

STATEMENT BY
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U. S. COAST GUARD

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANPOWER AND PERSONNEL
UNITED STATES SENATE

SELECTED RESERVE STRENGTH AUTHORIZATION

SECOND SESSION, 98TH CONGRESS
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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, I AM REAR ADMIRAL JAMES C. IRWIN, CHIEF, OFFICE OF RESERVE, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD. THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE YOU TODAY IN BEHALF OF THE COAST GUARD'S SELECTED RESERVE STRENGTH AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FOR FISCAL YEAR 1985.

THE LEGISLATION BEFORE THIS SUBCOMMITTEE PROPOSES AN AVERAGE ANNUAL STRENGTH OF 12,500 COAST GUARD SELECTED RESERVE IN FISCAL YEAR 1985. THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 500 OVER THE CURRENT YEAR. PROPERLY TRAINED AND ORGANIZED OUR SELECTED RESERVE COMPONENTS ARE THE ONLY FORCES AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE EXPANSION UPON MOBILIZATION.

FROM 1975 THROUGH 1981 OUR AUTHORIZED STRENGTH WAS SET AT 11,700. IN 1982 THIS SUBCOMMITTEE INCREASED THE NUMBER TO 12,000. WHILE A COMPARATIVELY SMALL INCREASE IN NUMBERS, IT WAS VIEWED AS AN INCREMENTAL STEP TOWARD AN IMPROVED EARLY MOBILIZATION POSTURE. THE 1983 AND 1984 AUTHORIZED STRENGTH REMAINED AT 12,000. SOME PROBLEMS IN RECRUITING KEPT US FROM ACTUALLY ATTAINING THE FULL INCREASE IN STRENGTH IN FISCAL YEAR 1982, BUT THESE WERE LARGELY OVERCOME TOWARD THE END OF FISCAL YEAR 1983. IN FACT, FOR FISCAL YEAR 1983, WE ATTAINED AN END STRENGTH OF 12,156 OR 101 PERCENT OF THE MINIMUM AUTHORIZED STRENGTH LEVEL. SO FAR IN FISCAL YEAR 1984, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH WE WILL BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THESE LEVELS.

COAST GUARD MISSION ASSIGNMENTS IN THE EVENT OF WAR OR NATIONAL EMERGENCY STEM FROM TWO MAJOR INTEGRALLY RELATED SOURCES: STATUTORY MISSIONS AND JCS/NAVY TASKING. THE STATUTORY MISSIONS ASSIGNED TO COAST GUARD BY LAW INCLUDE PORT SAFETY AND SECURITY,

SEARCH AND RESCUE, AIDS TO NAVIGATION, MERCHANT MARINE SAFETY, AND MARITIME LAW ENFORCEMENT. MOST OF THESE WOULD CONTINUE IN WARTIME, SOME AT INCREASED AND SOME AT DECREASED LEVELS. SOME, SUCH AS PORT SECURITY, WOULD EXPAND DRAMATICALLY IN WARTIME BECAUSE OF THE NEED TO PROTECT THE NATION'S PORTS AND WATERWAYS AND INSURE THE NECESSARY THROUGHPUT OF CRITICAL CARGOES.

THE SECOND SOURCE OF MAJOR WARTIME MISSION ASSIGNMENTS RESULTS FROM WAR PLAN TASKING DEVELOPED BY THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF AND ASSIGNED TO THE UNITED STATES NAVY. THE NAVY, IN TURN, REASSIGNS CERTAIN OF THESE TASKS OR PORTIONS THEREOF TO THE COAST GUARD. THESE INCLUDE COASTAL AND HIGH SEAS SEARCH AND RESCUE, ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE AT SEA, AND SUPPORT FOR SUCH HARBOR DEFENSE ACTIVITIES AS SURVEILLANCE AND INTERDICTION, AND INSHORE UNDERSEA WARFARE. IN COMBINATION WITH PORT SECURITY, THESE TASKINGS PLACE THE COAST GUARD RESERVE IN A CRITICAL ROLE IN SUPPORT OF THE STRATEGIC MOBILITY OF DEPLOYING MILITARY FORCES AND THEIR SUSTAINING LOGISTICS SUPPORT WHICH MUST TRAVEL BY SEA. IT THEN FALLS TO THE COAST GUARD TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL REQUIRED TO MEET THESE READINESS REQUIREMENTS.

