not able to establish significant confidence in knowing it will work. Nonetheless, it would be exceedingly important that it worked when called on. Scenarios such as multiple WMD events in the nation’s tier-one ports and major port population centers demand it. In order to vet domestic maritime security forces, do you see value in deploying a small percentage of the force abroad on a recurring, rotational basis to meet the needs of combatant commanders, including USCENTCOM, USPACOM, USSOUTHCOM, and USSOCOM? What about staff support to Combined/Joint Special Operations Task Forces? What permanent mechanisms might be needed?

Answer: From the military’s standpoint, it would be great to have USCG elements deployed overseas to assist with port and maritime security attached to the regional combatant commanders. Units should be chopped to the CC and further assigned to the correct command.

Question. What keeps you awake at night?

Answer: Not much. There will be another major attack on the US. Count on it. It may well be maritime as the Salafists have shown interest in maritime tactics as evidenced by the *The Sullivan Brothers*, *Cole*, *Limburg*, and the Morocco-based Strait of Gibraltar attempts.

Admiral Paul A. Yost, U.S. Coast Guard (Retired)
Coast Guard Commandant, 1986-1990

The author interviewed Admiral Yost because he was Commandant at the time of Goldwater-Nichols, Nunn-Cohen, and establishment of the U.S. Special Operations Command. Admiral Yost also served in the Coast Guard in Vietnam and participated in Operation Market Time. This electronic interview is dated 24 February 2005.

1. Why did the Coast Guard deploy patrol boats to Vietnam?

- a. Who made the request?
- b. What missions were assigned to these forces?

I was not in Headquarters at the time the Navy requested CG patrol boats in Vietnam and was an O-5 at the time. I have no firsthand knowledge. My understanding is that the Navy had no capable offshore patrol boats needed to secure the coasts of Vietnam. They were building 50' Swift Boats patterned after an offshore oil industry design but these boats had poor sea keeping ability and poor staying power as far as crew support were concerned. They turned to the Coast Guard who provided 82' patrol boats with a LT as CO and a LTJG as XO. These boats were excellent sea boats and could stay at sea for multiple days even in bad weather. They provided the offshore patrol the Swift Boats could not provide on a continuing basis. The 82' vessels were seldom used in the rivers due to their draft and lack of the agility the Swifts had. The Swifts were moved inside the rivers due to shallow draft and lack of sea keeping ability off the coasts.

2. What was the nature of Coast Guard operations in Vietnam?
 - a. Did the Coast Guard operate as a "pure" force or was the organization jointly manned?

At what echelons?

- b. Who were the Coast Guard forces' primary customers?

The Coast Guard provided forces to Operation Market Time (CTF-115) headquartered in Cam Ranh Bay. The 82' vessels were under a Coast Guard division organization for administration only i.e. supply, support, repair, personnel, pay, etc. There was no operational Coast Guard chain. The Coast Guard Division was responsible for providing operational boats to CTF-115 who was the operational commander. I was CTG-115.4 and had a few boats assigned to me for operations. I was the only Coast Guard officer in a Navy operational chain. I was preceded by Jack Hayes, Adrian Lonsdale, and one or two others.

3. Did the Coast Guard conduct or support what today would be described as "special operations?"
 - a. If so, can you describe such operations and the characteristics that made them "special?"
 - b. What differences, if any, existed between the missions of Navy swift boat operations and Coast Guard swift boat operations in Vietnam? What was the dynamic?
 - c. Were any Coast Guard personnel involved with USN Boat Support Unit One? Navy SEALs? If so, how so?

d. Did the Coast Guard ever conduct or support cross-border operations into Laos or Cambodia?

The 82' was too big, deep, valuable, and slow for river ops. We kept them boring holes in the water offshore. The skippers wanted to get into the rivers where the action was and some succeeded now and then in doing so but it was an exception. A swift boat had the same firepower, drew half the water, cost a tenth as much, had half the crew to risk etc.

