

Lisa Smith Writing samples

that will help us think appropriately about how to move forward.

Interview with the USCG Assistant Commandant for Engineering and Logistics

Rear Adm. Amy Grable, assistant commandant for engineering and logistics and Coast Guard chief engineer, gave an overview of responsibilities of her directorate, which manages and sustains every surface, aviation and shore asset owned by the Coast Guard, encompassing 243 cutters, 1,700 boats and 200 rotary and fixed wing aircraft, as well as a \$24 billion shore plan that involves 6,800 buildings.

Grable emphasized the need for shore infrastructure improvements because over 50% of shore infrastructure is past its useful service life. A recently implemented 20-year campaign plan will address strategically aligning home ports with new cutter purchases and modernizing the civil engineering program to keep pace with advancements in the field. Data and data analytics will enable leadership to make informed operational impact decisions when prioritizing improvements.

Grable also discussed the impact of deferred maintenance of cutters due to limited funding and price increases. Organizational-level maintenance to ensure readiness and safety is regularly performed by Coast Guard crews, but in some cases over 50% of depot-level maintenance is being deferred. Around 10% to 15% of maintenance is performed at Coast Guard Yard, which is 125 years old and needs substantial updating.

Page 2

The Coast Guard relies on the industrial base for maintenance not conducted at Coast Guard Yard, and Grable said access to that base is limited. Depot-level planned maintenance is a struggle because of reallocating funds for emergency repairs that could have been mitigated with regular planned maintenance. Grable noted that at the close of 2023, the Coast Guard deferred over \$120 million of planned maintenance and the fiscal year 2025 unfunded priority list contains \$18.5 million for the highest priority and most critical shortfalls on the service fleet.

Finally, Grable discussed the impact on the Coast Guard of the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, because Coast Guard Yard is located on Curtis Bay, inland of that bridge. Long-term impacts are still being assessed, but, at the time of the presentation, vessels could not come in or out for repair or to bring needed repair supplies. Grable added that the biggest impact, initially, is to personnel who are unable to use that bridge for their daily commute, which in turn could affect the retainment of talented personnel.

At right, Rear Adm. Amy Grable, assistant commandant for engineering and logistics and Coast Guard chief engineer, with Loretta Haring, Office of Strategic Planning and Communication (CG-925) in the Acquisition Directorate.

Mission execution begins [here](#).

[NEXT](#)

[HOME](#)

[BACK](#)

SAS 2024 *continued from page 2*

Interview with the USCG Commander of the Personnel Service Center

Rear Adm. Russell Dash, commander of the Personnel Service Center, addressed issues with recruiting, as the Coast Guard has struggled to meet the service's recruitment goals for the past four years and will probably be unable to meet its goals this year. Dash stated that the Coast Guard's commitment to law enforcement and rescue operations has not diminished; however, because of staffing shortages, difficult decisions were made to lay up some assets and evaluate which units can be staffed at a reduced capacity.

Dash acknowledged these workforce staffing challenges are not only impacting the Coast Guard, but other branches of the military as well. Reduced birth rates that began 17 years ago are impacting recruiting efforts and the U.S. workforce in general.

Additionally, the Coast Guard's tools for recruitment and retention tracking purposes are somewhat antiquated and modern personnel management software is not being used to provide automation of certain efforts, which would allow personnel to be allocated elsewhere. The Coast Guard has stood up an incident management team and appointed Dash as the incident commander to identify innovative ways to address these recruitment issues. Recruiting initiatives are underway to generate more leads and interest in talking with Coast Guard recruiters; improve the recruitment process, which includes a summer 2024 first release of the Coast Guard recruitment mobile app to appeal to the young generation of heavy technology users; and increase the capacity of Coast Guard recruiters who were reduced in number (as well as recruiting offices) over the past decade. Various innovative techniques to attract candidates, such as offering cash incentives for referrals for active Coast Guard members and retirees, are currently in play, and the Coast Guard is watching recruitment techniques of other military branches as well.

