



# REPORT TO THE COMMANDANT

Items of interest reported by District Commodores

August 2007

## ATLANTIC AREA EAST

### **First District, Northern Region**

1. Over 100 Auxiliarists and family members met at Station Merrimack in Newburyport, MA to celebrate the Coast Guard's birthday and the Yankee Homecoming Week in the community that is the birthplace of the Coast Guard. Auxiliarists catered a lunch for the Coast Guard crews of the Hammerhead and the Station Merrimack.

On Friday, August 3, the Newburyport Maritime Museum held a grand opening and reception for their theme exhibit of the Coast Guard. The exhibit provided historical documentation, artifacts and models representing the transitions and multi-missions of the Coast Guard. Captain James MacDonald Sector Boston and Renelle LeBlanc, vice commodore, presented the Coast Guard and Auxiliary ensigns respectively to be flown from the museum's flagpole.

2. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 11-1 adopted the Chatham Light lighthouse in 2005 and on 25 July Auxiliarists greeted the 50,000th visitor, Meribeth Garner from North Adams, MA and presented her with a model of Chatham Light and a laminated fact sheet.

### **First District, Southern Region**

1. On July 28, 2007, the town of Woodbridge celebrated Coast Guard Day and honored Sector New York and Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 4-4. Captain Robert O'Brien, Commanding Officer, Sector New York, Auxiliary members Stephen Ackerman, vice commodore and David TenBroeck, rear commodore, were the featured speakers.

2. At the request of Chief Slanina of Sector New York, Flotilla 4-6 assisted with a Cub Scout recruiting event. The flotilla provided a display, coloring books, a boat on display and Coastie the robotic boat.

3. On August 4, the Fox network in New York filmed a feature on the Coast Guard. The purpose is to increase awareness of CG roles and missions, to recognize CG Day, and to launch the Lives Saved Since 1790 campaign. Ken Stanley operated Coastie as part of the program.

### **Fifth District, Northern Region**

1. Auxiliarists from Flotilla 12-02 support Station MSD Lewes, Delaware eight hours each day to answer phones and take messages for the MSD personnel. The efforts of this flotilla enhance the capabilities of the station and active Coast Guard personnel can dedicate their time to other missions.
2. Station Indian River Delaware has Auxiliarist Robert Rozenburg serving as a radio communications watch stander 35 hours a week. He is a vital member of this station and serves an important role by relieving Coast Guard personnel for other duties. In addition, Auxiliarist Mark Deimler has trained to stand duty on the stations 41foot MLB and their 21-foot patrol boat.
3. Several Auxiliary members serving on board the Buoy Tender *William Tate* out of Philadelphia. For example, Steven Roth serves as an in port watch stander and as junior officer of the deck; and, Vito Ferrera works with the EMs on board in port and underway.
4. Auxiliarist Dan Murphy assists the Philadelphia recruiting office answering phones and taking message traffic for the recruiters. He is also redesigning the recruiting office power point presentation and is developing a website for the recruiting office.
5. Fourteen Auxiliarists work at Sector Delaware Bay. Auxiliarist Krista Tinney is the executive secretary for the Area Maritime Security Committee and the Area Contingency Plan meetings and is a vital member of the planning department. Tinney has been tasked to arrange field trips to the Tri-State Emergency Management Center and assists Captain Scott, Captain of the Port, and Captain Harrop, deputy director, in planning hurricane preparedness.

### **Fifth District, Southern Region**

1. Coast Guard Sector Hampton Roads VA communications staff contacted the DSO-CM requesting Auxiliary Telecommunications support for a planned power outage in July. The Command Center and ESD Portsmouth temporarily lost power in order to allow Rescue-21 equipment installations. Auxiliary Fixed-Land units were on stand-by throughout the Sector Hampton Roads AOR (the entire state of Virginia), providing VHF and HF contingency Telecommunications support for the event:
2. A sailboat traveling northbound on ICW failed to make a right turn at Money Point, fully marked on chart with an ATON, and proceeded into St Julian Creek, Chesapeake, Va., where its mast made contact with high power lines. The boat caught fire immediately. The Chesapeake, VA Fire Dept was first responder but couldn't make much headway with the land-based ladder truck. Norfolk Navy Security Boat, Station Portsmouth # 25701, and CG AUX Raven Rescue (28646) arrived on scene at 1100 HRS.