The last thing you needed in a SEAL operation was a big, slow, noisy, deep-draft, 82' vessel. As far as I know the 82' WPB was never used in a SEAL operation. If they were used in any type of Special Operation, it would have been to utilize their superior command ability (a full LT) and their superior communications and staying power. Once when I wanted to set up a command post for an operation in a remote area, I took one 82' WPB and about 4 Swifts to the area. The WPB gave me a place to sleep and eat and the support of two capable CG officers to run the swift boat operation for the scene. The WPB itself was just a command post that could be moved to the scene, but it was not intended to be in open combat. I have no knowledge of any cross-border ops with either Swifts or WPBs.

4. Why did the naval remnants of TFs 115, 116, and 117 evolve into special operations forces while the Coast Guard forces simply returned to their "normal duties" which, though apparently equivalent, were not considered to be special operations?

The [Navy's] 115, 116, 117 forces were river-capable and the [Coast Guard's 82'] WPBs were not. As the war progressed the coastal patrols became less important because there were little or no attempts to smuggle supplies across the coast. The river capable forces were then moved into more lucrative operations. The WPBs due to their size were a "one trick pony" and so were kept at sea.

5. As Commandant of the Coast Guard during the time of the establishment of the U.S. Special Operations Command, was there ever any discussion of incorporating Coast Guard capabilities into the special operations command on any level?

a. Why or why not?

b. Was it considered and rejected, or simply overlooked?

As Commandant, I never considered that the Coast Guard had a mission in Special Operations. Perhaps it was overlooked. We had "training units" in South America working in the field in combat-like conditions against drug smugglers. Also the Port Security Units were forces to deploy that were similar to Special Operations forces. I felt that our patrol boat fleet was an asset that the Navy ought to welcome and use in the war plans but the Navy was bent on having its own patrol boat fleet. This attitude was exacerbated by the failure of my offer to send seven [110'] WPBs to the [Persian] Gulf to

support the effort in Desert Storm. The JCS wanted them, the Navy did not, and the Congress blocked their going so as not to lose the capability in their home districts. This was more important to me than a special operations mission. [Author's note: four to eight 110-foot WPBs have supported Operation Iraqi Freedom continuously since the beginning.]

6. As Commandant of the Coast Guard during the implementation of Goldwater-Nichols, do you feel this legislation adequately addressed Coast Guard needs and capabilities relative to the joint force?

a. Did this legislation focus on DOD to the exclusion of the 5th armed service?

What about Nunn-Cohen?

b. What efforts were made, if any, to engage Congress on the Coast Guard's issues and concerns respecting either of these two pieces of legislation?

We made no effort to become part of this legislation. We looked at it as potentially restrictive of our own officer promotion system and not addressing any concerns that we had. It was a DOD piece of legislation and not one that I think the DOT would have had an interest in. I am not sure that the DOD services looked at it as highly desirable or without down-sides.

7. As Commandant of the Coast Guard when the nation "declared war" on drugs during the late-1980s, what is your explanation for why the Coast Guard did not expand appreciably in budget, manning, and capability while at the same time DOD became the lead federal agency for counterdrug detection and monitoring and the U.S. Customs Service expanded from a port-of-entry service into co-lead federal agency for air interdiction and amassed considerable air, maritime, and C4ISR assets?

The Coast Guard did expand significantly in budget for the drug war. We built an additional air station for three E2Cs and their support, brought in back-seat personnel to these aircraft, equipped a C-130 with the insides of an E2C, placed intercept radars (\$12M a copy) on our Falcons, shut down MJ [marijuana] in the gulf of Mexico through ship and air effort, built an operations center with Customs for drug interdiction to name a few. The disappointment was that before I became Commandant the Coast Guard did not fight Customs' establishing an air arm and a patrol boat arm. Once they had it, they expanded it and that fight is covered in my oral history.

8. Think for a moment about the following Coast Guard programs: Fast Coastal Interceptors, Surface Effect Ships, Coast Guard participation with the E-2C Hawkeye NFO

program, canine units, and Deployable Pursuit Boats. In your considered opinion, why do such programs consistently burn out so quickly in the Coast Guard?

