

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**United States
Coast Guard**



Commandant
United States Coast Guard

Washington, DC 20593
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PREPARED STATEMENT

OF

REAR ADMIRAL CLYDE E. ROBBINS
CHIEF OF OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

BEFORE THE

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON
NARCOTICS ABUSE AND CONTROL

DECEMBER 8, 1987



Biographical Sketch U.S. COAST GUARD



Rear Admiral Clyde E. Robbins Chief, Office of Operations

Rear Admiral Clyde E. Robbins became Chief of the Office of Operations at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, in July 1985. He was Commander, Fourteenth Coast Guard District in Honolulu, from 1983 until 1985, following an assignment at Headquarters as Chief of the Special Staff Element for the Commandant.

RADM Robbins was Chief of Staff of the First Coast Guard District in Boston, in 1981; Chief of Operations for the First District in 1980 and was Chief of Programs Division at Headquarters in Washington, from 1977. He was Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Base Galveston, Texas, from 1974 to 1976. He also commanded Coast Guard Air Station Washington in Alexandria, Va., from 1971 to 1974 after serving five years at Coast Guard Headquarters.

RADM Robbins served the Coast Guard in a variety of assignments as an aviator stationed in St. Petersburg, Fla.; San Francisco; Canada and Bermuda. He completed flight training at Naval Air Stations in Pensacola, Fla., and Corpus Christi, Texas, after serving a year and a half onboard the Coast Guard Cutter *HALF MOON*, homeported in New York, his first assignment.

He received a Bachelor of Science degree from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn., in 1954. RADM Robbins is a distinguished graduate of the National War College in Washington.

His awards include two Legion of Merit Medals, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, several Coast Guard Commendation Medals, the President's Medal and the Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Equal Opportunity.

A native of Columbia Cross Roads, Pa, RADM Robbins is married to the former Elizabeth P. Byrem of Hohokus, N.J. They have two children: Jennifer, now living in Philadelphia, and James, presently assigned to Coast Guard Air Station St. Petersburg, Fla.



Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, it is a pleasure to appear before you today to address the Coast Guard's drug interdiction operations, and the enhancements provided by the Anti Drug Abuse Act of 1986. The Coast Guard has a long history of dealing with the problems of smuggling, but the unprecedented flood of narcotics into the United States caused Congress in 1986 to provide critical assistance in the form of the Anti Drug Abuse Act. The Act, in addition to providing authorizations to the Coast Guard for additional hardware to expand its interdiction efforts made important changes in the law to make prosecution of smugglers easier, and to remove some Mansfield Amendment restrictions. As you know the Omnibus Drug Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1986 subsequently provided funding to the Coast Guard for additional aircraft, patrol boats, personnel, training and equipment. Additional funding was also provided for a joint docking facility in the Bahamas.

BAHAMAS INITIATIVES

Along with the Caribbean Basin, the maritime area of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas continues to receive the highest priorities for Coast Guard drug interdiction operations. The Omnibus Drug Supplemental set aside \$5 million for the joint U.S./Bahamian Forces docking facility for survey and design, and for equipment. In the Bahamas, Coral Harbor, New Providence Island has been selected for the boat repair facility and much of the heavy equipment such as the marine travelift has been purchased. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Bahamian Government is nearing completion for the facility which will be used by both Bahamian and Coast Guard vessels. The Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has approved an MOU and small differences in the provisions of the MOU are being examined by the Coast Guard and Department of

State. Our drug interdiction efforts in the Bahamas include participation in Operations Bahamas, Turks and Caicos (OPBAT). The Coast Guard operated helicopter site at Nassau is in operation and performing in an outstanding manner. A second 24 hour a day response site will be operational by 1 October 1988. We have augmented the Drug Enforcement Administration Operations Center (DEA OPCENTER) in Nassau to provide 24 hour a day coordination to all agencies participating in OPBAT. Coast Guard support to the DEA OPCENTER has greatly improved OPBAT communications and operations. The recent case of 16 November where a CG HH3 helicopter flew the Royal Bahamian Defense Force (RBDF)/DEA strike force to Chub Cay during a drug offload and seized 527 kilos of cocaine, and made Eight arrests after a handoff from a Customs tracker aircraft shows the level of cooperation that has been achieved and the resulting success.

