

from its aging ships—but it also underscores the fact that the Coast Guard has been forced, primarily for budget reasons, to carry out its military, maritime-safety, law-enforcement, and other missions with outdated resources that are badly in need of replacement and repair. Some Coast Guard ships were in active service during World War II.

It is not just ships, though. The Coast Guard's 190 fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters also need replacement, and often need repairs to sustain acceptable readiness and safety levels. Exacerbating the problem is the fact that these air and surface platforms were purchased piecemeal over decades, so they were never properly integrated with the right communication and data links or fitted with proper sensors. (One problem afflicting today's fleet is that the Coast Guard's HH-60J Jayhawk helicopters are too large to land on any but the largest of the service's cutters.)

CASUALTIES UP, AVAILABILITY DOWN

The overall situation has caused numerous problems for the Coast Guard, and also has degraded the service's "ability to manage the tactical picture," said Rear Adm. Ernest Riutta, assistant commandant for operations.

The end result is a steady decline in readiness and in the availability of Coast Guard ships and aircraft to perform their missions. Machinery and electronics casualties have increased 45 percent in 10 years, for example, and the nonavailability rate for HU-25 Falcon medium-range search aircraft has doubled since 1996.

To remedy these problems the Coast Guard has developed a plan to replace and modernize its current ships, aircraft, and command, control, and communications (C3) network. That plan is called "Deepwater." One of its main aims is to ensure that the new ships, aircraft, and C3 equipment the Coast Guard will be buying in the future are fully interoperable from the start, instead of knitted together haphazardly, as has been the case in the past.

To ensure that the proposed fleet recapitalization is well-planned and can be carried out in a cost-effective manner the Coast Guard has issued contracts to three industry teams:

Avondale Industries—Newport News Shipbuilding—Boeing—Raytheon.

Science Applications International—Bath Iron Works—Marinette Marine—Sikorsky.

Lockheed Martin—Ingalls Shipbuilding—Litton—Bollinger Shipyards—Bell Helicopter Textron.

Each member of each team possesses expertise in areas of operational importance to the Coast Guard. Lockheed Martin's Government and Electronic Systems Division in Moorestown, N.J., for example, has long supplied the Navy with such important systems as the highly successful Aegis SPY-1 radar system, the Mk92 fire-control radar carried on Perry-class guided-missile frigates, and the Mk41 vertical-launch system. The company also has a strong reputation for successfully integrating varied naval communications and combat systems.

SHORTFALLS AND STATISTICS

To fully understand Deepwater, one must first examine the shortfalls in platforms and equipment currently affecting the Coast Guard. One telling statistic: Seven of the service's nine classes of ships and aircraft will reach the end of their originally projected service lives within the next 15 years.

The Coast Guard relies upon three classes of cutters for its long- and medium-range surface missions: the 378-foot Hamilton-class high-endurance cutters (WHECs); the 270-foot Famous-class medium-endurance cutters (WMECs); and the 210-foot Reliance-class WMECs.

All of these ships are aging—some were built as long ago as the late 1960s—and are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. They also are technologically obsolescent. The diesel engines of the Reliance-class cutters are so old, in fact, that they are used elsewhere only on the locomotives in South Africa.

These ships also impose a heavy personnel burden on the Coast Guard. The *Dallas*, for example, normally carries a crew of 19 officers and 152 enlisted personnel, more than twice the number required to operate highly automated modern cutters of similar size. The Danish Thetis-class offshore patrol vessel is 369 feet long, displaces 3,500 tons, and has a 90-day endurance—but operates with a crew of only 90 personnel. A larger crew means a higher payroll of course. What this means is that the Coast Guard has been forced, in essence, to pay a sizable surcharge simply because it has not been provided the funds needed to buy new advanced-technology ships.

OPERATIONAL INCOMPATIBILITIES

There are several operational factors to consider, moreover. The Reliance class cutters are equipped with surface-search radars, for example, but have no sonars and no electronic countermeasures systems. They are capable of landing helicopters, but have no hangar facilities.