The Coast Guard in peacetime does not have a warrior mentality. Those of us who have such a mentality are working against the tide. The department of HLS may make a change in this as more emphasis goes to port security but this is a double-edged sword. How do you argue for being part of the war plan and having your forces nationalized when they are tasked with defense of the ports and waterways at home? It is the same scene that stopped me from sending vessels to the Desert Storm operation because some key Senators did not want to see forces removed from their state waters. How much more are they going to object now that we have gone through 9/11? It is hard to get money to fund what is thought of as a DOD mission. First, DOD is going to oppose you because they look at the budget as a zero-sum game. What money you get for dedicated forces they feel comes out of their budget. Your only argument is dual-mission forces and we are playing that game in Deepwater. When we don't meet an obligation for a DOD operation because our forces are needed in homeland security you will see SECDEF budgeting for his own forces and writing us out of his overseas deployment war plans. That is a current issue with Secretary Rumsfeld.

One last comment, don't hitch your career too tightly to DOD-type missions or you will be viewed as an anomaly. I have seen one senior captain's career ruined by such perceptions on a promotion board. My selection to commandant was preceded and followed by officers with very little operational experience, let alone a warrior mentality.

Major General Sidney Shachnow, U.S. Army (Retired)
Commander, U.S. Army Special Forces, 1991-1994

The author interviewed MG Shachnow because he served as Chief of Staff, Special Forces, when all Army SOF were unified under the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and Special Forces became its own branch of the Army. He also provided insight as a SOF general officer. As a matter of American history, MG Shachnow is a holocaust survivor of the Kovno concentration camp, former enlisted soldier, and Vietnam veteran. His many awards include two Distinguished Service Crosses, two Silver Stars, three Bronze Stars (one with "V"), two Purple Hearts, and the Combat Infantry Badge. The author had the honor to interview MG Shachnow in person on 11 February 2005 in connection with his visit to CGSC to speak to the SOF track officers about SOF leadership. Following are the notes from the interview, as close to the general's words as possible.

From what I know of the Coast Guard, you have a strong case for its utility in special operations, but the politics do not always go the way of common sense. For example, the Marine Corps in 1987 did not want to join SOCOM. They see now that this may have cost them some opportunities and some funding. Now they are trying to join, and they are being seen as opportunistic. Their forces also would come with many strings attached, and SOCOM does not like strings. Probably it would be the same with the Coast Guard.

Everyone these days is talking about CT. CT is amorphous--as soon as you figure out how to counter terrorists, they figure out a new way to terrorize. CT is simply a tactical operation that requires a mix of capabilities that you can apply with flexibility.

Another issue you have is one of perception. What SOF know about the Coast Guard is that you are domestic; they don't know much about how your capabilities tie into their capabilities. When one of my daughters was a young girl, her mother and I would occasionally buy her a dress. Often she didn't like the dress, but usually it was because she simply wasn't familiar with the dress. So we would hang it from her closet door in full view, and she would get used to it, get to know it, and eventually she wore it and liked it. You might try this approach with SOF. You could establish liaison officers at various places, like SOCOM for example. You could establish relationships at the various schoolhouses. Using this incremental approach, you might find yourself getting invited to do more things. You shouldn't be surprised if you give a fantastic brief, everyone is polite and says they like your idea, but nothing happens. It may not be as simple as 'starting a new program.

MG Shachnow asked if there was support for the concept in the Coast Guard and the author told him it was mixed. He said, "Fighting for change is an uphill battle unless you're talking mission failure, like Desert One. You should try to find a 'godfather.' Civil Affairs had Senator Strom Thurman and he had a lot of power for a long time. Psychological Operations had General Stillwell."

Coast Guard Security Response Team One

Lieutenant Commander Gerard Williams, USCG
Executive Officer

and

Lieutenant G. Eric Grabins, USCG
Direct Action Team Leader

LCDR Williams and LT Grabins briefed the author on SRT-1 and participated in a focus group with the author at SRT-1 on 26 January 2005. Following are my notes.