The Auxiliary vessel set up perimeter guard.

## **Seventh District**

1. Flotilla 24 provided support to CG Station Savannah for the Champ Boat Races on the Savannah River. Flotilla 24 and Flotilla 26 met with the Army Corps of Engineers and Georgia Department of Natural Resources Rangers to coordinate boating safety efforts on Lake Lanier during the busy holiday period. Flotilla 25 conducted a recognition ceremony for two youths who were involved in a lifesaving rescue on Lake Hartwell, near Atlanta
2. Of special note is the on-going support to CG Station Tybee Island by Flotilla 28. Auxiliarist Harvey Schirmer has provided over 350 hours of operations and watch standing service at the station, and Randy Wiggins has given over 300 hours of operational crew augmentation onboard USCGC TARPON. Wiggins is qualified and certified to serve as inshore OOD on the TARPON.
3. Operational activities increased throughout the Jacksonville area during July and were the result of Sector Jacksonville's request for additional harbor patrols to keep a watch for suspicious activities. The increase came at the urging of Homeland Security Department agencies and, in addition, patrols are now being conducted on weekdays.
4. Auxiliary Flotilla 14-9 of Jacksonville received a grant to install monofilament fishing line disposal containers at boat launch sites and is working closely on projects with a local Florida Wildlife Commission unit.
5. Working with Sector St. Petersburg, Auxiliary flotillas from Sarasota, FL jointly agreed to provide at least one surface facility each day for Marine Observation Patrols at the Sunshine Skyway Bridge and Port Manatee to keep watch on the local waterways for suspicious activities.
6. Auxiliarist Drew Hodge, a TCT facilitator, held TCT classes for personnel at CG Station Cortez and Sector St. Petersburg. A total of 100 personnel received TCT instruction at the two sessions.
7. Auxiliarist Mark Menzano, a member of Flotilla 34, Ft Lauderdale, FL., provided one day TCT training for 37 personnel at CG Station Ft. Lauderdale. He also spent two days with 18 personnel from Station Ft. Lauderdale, and two days with 23 personnel from Sector Miami on the Practical Pistol and Basic Pistol Marksmanship Courses.
8. Auxiliary instructors provided CPR training for 17 active duty personnel at Station Ft. Lauderdale and Auxiliarist Tom O'Brian is providing one or two days each week at the station repairing boats and engines. In addition, Auxiliarist Matt Wasserman works one day a week assisting the station with crew training.
9. Auxiliary members of the Miami area assisted CG Station Miami Beach by providing radio watch standers and vessel facilities during the two-day Mini Lobster Season. Ten vessel

facilities from the division escorted the USCG Barque *Eagle* through the Port of Miami and Biscayne Bay and 22 Auxiliarists from the division provided guest tours of the *Eagle*.

10. Auxiliarists of Key Largo, FL, took an active role in the July 23 Dive Alive and Safe Diving Exposition during the Mini Lobster Season with a mobile radio unit and stood watch in the Seventh District Recreational Boating Safety trailer.

11. Auxiliary aircraft supporting CG Air Station Savannah reported 19 missions and 69 flight hours. Surveillance flights along the Ocalina Bank, in concert with USCGC SHRIKE, have resumed. Auxiliarist pilots report good communications with all sectors. Training was conducted on most patrols and there was a good signaling practice with mirrors with an Auxiliary vessel facility escorting the French Frigate *Lafayette* up the Savannah River.

12. Auxiliary aircraft supporting CG Air Station Clearwater performed 12 logistic flights, six SAR flights and nine observation flights totaling of 165 flight hours during the month. Six vessels were photographed; a CG boarding party intercepted two.

## **ATLANTIC AREA WEST**

### **Eighth District Eastern Region**

1. Division 18 held a search and rescue exercise on Alum Creek Lake near Columbus, Ohio on 22 June. A helicopter from Air Station Detroit participated in lift training for Auxiliary boat crews and provided excellent publicity to the boaters who witnessed the activities. This event was the culmination of the Boat Crew Training Academy and marked the final on-the-water qualification event for several Crewmen and Coxswains.

2. Sector Ohio Valley is preparing a Strategic Business Plan, and the Auxiliary was asked to participate in the process by submitting input for the SWOT analysis and offering comments on the first drafts of the plans.