Retention of personnel is another challenge to address. The commandant of the Coast Guard, Adm. Linda Fagan, has stated a change in generational approach to talent management is in order and her first priority is to transform the entire Coast Guard workforce, including officers, enlisted, Reserve, civilian and auxiliary. This priority spawned the creation of the Talent Management Transformation Taskforce. The first phase, to evaluate the problem, was completed and the taskforce proposed decisions to Coast Guard leadership around six main lines of effort, which were recently approved. They are now moving into the project's integration office phase that focuses on how the Coast Guard attracts, hires, trains and motivates personnel for retention as well as their families. Changes in the promotion process include allowing personnel to stay in their position for as long as they wish; should they come up for promotion, they can step out of that process and still stay in the Coast Guard. The goal is to retain as many E-5s and E-6s as possible at the advanced journeyman level to provide maintenance for newly purchased surface vessels and aircraft.



Rear Adm. Russell Dash, commander of the Personnel Service Center.

Mission execution begins *here.*

NEXT

HOME

Coast Guard Unmanned Systems Experimentation and Lessons Learned

Capt. Thomas C. Remmers, Unmanned Systems Cross-Functional Team lead, briefed the audience at the 2024 Sea-Air-Space event on the Coast Guard's use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) over the past year, lessons learned, and future plans for unmanned capabilities.

Remmers spoke on the Coast Guard Unmanned Systems Strategic Plan, released at last year's Sea-Air-Space. He outlined how the Coast Guard is responding as a service to the expanded use of short-, medium- and long-range UAS, how UAS can be deployed for mission execution, how the Coast Guard can defend itself against adversaries and how the Coast Guard defines what is legal in the maritime transportation sector.

Long-range UAS (LR-UAS) have been deployed on various individual search and rescue missions, and joint missions related to border protection, land border surveillance outside the continental U.S. and international joint maritime activity. Remmers stated the Coast Guard sees the value in the future use of LR-UAS as an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platform and is currently seeking to develop the right requirements and capabilities to supplement the current manned fixed wing capabilities.

The Coast Guard has employed medium-range UAS (MR-UAS) through a contractor-owned and -operated arrangement (the contract is currently being recompeted with new requirements for potential use on additional host cutters) for several years. The contractors are deployed on national security cutters to launch and recover MR-UAS and provide up-close surveillance on a target, which assists with situational maritime awareness.

For short-range UAS (SR-UAS), the Coast Guard has acquired two models of "Blue Certified" – National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) compliant – multicopters and has many trained operators. The Coast Guard is on track to have over 1,000 SR-UAS pilots and is still determining the best ways to use them. It plans to obtain more NDAA-



Capt. Thomas C. Remmers, Unmanned Systems Cross-Functional Team lead.

compliant SR-UAS models with sensors and greater endurance as they are quicker to deploy when gathering images, like those taken at the site of the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse. Remmers also highlighted the use of unmanned surface vehicles such as the Saldrone, which are also contractor-owned and -operated.

Mission execution begins [here](#).

[NEXT](#)

[HOME](#)

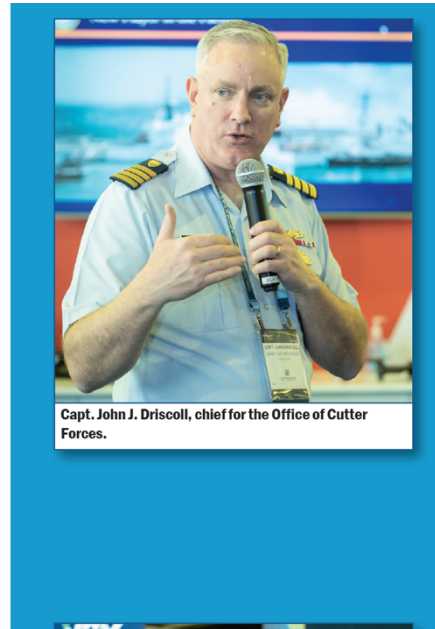
[BACK](#)