SRT-1 is a real, honest-to-god counterterrorism unit, albeit a fledgling one. SRT-1 is the material form of the Commandant's EMSST concept. The team was forged out of existing forces: MSST 91102 (Hampton Roads port-level AT/FP unit), Tactical Law Enforcement Team (TACLET) North (counterdrug and UN Sanctions MIO/VBSS unit), and aviation assets from Air Station Clearwater. The Coast Guard gained an EMSST, but lost the MSST and nine x 9-man law enforcement detachments in the process. The unit was stood up on the authority of a 24 February 2004 tasker from the Commandant of the Coast Guard: "create significantly enhanced law enforcement capability trained to conduct opposed boardings for upcoming National Special Security Events [NSSEs] and beyond." The NSSEs referred to were the G8 Summit, Democratic National Convention, and Republican National Convention.

To acquire the necessary expertise, the Commandant's Office of Homeland Security Operations and Tactics (G-OPC) contracted with CACI to provide the unit with instructors having the following backgrounds: Naval Special Warfare (NSW), Army Special Forces, Army 160th Special Ops Aviation Regiment, and U.S. Secret Service.

For initial stand-up, individuals selected for the direct action teams completed ten weeks of training on weapons, Close-Quarters Battle (CQB) tactics, and tactical vertical insertion. Of those selected individuals, the direct action teams have suffered an additional 28 percent attrition in a little over six months due to wash-out, most for safety violations in CQB training, and a few

for unsuitability. Most of these members are still good petty officers and have been employed successfully somewhere else in the unit. Unfortunately, the unit has to perform all roles of selection and assessment, schoolhouse, and operational unit. This speaks to the need for a Coast Guard special operations command to package and oversee all necessary functions. LT Grabins (DA Team Leader) mentioned that, at a minimum, members should only be sent to SRT on temporary duty orders until they have passed the initial training cycle. Those who wash out would then return to their original units without creating personnel management issues at the SRT.

Aviators completed a tactical syllabus as well, but were not at the unit for interviews.

In accordance with long-standing tradition, Coast Guard Headquarters (CGHQ) seems intent on reinventing the wheel rather than starting directly at the time-tested NSW model to get to full operating capability (FOC) as soon as possible, and then tweaking things as necessary as time goes on. Excellent Coast Guard men and women performing honorable service reported that some of the support provided SRT by CGHQ has been less than enthusiastic. Understandably, the SRT bucks nearly every trend in Coast Guard policy, and this is why the program needs flag-officer horsepower with cross-program waiver authority. The weapons, aviation, medical, marine safety, workforce, and training program managers have supported the unit at varying levels, generally with an excruciating level of associated pain. Several specific examples cited by unit members regarding CGHQ support-related issues follow in the section on Special Missions Training Center (SMTC). G-OPC, SRT-1, and SMTC all reported the same phenomena. The message these great Americans conveyed was very clear: everyone is leaning forward in this effort except Coast Guard Headquarters.

Despite the lack of focused, unified, and expeditious support across the various programs at CGHQ, SRT-1 has achieved impressive success in its short existence. Its first operational deployment was to the G8 Summit at Sea Island, GA, 2-12 June 2004. Operational planning had not been able to include them due to their stand-up timeline, but they learned how to deploy the

unit. During the second NSSE, the Democratic National Convention, U.S. Secret Service had incorporated them into the planning as a second-echelon evacuation resource for the principles and as a reserve opposed boarding capability. By their third NSSE, the Republican National Convention, SRT-1 had earned the trust and confidence of the U.S. Secret Service Counter-Assault Team (CAT) and served as the primary maritime evacuation force for POTUS and members of Congress (inner perimeter with CAT and principles) for any contingencies. The CAT assigned them this mission, allowed SRT-1 to conduct its own detailed planning, and trusted SRT-1 to accomplish their mission if called on to execute. At both conventions, the aviation element flew four sorties of two different platforms at two missions each.

Due to being collocated with the USMC Fleet Antiterrorism Support Team (FAST) School, SRT-1 enjoys on-site access to an excellent CQB trainer fully wired with CCTV and sound. Unfortunately, SRT-1 has been bumped off the range from time to time due to the primacy of FAST School requirements.

