

NACO D1NR CONFERENCE REMARKS

Admiral Pecoske, Commodores Kerigan and Johnson, and all of the members of the Coast Guard family, good evening. It is a pleasure to be here tonight and have an opportunity to share some of the thoughts of the National Leadership with you as we begin to move forward on a carefully charted course over the next two years.

For those who know me, realize the preparation and planning are two things that I hold high. I have been working a lot on N-Train which many of you know will be held in the next several weeks. I received a call from Commodore Johnson on Wednesday evening this past week when Bob and I discussed various issues and N-Train. Then Bob in his nonchalant way said, "Do you believe in free speech?" Thinking that this was a constitutional question and being conscious of my leadership responsibilities I responded, "Of course." Bob then said, "Fine, why don't you come up here and give us one." So much for preparation and planning. Seriously, I am delighted to have this opportunity to be with you this evening and to talk with you about the future of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Let me begin by saying that in order to understand where we are heading, we need only recall our recent history. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 resulted in a rapid and substantial transformation of the United States Government, as our nation sought to become better prepared to anticipate, deter, or respond to future terrorist actions. Not since the Korean War has our government increased its spending on national security matters to such a degree.

The Coast Guard has been in the forefront of this transformation. It plays a leading role in enhancing our maritime security and, as before, looks to the Auxiliary for assistance in performing its many missions.

In November of this past year, the New National Executive Committee attended the Commandant's Coast Guard Flag Conference in Miami, Florida. At that conference, we were given an opportunity to address and brief the Coast Guard Flag Officers on what to expect from the Coast Guard Auxiliary during the next two-to-five years.

We presented our plans and anticipated results for our first 100 days at the helm.

Fortunately, well before assuming the office on 1 November, your new leadership team began planning how to invigorate the transformation of the Auxiliary from an organization solely concerned with maritime safety, to one that gives added attention to maritime security. Our intended course was and is to wrap maritime safety and security into *one balanced effort* that will see the Auxiliary in step with the Coast Guard, in providing this country with safe and secure waterways.

As we thought through just how to accomplish this, the magnitude of this challenge became apparent. Nonetheless, I am convinced that, working together with common purpose we can succeed.

Our first 100 days will not be complete until February 8th, but I wanted to give you an overview of the Auxiliary's Direction, specifically as they pertain to our "Established

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Organizational Focus.” This focus includes our Vision and Mission Statements, our strategic imperatives, our new direction, and our strategic business plan.

Simply stated, the Vision of the Coast Guard Auxiliary is “To meet America’s changing maritime safety and security challenges while, at the same time, providing the American public with an array of recreational boating, and maritime safety programs.”

To realize this vision, we need to work together to **blend and balance** the concepts of change and continuity.

Why talk about change and continuity? Change and continuity is a recurring theme associated with leadership transitions in many organizations, including the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary. Admiral Thomas H. Collins marked the first anniversary of the Coast Guard’s realignment under the Department of Homeland Security by stating that, “The dual threads of change and continuity are woven into the fabric of the Coast Guard’s performance of today’s missions and its anticipation of tomorrow’s.”

Just as the Coast Guard charts a new course, so too must we. We need to provide not only a continuation of the superior level of service that we have provided for the past 65 years, but also a bold enhancement of that service to include an entirely new set of actions and directions in support of our country’s Maritime Homeland Security.

The overarching mission of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is to contribute to the safety and security of our citizens, ports, waterways, and coastal regions. We need to **balance** our missions of Recreational Boating Safety and Coast Guard Support with Maritime Homeland Security, and other missions that emerge as a result of our growing understanding of the changes required of us in the post 9/11 era.

One of the major post-9/11 changes affecting the Coast Guard is the need to increase Maritime Domain Awareness. Maritime Domain Awareness has been defined as “the effective knowledge of all activities associated with the global maritime environment that could adversely impact the security, safety, economy, or environment of the United States.”

How do we, the Auxiliary fit into the Maritime Domain Awareness program?

Let me see if I can describe to you just how we fit. As part of the Coast Guard’s Homeland Security Plan, the Coast Guard has developed a four-prong safety and security matrix. The four central themes of this matrix are Awareness, Prevention, Protection, and Response.

Prior to 9/11, most of the Coast Guard’s national homeland security efforts were focused on the far right side of the matrix in the way of protection and response. Little thought or effort was directed to awareness and prevention as the national mind-set was based on the belief that terrorism was something that would probably occur only outside of the homeland. The events of 9/11 dramatically altered that view, emphasizing the importance of awareness and prevention.

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Most of our Auxiliary missions fall within the Awareness and Preventions themes and to some degree Response. Efforts to protect America's waterways and critical infrastructure fall largely outside of the Auxiliary's authorized missions; however, the Auxiliary does have a role in augmenting Coast Guard billets so that more of the Active Duty personnel can join the front line in protecting areas and sites.

Let me emphasize that while Maritime Domain Awareness directly positions the Auxiliary to become a major support force in both safety and security roles, Maritime Domain Awareness encompasses more than security. Post-9/11 security is a major and very important part, but Maritime Domain Awareness also includes all *maritime safety issues*, including, but not limited to, Public Education, Vessel Safety Checks, and the Recreational Boating Safety Visitation Program. Likewise, it includes the Auxiliary's operational support of the Coast Guard's safety mission through safety patrols and search and rescue missions.