MANSFIELD AMENDMENT

Modifications to the Mansfield Amendment (Section 2009 of the Anti Drug Abuse Act of 1986) have allowed the Coast Guard to develop closer cooperation with several countries of the Caribbean region and to react to drug smuggling operations in the territorial waters of these countries. By eliminating Mansfield restrictions in a consenting coastal nation's territorial seas, Coast Guard units have been able to more effectively use shipriders to enforce both U.S. and coastal nation's law as appropriate. We have also been able to respond to requests for technical assistance without running afoul of Mansfield restrictions.

LAW ENFORCEMENT DETACHMENTS (LEDET)

Approximately 300 Coast Guard personnel are assigned to law enforcement detachments which serve aboard Navy vessels. This was codified by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 in Title 10 USC Section 379. Smugglers must now contend with Navy as well as Coast Guard units. This team effort resulted in the seizure of 15 vessels, the arrest of 87 smugglers and the interdiction of 182,891 pounds of marijuana and 539 pounds of cocaine in FY-87.

ENHANCED COMMUNICATIONS

Communications security is critical to protect planning and execution of Coast Guard drug enforcement operations. The Omnibus Drug Supplemental Appropriations Act appropriated \$11M for enhanced secure communications. Of the \$11M, \$5M was obligated in May of 1987 for the procurement of secure VHF-FM equipment. Delivery is expected to begin in February 1988. The remaining \$6M is divided into \$3.5M for Tactical C3 (command, control, and communications), \$1.5M for aircraft secure communications, \$.5M for satellite communications and \$.5M for high frequency (HF) communication upgrades. These improved communications capabilities will enable us to operate more effectively by improving real time coordination of cutters, aircraft, and personnel.

AIR INTERDICTION

Funds authorized by the Omnibus Drug Supplemental Act of 1986 have provided the Coast Guard increased assets for air surveillance in the maritime region. Of the \$39M added to the Operating Expenses appropriated \$8.6M was used to operate two E-2C's, transferred from the Navy. To be most effective, all air interdiction assets must be controlled from a regional command center that will maintain the "big picture" in the fast moving air environment. To do

this the Coast Guard has been working closely with the Customs Service to build a C3I system that would meet the needs of both agencies along with the needs of the other agencies attacking the drug problem. Agreement was reached with Customs on 16 March for the Southeast C3I center, and groundbreaking occurred on October 20th. Our personnel are training and deploying to remote C3I sites to keep up their skills until the planned opening in late spring of 1988. Additionally, eight HU-25's are being converted to fully sensed air interceptors using DOD funding. They are presently being used for intercepts under visual conditions. Two HU-25 interceptors are scheduled to be completed by April 1988, with one per month completed thereafter.

SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITIES

Thirty-eight million dollars of the \$89M AC&I funding in the Omnibus Drug Supplemental Appropriation of 1986 is being used to procure two C-130 aircraft. We expect delivery of the two aircraft in summer of 1988.

Another \$35M was transferred to the Navy on 10 February as part of an existing Navy contract for procurement of five new patrol boats. The remaining \$5M is being used for the joint docking facility in the Bahamas. The \$39M Operating and Expense drug supplemental funding was used for training the crews of the 5 new patrol boats and aircraft, purchasing new equipment including night vision devices, surveillance cameras, and aircraft life support systems, and operating the resources.

RESULTS

We are continuing to seek innovative ways to stop the flow of narcotics into the United States, and we are proud of our achievements. In FY87 in both air and maritime enforcement, the Coast Guard: seized 136 vessels; made 568 arrests; and interdicted nearly 1.3 million pounds of marijuana, over 12,900 pounds of cocaine, and 14 gallons of hashish oil. The Coast Guard assisted other law enforcement agencies in 6 additional seizures, the interdiction of over 1,600 pounds of cocaine and 11,000 pounds of marijuana. Our drug interdiction operations in the Caribbean basin continue to expand with the invaluable assistance of the Department of Defense, Customs, DEA, the State Department, and the new resources authorized for the Coast Guard by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986.

In summary, we have used the resources authorized by the Anti Drug Abuse Act as directed, and continue to use close working relationships with Customs, DEA, the State Department, and the Department of Defense to build an effective interdiction system. These additional resources have been critical to the Coast Guard's increased operations in the Bahamas and Caribbean.

This concludes my prepared statement, and I will be happy to answer questions.