Until 25 January 2005, SRT-1 had organic aviation assets. They were reassigned to the nearest air station out of concern for required aviation safety standards. One of the drivers for this change (presumably) was a blade-strike against the target ship during a night training evolution--well above the normal risk tolerance for conventional Coast Guard aviation. The air station billets (spaces) are to be labeled "EMSST support" and organized into a non-rescue operations department, but SRT-1 is not confident that this reorganization will provide the level of support sufficient for them to accomplish their missions.

Aviation gunner (designated marksman) support from the counterdrug aviation unit HITRON was never organic, and due to HITRON's extremely demanding deployment schedule, the SRT has trained with them mostly while on-mission at the NSSEs. This capability is a critical component of the risk-mitigation strategy for the assault elements [and therefore also should fall

under a special operations aviation command, and be expanded as necessary to complete both the counterdrug and homeland security missions].

Until 28 January 2005, SRT-1 had seven Coast Guard strike team members assigned TAD with the understanding that they would receive PCS orders and follow-on tactical training with CACI contractors. The strike team element gave SRT an on-scene Level A CBRNE capability, which factored strongly into the operation plans for the NSSEs (decontamination stations for principles). Because the Operations and Marine Safety communities reportedly could not agree, the TAD period ended with no apparent plans to replace the capability. According to LT Grabins, this capability “will be sorely missed.”

The standard 25-foot “Response Boat--Small” (RB-S), while an excellent choice for the extended security patrols typical of MSSTs and Stations, is absolutely the wrong boat for the EMSST-SRT mission. It has a high radar signature, an orange hull, and it’s too small.

Author’s note: The RB-S also has insufficient sea-keeping for offshore missions and a superstructure that impedes rapid troop deployment. The 11-meter NSW RHIB is one available platform that will get eight assaulters each from their assembly area onto the target vessel in short order. There may be a need for more than one boat type. Any west coast capability would have to account for larger seas, swells, and spray. Something like the 82-ft, 50-knot Mark V Special Operations Craft may be absolutely necessary for an offshore mission in that environment, or in San Francisco Bay for that matter. Both platforms are supportable through DOD logistics systems. These are requirements the Coast Guard needs to take up with OMB, Congress, and/or USSOCOM. Again, blaze orange is good for the presence mission, but unsatisfactory for the DA-CT mission.

While EMSSTs clearly serve some of the purposes required of MSSTs by 46 USC 70106, EMSSTs cannot fulfill all MSST responsibilities and neither can MSSTs perform DA-CT opposed boardings. The DA-CT opposed boarding mission is too task-specific and the skills too

perishable to take on other required MSST missions such as security zone enforcement and routine critical infrastructure protection (though EMSSTs clearly serve those roles in an indirect way and probably at a distance through opposed boardings, when needed). Similarly, no MSST can achieve a safe, reliable DA-CT competency while performing the baseline MSST missions.

As proud as the Coast Guard should be of SRT-1, there are forces at work dismantling this capability as fast as it can be built, to wit, reassignment of aviation and CBRNE resources among other evidence. As with the G-OPC staff office, no OFCO has been issued officially establishing the SRT. Has there really not been enough time to staff and sign these two letters, or is some other factor in play? SRT still exists as MSST 91102 and TACLET North. This has resulted in unnecessary blockages for issues as mundane as changing vehicle allowances and reprogramming petty officer billets/spaces. The unit purchased \$100,000 in over-the-horizon radios out of hide. This is small potatoes for what the White House has identified as a national priority.

Policy, doctrine, and TTPs have not kept up with the SRT's progress. Factors include a Coast Guard Headquarters that is not united behind the concept, the myriad program managers with authority over small niches, and the shaky ground of G-OPC due to its unofficial status.

SRT-1 has a warm, neighborly relationship with NSW Development Group, which has assisted the unit with advanced shipboarding TTPs.

The author was extremely impressed with the dedication, professionalism, and competence of the SRT members he interacted with, including LCDR Gerard Williams, LT Eric Grabins, and LT Dawn Prebula. Sadly, they are pioneers in the wilderness.

Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON)

Lieutenant Commander Mike Campbell, USCG
Engineer Officer

LCDR Campbell provided an electronic interview on 25 March 2005.

