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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

U. S. COAST GUARD

STATEMENT OF

COMMODORE PETER J. ROTS

CHIEF, OFFICE OF MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SYSTEMS

BEFORE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SUBCOMMITTEE ON MERCHANT MARINE

REGARDING

THE SUFFICIENCY OF SECURITY MEASURES CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY VARIOUS SEGMENTS

OF THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY TO PROTECT AGAINST TERRORISTS ATTACKS

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, I AM COMMODORE PETER J. ROTS, CHIEF OF THE OFFICE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND SYSTEMS, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD HEADQUARTERS. I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS THE SUFFICIENCY OF SECURITY MEASURES CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY VARIOUS SEGMENTS OF THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY TO PROTECT AGAINST TERRORISTS ATTACKS.

THE COAST GUARD HAS BEEN CONCERNED WITH THE THREAT OF TERRORISM IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. WHILE NOT DESIGNATED A LEAD AGENCY THE COAST GUARD HAS EXECUTED MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THOSE AGENCIES WHICH DESCRIBE OUR SUPPORTING ROLE.

WITH A COAST GUARD PRESENCE IN MOST U. S. PORTS AND OUR VESSELS UNDERWAY ON MANY OPERATIONAL MISSIONS IT IS LIKELY THAT THE COAST GUARD WILL BE THE FIRST FEDERAL AGENCY AT THE SCENE OF A TERRORIST INCIDENT. OUR INITIAL RESPONSE IN THIS SCENARIO WOULD BE TO STABILIZE AND CONTAIN THE SITUATION UNTIL THE DESIGNATED LEAD AGENCY RESPONDS. TO THIS END EACH OF OUR 48 CAPTAINS OF THE PORT HAVE BEEN TASKED WITH DEVELOPING LOCAL COUNTERTERRORISM CONTINGENCY PLANS. THESE PLANS REQUIRE COORDINATED PLANNING BETWEEN THE COAST GUARD AND THE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES AS WELL AS THOSE IN THE MARITIME COMMUNITY THAT MAY BECOME INVOLVED IN A TERRORIST INCIDENT.

FOR THE PAST 4 YEARS WE HAVE BEEN SENDING A LIMITED NUMBER OF COAST GUARD PERSONNEL TO COUNTERTERRORISM SCHOOL FOR FORMAL TRAINING.

DURING 1983 THE COAST GUARD PARTICIPATED IN A 2 DAY MULTIPLE AGENCY COUNTERTERRORISM COMMAND POST EXERCISE IN WASHINGTON,DC.

IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR CAPTAIN OF THE PORT NEW YORK, THE FBI AND THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT CONDUCTED A JOINT TERRORISM EXERCISE IN THE PORT OF NEW YORK. THIS EXERCISE WAS CONDUCTED THROUGH THE COOPERATION OF UNITED STATES LINES, THE VESSEL AMERICAN LEADER AND THE NEW YORK CITY PORTS AND TERMINALS AUTHORITY.

ON SEPTEMBER 17TH OF THIS YEAR I ADDRESSED APPROXIMATELY 70 PORT DIRECTORS AT THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PORT AUTHORITIES ANNUAL CONFERENCE. I ADVISED THE ATTENDEES OF THE TERRORIST THREAT AND URGED THEM TO REVIEW THEIR PHYSICAL SECURITY AND SECURITY PROCEDURES AT THEIR WATERFRONT TERMINALS. I ALSO INFORMED THEM THAT EACH OF THE COAST GUARD CAPTAINS OF THE PORT IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST THEM IN REVIEWING AND IMPROVING TERMINAL AND VESSEL SECURITY.

AS IN AIR TRANSPORTATION OF PASSENGERS AND CARGO, IMPLEMENTATION OF PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF VESSELS AND WATERFRONT TERMINALS RESTS WITH THE MASTERS, OWNERS, OPERATORS AND AGENTS.