3. Revisions to the Sector Ohio Valley Auxiliary SOP are in progress as directed by the new Commanding Officer, CAPT Hung Nguyen. A particular effort was made to incorporate channels for coordination of Auxiliary efforts with those of the sector field command. All of this is to happen during support with various degrees of complexity, and during times when ICS command structure might be activated. It is expected that this will lead to a coordinated Emergency SOP with advance billeting lists to facilitate responding to area wide emergencies.

4. The district board and EXCOM conducted summer meetings in Cincinnati, OH. Among the issues addressed were: new QE Program, boat crew check off procedures, DSAR program, Operational Excellence Program, business plan update, training suggestions for Fall Conference, collateral duty support of Sector Ohio Valley, support to the DIRAUX office and subjects to be brought to the attention of the National Board.

5. The study group involving redrawing the D8/D9 boundary presented a recommendation that addresses the issues of political boundaries, emergency action agency boundaries, and industry requests. The boundary changes recommended received concurrence of Eighth District, Eastern Region. In this district, the changes involve only minor departures from the present northern boundary of the 41<sup>st</sup> parallel, and do not involve the reassignment of any units or significant operational changes to areas of responsibility within the district. The respective district commanders are presently reviewing the recommendation.

### **Eight District, Coastal Region**

1. The rains of late spring and early summer have curtail Auxiliary operations in the north Texas area so far this summer. Division 10 reports that the levels of Lake Texhoma and Lake Ray Roberts are still above flood stage as of this writing. The Corps of Engineers is considering that restoration of services to marinas and allow some ramps to reopen around Labor Day, if there is no more rain. Of the 23 marinas on the lake, only one has remained open during the summer. Food service by all shore side eateries has been flooded out and not projected to reopen until 2008. Flotillas are performing vessel safety checks at dry storage facilities and doing classroom training for public education and member training.

2. Division 5, located in the same relative area, has been like wise affected by the high water on lakes in their area of operations. Again, workarounds have allowed for public education and member training. However, Vessel Safety Checks have been greatly reduced as compared to last year.

### **Eighth District, Western Rivers**

1. Wednesday night, 1 August and Thursday 2 August, Division 11, 8WR had two facilities, one commanded by Denny Sando and the second by Robert Smekta, on patrol on the Mississippi River at the site of the Highway 35W-bridge collapse in Minneapolis, MN. The vessels arrived on scene approximately an hour after receiving the call. After taking part in the unified command briefing, the facilities headed up river to the accident site where they received direction from Sector Upper Mississippi River. On 5 August, the Auxiliary was ordered to stand down concerning the I-35W Bridge collapse because the accident scene was turned into a security zone and is being secured with local LE.

2. Division 5, Flotilla 53, north Texas, assisted CWO Bill Perkis with the inspection of two Ride the Ducks vessels, the Spirit of America Catamaran and one new DUKW from the AVM (Amphibious Vehicle Manufacturer). All were annual COI inspections.

3. Division 9 has worked with a CG PATCOM and crew for two marine events. Prior to the crewmembers of the *Wyaconda* using their morale boat, Senior Chief required them to take an ABC class from Flotilla 96. The division captain had a meeting with the new ensign assigned to MSDQC and went over the future staffing of marine events.

4. Division 11 was busy in July with the many marine events taking place in the Minneapolis area. Two members received qualification as AUXPATCOM and served as patrol commander

for several of the events. Coastie, the robotic boat, has also been in use at several of the community events this summer. There has been a major rotation of active duty personnel at MSD St. Paul and the SO-OP of Division 11 has taken most of them on an area familiarization patrol.

5. Jose Riera, vice flotilla commander, 16-01 took MC Mott on an over flight of his AOR recently to see how the recent flooding was affecting the area. It was learned from this flight that between 15 and 20 percent of the NAVAIDS are off station or in need of repair. SO-AN Les Tuthill and *Muskingum* LO Les Pace are working with Master Chief Mott on a class specifically focused on the aids in the AOR.

### **Ninth District, Eastern Region**

All aspects of boating in this area are down. Most events such as Harborfest in Oswego, NY and Canalfest in the Buffalo area had a lot of vacancies in the marinas and on the river walls. Gasoline cost is \$3.78 to \$4 a gallon and many folks are not traveling. This has had a negative ripple effect on VSC production.