Question: What is HITRON's authorized strength in pax, aircrews, and airframes?

Answer: Total pax strength is 75. Total aircrews: approximately 30 pilots (including the command) and 24 gunners. Total airframes--right now we have eight MH68A helicopters, but there is always talk of getting two more for a total of 10. The contract ends in January 2008. The Coast Guard is planning to convert the unit to the re-engined HH65C with talk of it being a 10-aircraft unit.

Question: Has there been any talk of shutting down HITRON once the air stations come online with airborne use of force (AUF)?

Answer: Absolutely not! COMDT has directed that by FY09, all helicopter units will be AUF capable. However they are in the process of defining the various levels of AUF capability that the units will be qualified to fulfill. The AUF levels will correspond directly to the tier level of the ports within their AOR. The most basic level will be simply anti-personnel or vessel with an area weapon (M240 machine gun). The training required for this weapon is relatively easy to manage as it is not a precision weapon. The highest level will be HITRON. Right now they are calling it Level 5, and it will consist of all of the HLS port security missions, plus the EMSST support and the go-fast interdiction that we are doing now. This comes with a significant amount of initial and recurring training and will only be completed by the two units (East & West) designated for such missions. HITRON Jacksonville will be the East Coast unit, and I am not sure where the West Coast unit will be located (Point Magoo is a name floating around). They may also change the name from HITRON to something else, but the unit will remain. So you are right on the money for a permanent "special operations" aviation unit. I think the name may even incorporate something like Special Operations Deployment Center or something along those lines. These units will be minimally SAR-capable, but will not provide a SAR response from home base. Their primary duty will be special operations and deployment support. As for the Special Operations Command, you know the Coast Guard. That may be leaning a little too forward in the fox-hole for the current "humanitarian service" leaders to handle. But in a few years, when people like you and I become part of that leadership, things may change. Who knows?

Hope this info helps. Please let me know if I can be of any other assistance. If you are doing your research in this area, maybe you can squeeze a trip down for a visit? I will be here until mid June, then I am going up to DC for grad school myself--most likely Johns Hopkins.

Coast Guard Special Missions Training Center

I conducted interviews at the Coast Guard Special Missions Training Center (SMTC), Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, on 27 January 2005. SMTC began as the Port Security Unit Training Detachment in Camp Perry, Ohio, with six people assigned. In 1998 they relocated to the Courthouse Bay area of Camp Lejeune, NC in direct cooperation with the USMC Special Operations Training Group. Access to gunnery ranges and the open sea has proven to be superb. In 1999, PSU TraDet assumed the duties and resources of the Coast Guard's Fast-Boat and Nonlethal Weapons Centers of Excellence. Due to counterdrug and post-9/11 throughput requirements, the staff now numbers 102 assigned Coast Guardsman, Sailors, and Marines. In FY04 the center awarded a \$19.2M construction project to build out training facilities (ranges, classrooms, simulators, and a pool); boat storage, maintenance, and supply facilities; and admin spaces.

The USN and USMC recognize Coast Guard expertise in small boat operations. The Coast Guard has the preponderance of the throughput and therefore the preponderance of the obligation to man and fund the schoolhouse. SMTC is the central schoolhouse for tactical coxswain training (Levels 1 and 2) in the three services. Level 1 is mostly an expedited coxswain qualification used by the Navy and Marine Corps for coxswains who may fill only a three-year billet on a base security force and then proceed back to their normal jobs that have nothing to do with boats. Level 1 is based on the Coast Guard boat crewman qualification rather than the detailed, highly proficient, professional coxswain qualification that Coast Guard boatswain's mates pursue. Level 2 is a tactical qualification that means the coxswain can fight his boat as an effective combat system in a tactical environment using fire and maneuver. The better the coxswain that enters the Level 2 training, however, the better the Level 2 coxswain that exits the other end. Qualified Coast Guard coxswains go directly to the Level 2 training. SMTC has standardized Levels 1 and 2 across the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Theoretically any

Level 2 coxswain can be tasked by any service to fill a Level 2 assignment. The Army declined to participate in SMTC.