These Recreational Boating Safety and Operations programs position the Auxiliary to provide not only safety measures but to share critical information to the boating community on awareness. Likewise, by blending our America's Waterway Watch program into these traditional safety missions, it allows these outreach activities to broaden their scope and make a significant contribution to United States Maritime Security.

I think that it becomes increasingly evident that as the Coast Guard becomes more involved with maritime security matters, the Auxiliary will have to carry a heavier burden with maritime safety needs.

Additionally, as with awareness, prevention efforts are also deeply embedded in the Auxiliary's Operation Patriot Readiness Program, with its set of seven well-defined operations.

Using the Auxiliary's Operation Patriot Readiness Phase III Program as the nucleus, the Auxiliary has begun building a Maritime Domain Awareness capability that includes the elements of awareness, prevention, and response.

To help spearhead this effort we have created a new position within the Auxiliary, the National Director for Maritime Domain Awareness. The new position will work closely with his Coast Guard counterpart and our leadership to identify and develop specific Auxiliary programs and activities in support of increased Maritime Domain Awareness. Additionally, his responsibility is to make abundantly clear to our organization, that all we do, must bear on Maritime Domain Awareness. It is equally important for our members to understand that Maritime Domain Awareness includes both our new maritime security missions as well as our traditional maritime safety missions.

The Auxiliary welcomes the new opportunities to support the Coast Guard and will certainly assume a larger role in Maritime Domain Awareness. But, recreational boating safety remains a shared responsibility with the Coast Guard. We must maintain and, if

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possible, increase our safety programs, as well as integrate Maritime Domain Awareness into each of them.

I cannot stress enough, that our traditional cornerstone activities remain worthy missions. They save lives and property. They are the major sources of new members and help provide funds to all levels of the Auxiliary. What could be better?

The key task for the Auxiliary in the years ahead is to maintain the appropriate *balance* between our new opportunities and these traditional missions.

Tonight, I have portrayed the need for change. You may well ask, “If the need for change is obvious, why do we also speak of continuity?” The answer is simple. The core values of both the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary – honor, respect, and devotion to duty – are our fundamental strengths. These and related attributes – *professionalism*, *accountability*, and *commitment* – are the foundation of our continued success.

It is essential for us to align our organizational strategies with these core values and strengths as we chart a course for the future.

We must continue to be “people-centric” and maintain our efforts to recruit and retain members. As our Maritime Domain Awareness programs and activities take shape, we will increase our efforts to explain these changes, show why these are necessary, and how our members can contribute to and benefit from “our new Auxiliary direction.”

I have tried to give you an overview of our new direction, but this direction must also coincide with the Coast Guard Auxiliary’s Strategic Business Plan. I would like to talk briefly about this plan.

This plan is a strategic blueprint for the Auxiliary. It describes the environment, key strategic imperatives, identifies missions and directions for the period, and provides a listing of tasks and associated milestones.

This plan is intended to be a living document and will be updated as necessary based upon feedback from appropriate Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary authorities and our progress toward accomplishing the elements of the plan, as well as future changes in the environment.

The Strategic Business Plan is properly characterized as evolutionary, rather than revolutionary. Nonetheless, the cumulative effects of implementing the plan’s features are intended to be substantial—providing clear direction, focus, and accountability for the coming years.

I feel it is important to understand a few of the basic premises that went into the development of both our direction and the business plan:

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- The expectations and demands of the Coast Guard, the recreational boater and the nation will not allow us to follow a “business as usual” strategy.
- The Coast Guard Auxiliary will continue to move into new and largely uncharted areas of responsibility. Although we will assume added duties, we will also have new, interesting, and rewarding opportunities to contribute.
- It will be up to the senior leadership of the Auxiliary to chart these unknown waters and provide to our membership, the Coast Guard, and the country, a ***bold enhancement of services*** to include an entirely new set of actions and directions in support of America’s Maritime Homeland Security.
- As the Coast Guard reviews its missions, we will identify jobs that could be more appropriately handled by the Coast Guard Auxiliary.
- The Auxiliary will welcome such tasking and will do whatever is necessary to shoulder a larger role in Maritime Domain Awareness.
- That the major thread throughout our transformation will be balance our new opportunities with our traditional missions.
- Lastly, we need to share a sense of urgency. Failure is not an option and time is not on our side.

Our New Direction for the Auxiliary and our Business Plan documents have been provided to the District Commodores and National Staff.

We need to remember that while plans are certainly important, they are just a beginning. Membership commitment is essential if we are to implement these plans successfully. I am confident that each of you will continue to provide outstanding support and commitment to the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary.

The next few years will provide us with new, interesting, and important jobs, and with your continued valued support and commitment, we will stand side-by-side with the Coast Guard – *Semper Paratus* – ready to answer the call of the Nation, the Recreational Boating Public and the Maritime community.

I thank you for your patience, your attention and your gracious hospitality; this truly has been an outstanding conference.