WHILE WE ARE PRESENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF REVISING PLANS AND UPDATING CURRENT REQUIREMENTS, THE BASIS OF OUR CURRENT NEEDS IS A 1965 STUDY, REVALIDATED IN 1974. AT THIS TIME OUR READY RESERVE STRENGTH IS 17,000. THIS INCLUDES 12,000 IN OUR SELECTED RESERVE AND 5,000 IN THE INDIVIDUAL READY RESERVE (IRR). GIVEN PROJECTED RESPONSE FIGURES OF 95 PERCENT AND 70 PERCENT FOR THE SELECTED RESERVE AND IRR, RESPECTIVELY, IT IS

ANTICIPATED THAT APPROXIMATELY 15,000 COAST GUARD READY RESERVISTS WOULD RESPOND.

THE RECORDS OF THIS SUBCOMMITTEE ARE FILLED WITH INFORMATION ON THE ROLES AND MISSIONS OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE. THEREFORE, I WILL NOT BELABOR YOU WITH THESE DETAILS. I ASK ONLY THAT YOU ENVISION THE TREMENDOUS INCREASE OF ACTIVITY IN OUR MAJOR PORTS OF EMBARKATION, WHEN, UPON MOBILIZATION, THE MASSIVE FLOW OF PEOPLE AND SUPPLIES TOWARD THE FORWARD OPERATING AREAS BEGINS. ALSO, THE SAFE FLOW THROUGH OUR PORT SYSTEMS OF CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS AND FINISHED PRODUCTS THAT ARE NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN OUR NATIONAL ECONOMY AND THOSE OF OUR ALLIES WILL ASSUME INCREASING IMPORTANCE. AS YOU CONSIDER THE MANY PROBLEMS THAT WILL ARISE YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE ONLY SERVICE COMPONENT WITH A FORCE SPECIFICALLY TRAINED IN PORT SECURITY IS THE COAST GUARD. IN FACT, OVER 75 PERCENT OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE AUTHORIZED STRENGTH IS DEDICATED TO THE PORT SECURITY MISSION.

THE COAST GUARD RESERVE IS ORGANIZED INTO UNITS, WHICH ARE FURTHER COMBINED INTO GROUPS, TO SUPPORT MOBILIZATION READINESS AND TO FACILITATE TRAINING AND ADMINISTRATION. WHERE POSSIBLE, OUR RESERVE GROUPS AND UNITS ARE COLLOCATED WITH THE ACTIVE UNITS TO WHICH THEY WOULD REPORT UPON MOBILIZATION. IN THIS WAY RESERVISTS TRAIN ALONGSIDE REGULAR COAST GUARDSMEN, USING REGULAR COAST GUARD EQUIPMENT, ACCOMPLISHING COAST GUARD PEACE-TIME MISSIONS. THIS FACET OF OUR PROGRAM, WHICH APPROACHES 65 PERCENT OF OUR TRAINING TIME, IS CALLED "AUGMENTATION TRAINING".

AUGMENTATION TRAINING, THE ACTUAL PERFORMANCE OF COAST GUARD DUTIES, IS ONE OF THE BEST MEASURES OF COAST GUARD RESERVE

READINESS. AS IN FY82 AND 83 COAST GUARD RESERVISTS WILL, IN FY84, DEVOTE ABOUT 1,700,000 HOURS TO ACCOMPLISHMENT OF COAST GUARD PEACETIME MISSIONS AS A PART OF THEIR TRAINING FOR MOBILIZATION. THEIR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IN THIS "ON-THE-JOB TRAINING" IN FUNCTIONS SUCH AS SMALL BOAT OPERATIONS, SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS, AND PORT SAFETY AND SECURITY INSPECTIONS IN PART SHOWS THEIR STATE OF READINESS. THE INCREASED NUMBER OF SELECTED RESERVISTS REQUESTED IN THIS AUTHORIZATION SHOULD RESULT IN A COMMENSURATE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF HOURS THAT WILL BE PERFORMED ON AUGMENTATION TRAINING IN FUTURE YEARS: ONCE THE NEW PERSONNEL COMPLETE THEIR INITIAL TRAINING IN COAST GUARD SKILLS AND FUNCTIONS.

HOWEVER, NOTWITHSTANDING THE INCREASED HOURS AVAILABLE FROM OUR INCREASED FORCE SIZE, WE ARE BEGINNING TO RECOGNIZE SOME LIMITATIONS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF RESERVISTS FOR AUGMENTATION ACTIVITY. AS A RESULT, WE HAVE FOUND IT PRUDENT TO REORIENT "SOME" EMPHASIS TO MOBILIZATION TRAINING. THIS WAS DUE TO A NUMBER OF FACTORS:

(1) SOME SPECIFIC MOBILIZATION SKILLS, NOT ROUTINELY AVAILABLE DURING AUGMENTATION TRAINING, HAVE BECOME THE OBJECTIVE OF OUR FORMAL TRAINING PROGRAMS (e.g. EXPLOSIVE LOADING SUPERVISION, SMALL ARMS TRAINING AND FIREFIGHTING);

(2) THE ACTIVE DUTY COAST GUARD HAS INCREASED ITS EMPHASIS ON MOBILIZATION READINESS, RESULTING IN AN INCREASED TEMPO IN READINESS PLANNING AND MOBILIZATION EXERCISES; AND

(3) CHANGING OPERATING PROFILES IN SOME OPERATING MISSION AREAS, PARTICULARLY BOATING SAFETY AND MARINE SAFETY, HAVE REDUCED AUGMENTATION TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES CREATING CHANGES IN

LOCAL UNIT OPERATIONS.