Even the somewhat less antiquated Famous-class WMEC, built in the 1980s, lack the ability to maintain real-time voice, video, or data links with other Coast Guard assets; they also have no Link-11 or Link-16 capability, essential for the exchange of tactical data with other U.S. military forces.

There also are shortfalls in speed. None of the Coast Guard's cutters can match the so-called "go-fast" boats—drug smuggling craft that can achieve high rates of speed. Smugglers often are also armed with night-vision goggles, satellite phones, and digital precision-location equipment, widely available commercial gear that Coast Guard vessels do not have.

The Coast Guard's aviation assets suffer from similar limitations. The HH-65A Dolphin helicopters, for example, are operationally compatible with the Reliance, Hamilton, and Famous cutters, but the Dolphin's sensor payload is less than it could be because of weight handling limitations on the cutters.

The service's HH-60J Jayhawk helicopters are capable of long-range operations, and have significant endurance, but these helicopters are compatible only with the Famous-class WMECs—which can give them only limited on board maintenance and logistics support, unfortunately.

Among the Coast Guard's fixed-wing aviation assets are 20 HU-25 Falcon medium-range search jets, all of which are over 14 years old and suffer from engine supportability problems. Their APG-66 radar provides a good intercept capability—but only eight of the HU-25s are equipped with that radar. The remaining 12 Falcons simply lack the modern sensor packages they need to carry out their missions. One indication of the limited utility of the Falcon fleet is the fact that the Coast Guard put 17 others Falcons into storage in 1998.

DEEP, DARK DEFICIENCIES

The deficiency in sensors puts Coast Guard ships and aircraft at a severe disadvantage against maritime lawbreakers, according to Capt. Craig Schnappinger, the Coast Guard's Deepwater program manager. "They can see us before we can see them."

The Coast Guard's 23 HC-130 fixed-wing aircraft, which are used for long-range aerial-search missions, are being fitted with new FLIR and electro-optical sensor packages

and Global Positioning System receivers. This is one of the few bright spots in Coast Guard aviation today. Otherwise, the picture is dark. "Scrutiny of individual platform capabilities," according to the Coast Guard's '21st Century Hemispheric Maritime Security' document, "reveals an unintegrated system that falls well short of optimum tactical requirements."

One of the more promising hardware solutions to its aviation problems that the Coast Guard is considering is the HV-609, a commercial tiltrotor craft that can take off and land like a helicopter but fly like a fixed-wing aircraft. Now under development by Bell Helicopter Textron, the HV-609 will have a speed of 275 knots and a range of 750 nautical miles, and will be able to carry a significant payload. Because of its versatility the Coast Guard might possibly use the '609 to replace several different types of aviation platforms now in the inventory—thereby helping to streamline logistics and maintenance costs in the future.

The Coast Guard protects the nation's maritime borders and carries out numerous missions of importance to all Americans. But continuing to operate aging platforms that are not equipped with modern sensors guarantees a future filled with hazard and difficulty not only for the Coast Guard itself but for all whose lives are touched by the sea.

By recapitalizing the force, the Coast Guard believes, it will be able to operate more safely and efficiently—and more cost-effectively as well. "I think we are moving in the right direction," said Riutta. Congressional approval of the Deepwater program, he said, will "more u into the next century and equip our people with the resources [needed] to do their jobs properly."

EAGLE SCOUTS HONORED

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to bring to the attention of my colleagues, six outstanding young individuals from the 3rd Congressional District of Illinois, all who have completed a major goal in their scouting career.

The following young men of the 3rd Congressional District of Illinois have earned the high rank of Eagle Scout in the fall and winter seasons: Anthony Cesaro, Eric Charles Fritz, John A. Studnicka Jr., Brandon William Pfizenmaier, Peter William Davidovith, and Charles Lamphier. These young men have demonstrated their commitment to their communities, and have perpetuated the principles of scouting. It is important to note that less than two percent of all young men in America attain the rank of Eagle Scout. This high honor can only be earned by those scouts demonstrating extraordinary leadership abilities.

In light of the commendable leadership and courageous activities performed by these fine young men, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the above scouts for attaining the highest honor in Scouting—the Rank of Eagle. Let us wish them the very best in all of their future endeavors.