The Navy currently has eight SWCCs assigned as instructors at SMTC, although the plan is to replace them eventually with SMTC-trained coxswains. The USN involvement at SMTC originated with the USS COLE bombing. They realized a need for tactical (Level 2) coxswains who are not SWCCs. These coxswains are intended to fill base harbor security forces, mobile security forces for transiting NSC ships, etc. All Navy small boat special operations training falls to the SWCC school in Coronado. SWCC qualification is not aligned with the Levels 1 and 2 system, but they have discussed a concept where SWCC is the final rung on the Navy's small boat qualification ladder. Rather than stand up a new school, the Navy sought a joint solution with the Coast Guard. SWCCs admitted that the Coast Guard training they've received at SMTC—including navigation rules, towing, and basic SAR patterns—has made them better coxswains. When SEALs go in the water or one of their boats breaks down, SWCCs do the CSAR and towing.

The USMC's purpose at SMTC is to develop small boat coxswains for MEU-level small boat companies and the 2nd MARDIV small craft company (which has been recommended for deactivation to recoup people and resources for the regular battalions). The USMC concept uses small-boat resources as another maneuver element supporting the MAGTF, but their boat forces theoretically are available to whoever might need and ask for them, anywhere on the joint force. They have supported Army SF and Marine infantry in Iraq. Captain Roberto Martinez, USMC, the Marine Detachment Commander at SMTC, said that although the USMC lacks a coherent small boat doctrine for supporting the MAGTF, ground commanders are beginning to recognize their value on the inland waterways of Iraq. Capt Martinez said that, so far, SOF have a better understanding of how to use small boat capabilities.

Captain Lee Alexander, USCG
Commanding Officer

Captain Lee Alexander, USCG, Commanding Officer of SMTC, said that Coast Guard units performing counterdrug and terrorism-related missions need a headquarters and doctrine entity that is “agile and responsive” to the changing threat environments and changing technologies. Captain Alexander said that “the Coast Guard headquarters bureaucracy, developed over 30+ years of association with DOT, is slow, ponderous, and deliberative”--a process that served us well under DOT but which is too slow, ponderous, and deliberative to serve us well in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 environment. He said the growth of SMTC and the Coast Guard’s leadership of it “require new thought. It requires visionary and risk-taking leadership. It requires focused, determined leadership that can take us beyond our comfort zone. One thing I do know: Coast Guard men and women are up to the task. They are eager and ready for it.”

One issue that highlights the Coast Guard’s split personality is its handling of the Clean Water Act. According to Capt Alexander, “this has not been a huge issue but it does illustrate the mindset of an organization that is struggling to balance traditional humanitarian and environmental policies with warfighting requirements. I remember seeing a LANTAREA (or ALCOAST) message to suspend all live-fire training within 3NM and concurrently have seen AT LEAST 3 LANTAREA messages directing all small boats conducting MHLS missions to be armed with crew-served weapons. How do our people train, qualify and remain proficient when potentially they will not get a chance to put a live round down range under realistic conditions? Simulators certainly offer a partial solution but cannot replicate the live fire experience.”

Chief Engineman Hager, USN (SWCC)
TF White, Operation Just Cause

I interviewed ENC Hager (SWCC) as part of the interviews conducted at the Coast Guard Special Missions Training Center, Camp Lejeune, NC, on 27 January 2005. Chief Hager also

happened to be a veteran of TF White, the NSW component of Operation Just Cause, Panama, 1989. Following are my notes from the interview.

I talked to Chief Hager about his participation in Task Force White. A large part of the Special Boat Unit (SBU) tasking had to do with port security, critical infrastructure protection, and vessel boardings—missions in which the Coast Guard has developed expertise for, in some cases, over 200 years. I asked him, “Had there been a Coast Guard special operations component back then, could it have made a contribution to JUST CAUSE?” He answered, “Definitely. SBU 26 ran shifts of 12-hours-on, 6-hours-off to board vessels outside both ends of the canal looking for Noriega, his regime members, and contraband. We blockaded each end of the canal to prevent any ships from being damaged by sabotage or ongoing operations. These would have been perfect missions for a Coast Guard SOF element. If you had covered those missions, we could have supported the SEALs better than we did.” Chief Hager participated in both the Caribbean-side blockade and the Pacific-side MIO/VBSS campaign.