### **Ninth District, Central Region**

1. Operation Barbell, a joint surface and air training exercise that involved Air Station Detroit, was held on 13-15 July. The exercise was the result of planning by Bob Shafer, DSO-AV, Don Pryjmak, DSO-OP, and Ken Renner, DSO-MT. CWO Tom Gough, OTO for Sector Detroit, and LT Ryan Lampe from AIRSTA Detroit, also played a large role in coordinating the event.

2. Friday Aug. 13 was Helo Ops training, as five Auxiliary facilities and one Canadian Coast Guard facility took part in conducting lift evolutions with an HH-65 and rescue swimmer from AIRSTA Detroit. It should be noted that Lake St. Clair lies on the US - Canada border just north of Detroit, so members of the Canadian CG were invited to participate over the entire weekend.

On Saturday, the boat and aircrews met at AIRSTA Detroit for a pre-exercise briefing. The training consisted of AUXAIR and surface facilities working together on a simulated PIW search and rescue mission. An Auxiliary radio station was activated for the event. Members of the Canadian CG rode along on the OPFACs and participated in the exercise.

Communications between the boats and planes was the primary focus of the exercise, with the planes finding the simulated PIW and vectoring the boats to the scene to make the pick-up. Saturday concluded with a debrief, cookout, and fellowship at the AIRSTA.

Sunday's exercise was the most ambitious. Building upon lessons learned, the AUXAIR facilities were given a search plan consisting of a search pattern and CSP. They found the simulated PIW after they had run several legs of their search pattern. At this point, they vectored in surface facilities for the rescue. These scenarios ran smoothly and the PIW was found and recovered in each case. One of the surface facilities was from the Canadian CGA, skippered by Central and Arctic Region Director of Operations Butch Dompierre. After the last scenario was run, another de-brief was held.

Operation Barbell was a success on several levels. It showed that Auxiliary boats are proficient in conducting HELLO Ops and capable of conducting successful joint surface and air

operations. It also demonstrated the value of cross border training with our Canadian counterparts; and that such training creates good will and increases joint capabilities. It also demonstrated that a full-scale operation with approximately 45 members involved could be held at the same time as a major marine event, with the Gold Cup Unlimited hydroplane races that were held at the same time in the Detroit River 25 miles away.

### **Ninth District, Western Region**

1. Coast Guard City USA, Grand Haven, Michigan, hosted the Coast Guard birthday celebration from July 29 to August 4. The Auxiliary participated in the parade, ships tours, memorial services, and recognitions. The first Auxiliarist of the Year was presented to the public along with the active duty and reserve honorees. The Auxiliary was welcomed as an integral part of the Coast Guard family. Sorely missed this year was Ray O'Malley, the last survivor of the Escanaba sinking in 1943, who died in March. His widow and family were present to place a wreath in his honor and a plaque as a memorial.
2. Members of Division 3 participated in the Spill of National Significance exercise. Communication issues and/or improvements are being reviewed and discussed locally.
3. The City of Park Ridge, Ill, officially recognized the hard work performed by the Coast Guard Auxiliary for its work in public boating safety. The city issued a proclamation honoring the local flotilla, Division 7, and the entire Auxiliary July 16.
4. During a recent ops workshop in Milwaukee an actual save occurred. While placing markers for the SAR exercise, Mike Scott came upon a boat in distress. After receiving permission from Station Milwaukee, Mike transferred the markers to Aux PWCs and took the boat under tow. The PWCs fulfilled the mission setting up the markers for the event.

## **PACIFIC AREA**

### **Eleventh District, Northern Region**

1. Several Auxiliary operational facilities (OPFACs) joined with the North Lake Tahoe Fire Prevention District boat and the Washoe County Sheriff's Marine 9 to create a 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks safety zone team. Hundreds of recreational boaters attend these events annually. Because of the interagency cooperation, there was no need for CGSTA Tahoe to provide any of their SAFE boats. AUX OPFACs covered both South Lake Tahoe and Tahoe City (North Tahoe).
2. At Crescent City, CA, during a 4th of July parade, the Flotilla 11 Coastie, the robotic boat, was used to spread the Sea Partner Pollution Prevention message. There were 15,000 adults and children in attendance and 200 Sea Partner Activity Books were handed out to children along parade route. The Coast Guard provided tours of the Crescent City Coast Guard facility and the cutter *Durado*. During the tours, special emphasis was placed on the Coast Guard's mission to prevent pollution in the marine environment.