CURRENTLY, SECURITY PROCEDURES AT WATERFRONT TERMINALS AND ABOARD SHIP VARY AMONG THE MANY COMPANYS FROM MINIMAL TO MODERATE. THE MAJORITY OF TANKER TERMINALS HAVE THE PERIMETER FENCED AND THE GATES MANNED CONTINUOUSLY BY A GUARD. MANY DRY CARGO TERMINALS ARE SIMILARLY PROTECTED.

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 1500 CRUISE SHIP VISITS IN MIAMI AND PORT LAUDERDALE EACH YEAR. ALL OF THESE SHIPS ARE OWNED AND OPERATED BY FOREIGN OWNED COMPANIES. IN SAN FRANCISCO THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 70 VISITS PER YEAR AND AGAIN WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TWO SHIPS ALL ARE UNDER FOREIGN FLAG.

AS A RESULT OF THE ACHILLE LAURO INCIDENT A NUMBER OF THESE COMPANIES ARE REVIEWING THEIR SECURITY PROCEDURES. LAST WEEK DURING A CRUISE SHIP VISIT TO THE PORT OF SAN FRANCISCO THE COMPANY REQUIRED PASSENGERS TO BOARD THE VESSEL BY ONE GANGWAY AND VISITORS BOARD BY A SEPARATE GANGWAY. IN ADDITION, THE COMPANY HIRED GUARDS TO SCREEN EVERYONE BOARDING THE VESSEL WITH METAL DETECTORS.

INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES THAT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED MAY APPROACH THOSE THAT ARE IN PLACE AT COMMERCIAL AIR PORTS; ALL BAGGAGE, STORES AND PERSONNEL GOING ABOARD THE VESSEL COULD BE SCREENED. SERVICING PERSONNEL AND VENDORS COULD BE REQUIRED TO BE ESCORTED. THESE PROCEDURES WOULD OF COURSE BE VERY LABOR INTENSIVE AND COSTLY.

ANOTHER ELEMENT TO CONSIDER IS THAT IF INCREASED SECURITY PROCEDURES ARE IMPLEMENTED IN ALL U. S. PORTS TO PROTECT VESSELS FROM THE TERRORIST THREAT THEY WILL BE RENDERED ESSENTIALLY INEFFECTIVE IF SIMILAR SECURITY PROCEDURES ARE NOT IN PLACE AT THE MANY FOREIGN PORTS THESE VESSELS VISIT.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA, 1974 AND FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION REGULATIONS REQUIRE THAT PASSENGER SHIPS IRRESPECTIVE OF SIZE AND CARGO SHIPS OF 1600 GROSS TONS AND UPWARDS BE FITTED WITH A RADIOTELEGRAPH STATION. THE BRIDGE TO BRIDGE RADIO TELEPHONE ACT REQUIRES THAT EVERY PASSENGER VESSEL AND EVERY POWER-DRIVEN VESSEL OF 300 GROSS TONS AND UPWARD SHALL HAVE A BRIDGE TO BRIDGE RADIOTELEPHONE. THE COAST GUARD INSURES THAT ALL U. S. VESSELS AND FOREIGN VESSELS VISITING U. S. PORTS ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE REQUIRED RADIO EQUIPMENT. CARGO VESSELS ARE REQUIRED TO CARRY ONE RADIO OPERATOR WHO IS NORMALLY ON DUTY 8 HOURS A DAY. PASSENGER VESSELS ARE REQUIRED TO CARRY 3 RADIO OPERATORS WHO MAN THE RADIO ROOM 24 HOURS A DAY WHILE THE SHIP IS UNDERWAY. SHIPS ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO HAVE AN EMERGENCY SOURCE OF POWER TO OPERATE THE RADIOS SHOULD THE PRIMARY SOURCE FAIL. WHILE THESE ARE THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS MOST, IF NOT ALL, SHIPS HAVE RADIO EQUIPMENT FAR IN EXCESS OF THAT REQUIRED BY THE CONVENTION AND REGULATIONS.

MR. CHAIRMAN, THIS CONCLUDES MY PREPARED STATEMENT. I WILL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU OR THE MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE MAY HAVE. THANK YOU.