Chief Electronics Technician Main, USN (SWCC)

The author interviewed ETC Main (SWCC) as part of the interviews conducted at the Coast Guard Special Missions Training Center, Camp Lejeune, NC, on 27 January 2005. Following are the notes from the interview.

Chief Main mentioned that “the Coast Guard is in its little box, and it’s going to take an act of Congress to get them out of it.” [That sounds a lot like the conventional services’ handling of SOF in the 1950s-1980s, and the resultant Nunn-Cohen Amendment that created USSOCOM.] When Chief Main talked to an officer on the Commandant (G-WT (workforce/training)) staff about using night vision on the boats, the officer said that NVG could not be used to operate boats because there had been no human performance study completed. [Twenty years of NSW experience—not just this individual’s experience, but the entire NSW organization’s collective experience with NVG—apparently does not count as a human performance study. What study

could replicate decades of combat experience in special operations? Do we really have to start at step one when others have already fought and died to learn the lessons?] Others at SMTC mentioned the need to exercise vertical insertion capabilities as part of the complete mission package being conducted by the MSSTs, and someone in G-WT said, “Why don’t you lower them in the rescue basket? Then you don’t have to train.” Ah yes, that old maxim, “train as you fight.” Such comments demonstrate unfamiliarity with emerging mission requirements. Another SMTC instructor mentioned the need for M203 training to the G-WT (or G-WTT) staff and got the response, “What’s an M203?” Upon hearing the answer, yet never having seen an M203, this person felt qualified to offer a training solution.

Chief Main further noted that Coast Guard coxswains selected for combat training—be it conventional or special ops—must alter the risk management model they have been accustomed to for Search and Rescue, where they have the option to go or not go on a mission. A light grounding on a sandbar is no cause to abort a combat mission, yet that is the mindset that many Coast Guard coxswains have been conditioned into by recent Coast Guard policies. Such policies represent a tremendous improvement in life safety for deliberative missions, but they are unacceptable for combat missions. For SWCCs, there is only mission accomplishment. Coast Guard coxswains likewise need to learn how to close with and destroy the enemy vice using force in purely self-defense or law enforcement applications, where “creating distance” is de rigueur. This argues to the need to be selective in which Coast Guard coxswains are assigned combat roles and then to retain that capability within a small community once developed. Regarding potential Coast Guard roles in special operations such as SRT, ETC Main said, “Absolutely, SRT could benefit tremendously by working with NSW. All services need to be involved because each service (no matter what they say) is continually being asked to do more with less. The days of ‘my service is better than yours’ must end. We all have to work together, and we need to be 100%

interoperable.” He said that the Coast Guard “needs to get in bed with the NSW community because those techniques are battle-proven. It is stupid to fight all those battles all over again.”

Coast Guard International Training Division

Commander Matthew Creelman, USCG
Division Chief

The author interviewed Commander Creelman at Coast Guard Training Center Yorktown on 25 January 2005. A summary of the interview follows.

The most startling and disturbing revelation of this visit was the decision by Coast Guard Headquarters to discontinue the long-term deployment programs to Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Panama, Haiti, and Antigua that had been a staple of the Coast Guard’s international activities since at least the 1980s.

The reasons for this decision, as understood by the unit, had to do with risk aversion, legal gray areas, and demand for ITD services that outstripped its capacity. The general trend in their assignments has been away from counterdrug missions in SOUTHCOM toward GWOT missions in CENTCOM and to a lesser extent PACOM [which analysis in this author’s opinion is deeply flawed--the conditions that permit one permit and in some cases finance the other]. At no time had the State Department, any Embassy, or any other interagency or joint entity requested that the long-term training teams be halted or even changed. This was purely an internal Coast Guard decision. At no time did the Coast Guard discuss increasing the size of the unit to retain core competencies and meet additional demand.

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