3. At Lake Shasta, District 11 NR installed another active repeater system high on Bass Mountain, overlooking Shasta Lake. The AUX repeater team replaced the old and outdated system with new equipment that is now fully narrow band. The site has excellent coverage of Shasta Lake, parts of Whiskey Town Lake, Redding and the Sacramento River, below Redding. This has markedly improved radio communication for CG GRU Humboldt Bay.

Local Shasta County administrators stood this repeater site up several years ago under a grant and included the CG Auxiliary as a major partner. This location is shared with CalTrans, US Forest Service and some local private businesses. The Auxiliary will provide the maintenance needed to maintain repeater communications

4. In Sacramento, Flotilla 35 conducted training in navigation and boat handling for the California Highway Patrol. Bob McCaw, Ed Sweeney, and Richard King conducted a Basic Navigation Class over the week of 25 June 07.

5. On July 4<sup>th</sup> members of Division 7 were asked to represent the USCG, along with active duty from the four other military branches, in a special joint military color guard for the *Stadium of Fire* celebration at Brigham Young University in Provo UT. This is the largest 4<sup>th</sup> of July event in the state. Sponsors of the event underwrote broadcasting via the Armed Forces Network to members of the armed forces throughout the world.

### **District Eleven, Southern Region**

1. The Auxiliary was honored by The Western States Boating Administrators Association for 60 years of the Vessel Examination program. RADM Breckenridge, Commander Eleventh Coast Guard District, passed the WSBA resolution to all Auxiliarists in the 11th CGD.

2. The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office in Arizona put out an emergency call for search and recovery assistance for a small plane with two people on board at Lake Pleasant, AZ, on 10 June 2007. Within four hours of initial notification, vessels with coxswain and crew and radio guard were in place for the five days of the ensuing week, as requested. A safety perimeter was provided for the sheriff's office and their divers by the vessel on patrol during their recovery operations. Those members involved were: Dave Esparza, Coxswain; crewmembers Dan Wall and Steve McSain; and radio guard, Stanley Klock, Mary Klock, and John Whiting. The recovery efforts were completed at the end of the third day and the Auxiliary was released from duty at that time.

3. On Saturday, 21 July, RADM Bone attended the OPEX of divisions 09 and 10 held at Lake Mead, Nevada. The CO, deputy and AUXLO from Sector San Diego were present. Sector provided an early morning FAM flight covering the river and three lakes. Mike Johnson, inland RCO narrated the points of interest during the flight. RADM Bone and his aide participated in the TCT training and observed the boat crew re-qualifications taking place.

4. A boating mishap on Roosevelt Lake in Arizona resulted in the sinking of a 20-foot watercraft at the entrance of a popular skiing area. Because most of the watercraft was submerged and presented a navigation hazard, it was necessary to close off the entrance to

Salome Cove during a sheriff's investigation. Members of the local flotilla at Roosevelt Lake to assist during the weekend offered to secure the scene. Special recognition goes to members Chuck Costelow, and Bud Gothann, along with their crews.

Sgt. John France, Roosevelt Lake, Patrol, Gila County Sheriff's Department sent a letter to USCG Sector San Diego thanking the Auxiliary for their support during this incident. He wrote: "They did a tremendous service to boating enthusiasts on Roosevelt Lake as well as Gila County Sheriff's Office."

### **District 13**

1. Following a successful event on Memorial Day Weekend, CGD 13 and Sector Seattle initiated a return visit to Wanapum Lake to help Grant and Kittitas County cover the weekend proceeding the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Station Seattle supplied a RBS with a joint Station Seattle and Station Portland crew. Following the event the Commander, Sector Seattle, sent a BZ message to the men and women of team Coast Guard, active duty and Auxiliary, who turned the Wanapum Lake concept into a reality.