THE RESULTING INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN READINESS EXERCISES IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE FOR TRAINING AND IMPROVEMENT IN MILITARY READINESS IN RECENT YEARS. IN FY81 WE ESTABLISHED A GOAL OF HAVING 25 PERCENT OF OUR SELECTED RESERVISTS PARTICIPATE IN AN EXERCISE EACH YEAR. THIS GOAL WAS REACHED IN FYS 82 AND 83. INDICATIONS ARE THAT WE WILL BE EQUALLY SUCCESSFUL IN FY84. THE NATURE OF THESE EXERCISES IS ALSO IMPORTANT. NOT ONLY DO THEY FAMILIARIZE RESERVISTS WITH THEIR MOBILIZATION SITES, BUT MANY DEVELOP INTERSERVICE COOPERATION THROUGH JOINT SERVICE EXERCISES SUCH AS REFORGER AND SOLID SHIELD.

IN MANAGING THE CONTINUING AUGMENTATION TRAINING PROGRAM, THE COAST GUARD IS CONSTANTLY ALERT TO OPPORTUNITIES TO EMPLOY COAST GUARD RESERVISTS TO ASSIST OR EVEN SUBSTITUTE--ON A SHORT TERM BASIS--FOR ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL IN PERFORMANCE OF THEIR ONGOING PEACETIME MISSIONS. SEVERAL EXAMPLES ARE CITED BELOW.

THE COAST GUARD RESERVE HAS CONTINUED TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF COAST GUARD MISSIONS EACH YEAR. IN FISCAL YEAR 1983 OUR MIDWEST DISTRICTS PROVIDED OVER 300 RESERVIST-DAYS OF SUPPORT TO FLOOD RELIEF. IN FLORIDA, OVER 900 RESERVIST-DAYS WERE USED TO PROVIDE SAFETY AND SECURITY ZONES FOR NASA'S SPACE SHUTTLE LAUNCHES AND TO ASSIST IN RECOVERY OF THE ROCKET BOOSTERS. OUR THREE "SUMMER-ONLY" SEARCH AND RESCUE STATIONS IN THE GREAT LAKES ARE OPERATED EACH YEAR BY RESERVISTS CALLED FROM ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY TO MEET THE SURGE OF PLEASURE BOATERS. THESE STATIONS PREVENT THE LOSS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF PROPERTY AND SAVE SEVERAL LIVES

EACH YEAR. IN ADDITION TO THESE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES, RESERVISTS CONTINUE THE PROGRAM OF AUGMENTING ACTIVE DUTY STATIONS DURING WEEKEND DRILLS AND ANNUAL TRAINING IN SUCH AREAS AS SEARCH AND RESCUE, MARINE SAFETY, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AIDS TO NAVIGATION. BECAUSE OF THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN PEACETIME AND WARTIME MISSIONS, THE BENEFITS OF THIS TYPE TRAINING ARE EASY TO SEE -- VALID MOBILIZATION-RELATED TRAINING, IMPROVED INDIVIDUAL SKILL LEVELS, AND MUTUAL RESPECT BETWEEN OUR ACTIVE AND RESERVE FORCES.

OUR BASIC PHILOSOPHY CONTINUES TO BE THAT ACTUAL PERFORMANCE OF DAILY COAST GUARD MISSIONS PROVIDES THE BEST OVERALL TRAINING FOR MOBILIZATION. DAILY INTERACTION WITH ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL CREATES AN INCREASED MUTUAL APPRECIATION OF EACH COMPONENT'S TALENTS AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF ITS PROBLEMS. OUR PROGRAM'S OBJECTIVE IS TO FIND THE MIX WHICH WILL MAKE THE MOST OF OUR AUGMENTATION AND MOBILIZATION TRAINING AND THUS IMPROVE MILITARY READINESS AND THE ABILITY TO MEET MISSION OBJECTIVES.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS YOU ON OUR COAST GUARD RESERVE PROGRAM. MANY IMPORTANT ISSUES ARE BEFORE YOU, BUT I ASSURE YOU, THE STRENGTH OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE IS IMPORTANT TO THIS NATION'S ABILITY TO RESPOND IN CRISIS. IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, I WILL BE PLEASED TO ANSWER THEM NOW.