SAS 2024 *continued from page 4*

USCG Cutter Forces: Ready Today, Preparing for Tomorrow

Capt. John J. Driscoll, chief for the Office of Cutter Forces, highlighted missions Coast Guard cutters are currently performing domestically and internationally, as well as mission needs that are likely to emerge in the future. Domestically, cutters are conducting a full range of Department of Homeland Security national defense missions and immigrant and drug interdictions off the coast of Florida and in the Caribbean. Internationally, the Coast Guard has been expanding its presence on the seas in a way not done previously; for instance, the Coast Guard has ships in Bahrain conducting interdiction missions of shipments in the Arabian Sea. The Coast Guard is also increasing support to NATO partners in the Arctic and Scandinavian regions, providing assistance off the coast of Norway with Coast Guard Cutter Healy and welcoming a new NATO partner in Sweden last year with the training vessel, Coast Guard Cutter Eagle. Additionally, more ships have been deployed to the Indo-Pacific region, performing joint operations with the governments of India and Papua New Guinea.

In December 2023, the 270-foot medium endurance cutter Harriet Lane, which had been homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia, and recently received new capabilities under the Service Life Extension Program, was re-homeported to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, a shift from the tradition of medium endurance cutters being homeported on the East Coast. This re-homeporting allows Harriet Lane to conduct joint operations with the U.S. Navy in such places as Fiji and Australia in the Oceanic region, areas where the Coast Guard previously had minimal presence. These joint operations entail assisting countries in that region to enforce their fisheries laws as well as patrol for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.



Capt. John J. Driscoll, chief for the Office of Cutter Forces.

time longer to get awarded because of the technicalities of the boat.

Partnerships and Collaboration with Industry

Capt. Andrew Pecora, commander of the Surface Forces Logistics Center (SFLC) in Baltimore, discussed the mission of the SFLC, which is responsible for the lifecycle sustainment and support of assets in operation around the world. Three lines of effort are performed by the SFLC: scheduled maintenance, casualty maintenance and renovation maintenance. With cutters that are 40 to 60 years old, the Coast Guard is conducting several service life extension programs, which ensure continued operation and create ample commercial contractor opportunities.

Pecora emphasized the importance of contractors for successful Coast Guard missions and that the Coast Guard can work more effectively with industry, outlining the initiatives underway to improve the contracting process. Currently, 1,300 maintenance projects are performed annually on cutters, which could range from drydock and dockside actions to engine overhauls. The Coast Guard conducts about 90% of its business with commercial contractors within the continental United States and in certain areas overseas, so collaborating with companies within the maritime industry is key.

Pecora said, "Our goal is to make decisions smarter and faster."

Coast Guard Climate Framework and Implementation

Candace Nachman, senior ocean policy and program adviser for the Polar Coordination Office, spoke about the impact of climate change on Coast Guard operations, mission, infrastructure and people. Adm. Linda Fagan, Coast Guard commandant, in February released the Coast Guard's first climate framework to address those concerns.

The framework focuses on three lines of effort: preparedness, resiliency and partnerships. Investment in these three lines of effort is critical as the effects of climate change can now be seen during Coast Guard operations addressing transoceanic crime, migration of people and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Climate change also impacts port security and the marine transportation system. The U.S. works closely with tribal partners, state and local governments, international partners, industry leaders and academia to better align with the Department of



Capt. Andrew Pecora, commander of the Surface Forces Logistics Center in Baltimore.



Candace Nachman, senior ocean policy and program adviser for the Polar Coordination Office.

Mission execution begins [here](#).

[NEXT](#)

[HOME](#)

[BACK](#)

SAS 2024 *continued from page 6*

Homeland Security's plan to address climate change and other agency efforts.

In line with those efforts, the Coast Guard has over 50 initiatives underway, under the guidance of the Coast Guard Climate Policy Working Group.