2. Another example of close coordination with Auxiliary resources and an active duty unit was the operation conducted by the CGC *Henry Blake*. The following is the report by LT Katie Blanchard, CO of this Buoy Tender based in Puget Sound. The capability supplied by the Auxiliary was a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) that has been providing support to CGD Thirteen for the past year. LT Blanchard wrote:

"On Wednesday August 1st, with the help of the CG Auxiliary, CGC HENRY BLAKE pulled over 4000ft of sub cable from Neah Bay. This sub cable was previously used to power several aids to navigation on Waddah Island. This evolution started several months ago with a meeting between HENRY BLAKE personnel and CG Auxiliarists Dale and Amy Jacobs. Dale demonstrated and discussed the capabilities of the self made Remote Operated Vehicle (ROV) that he and his dad, Ed Jacobs, had developed. This machine was capable of seeing the cable and following it from one bank to the other if the water clarity was there. He also had side scan sonar that was capable of depicting objects under the water. Over the July 4th holiday, the CG Auxiliary team of Dale, Amy and Ed Jacobs headed up to Neah Bay and did a survey of the area to locate and identify cable and hazards that might impact the ability to pull the cable. Utilizing Station Neah Bay's 47 with BM1 Canny and BM2 Patton as coxswain, they completed a survey of the area and identified some hazards as well as a portion of the cable. With this information, CGC HENRY BLAKE headed out to Neah Bay and utilized our unique buoy deck and hold station capabilities to pull the cable. CGC HENRY BLAKE was able to hold position just south of Waddah Island and have the small boat tow the bitter end of the sub cable out to the ship. We attached the cable to the inhaul device and wrapped the cable up as the ship slowly walked in the direction of the other bitter end. In the middle of the channel, we pivoted the ship around and continued pulling in cable eventually pulling up over 4000 ft of cable. This evolution was a huge success and a demonstration of the unique capabilities of the CG Auxiliary."

## District 14

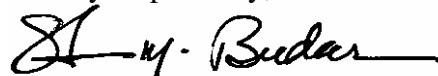
1. Communications in the Hawaiian Islands is critical, and to cover the vast area that the islands occupy, VHF-FM “High Sites” have been established by the Coast Guard to provide the greatest coverage for the boating public to have communications with the Coast Guard. These high sites require maintenance, and the Auxiliary is often tasked to assist when the high sites are down. On Tuesday July 24, between 0930 and 1230, the Kulani High Site on the big island needed to be shut down. The Auxiliary was requested by sector to provide coverage using Aux Air and land fixed and portable VHF-FM radios. The Auxiliary radio net was activated at 0900 and remained operational until the completion of the maintenance cycle.

2. Fifteen members of Division One participated in the 61st Kailua, Oahu July 4th Parade. The public response of clapping and cheers while viewing the trailered 23-foot UTL “Safe Boat” occupied by its Auxiliary crew in their ODU’s was overwhelming. The “Auxiliary Ambassadors,” who walked beside the UTL, were beckoned by people and children of all ages asking for the coloring books and PFD brochures they were passing out.

## District 17

On June 14, the D17 Whittier flotilla participated in a sea, search and rescue exercise with the Alaska Air National Guard and the 212 ARSQ. The scenario was a military aircraft had to make an emergency landing in the water behind simulated enemy lines. With the emergency ditching completed, 12 survivors were counted. Two were in a 20-man raft, two were on shore and eight were in the water. We provided three vessels for this exercise. One vessel was for transportation of all 12 of the participants and their equipment. Two vessels were used for traffic and safety patrol. At 11 a.m., an ANG C-130 flew over and air dropped a PWC and four Pararescue “PJ’s” members to aid in removing the survivors. One PJ would take the PWC to the survivors bring two or three persons back on the PWC to a seven man raft that was air dropped with the PWC. Two Pave Hawk Helicopters arrived to hoist each survivor from the water, including the life raft and the shoreline, to safety. After all the survivors were airlifted out of the simulated enemy area, we cleaned up the area of debris and delivered all the wet parachutes and equipment back to Cliffside Whittier Marina to be transported back to Kulus ANG in Anchorage. This exercise went off without a problem; professionalism was displayed by all that were involved. Members involved with this exercise: coxswain Roy Stoddard with crew Terry Stoddard; coxswain Sigurd Murphy with crew Tom Kane, and coxswain Bill Morris with crew Linda Shogren.

Very respectfully,



Steven M. Budar  
National Commodore