Coast Guard Releases 'Maritime Commerce Strategic Outlook'

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Coast Guard has released a 10-year vision for enabling maritime commerce, which "emphasizes the critical need for a ready, relevant, responsive Coast Guard," the service said in an Oct. 11 message.

The Coast Guard "Maritime Commerce Strategic Outlook" will guide the service's efforts in securing the strategically critical maritime environment while enabling its impact on the nation's economic prosperity.

A message to the service signed by Vice Adm. Daniel B. Abel, deputy commandant for Operations, noted that "America is a maritime nation. It is a nation shaped by seafarers who recognized the tremendous economic potential derived from unrestricted access to the oceans, internal waterways, deep-water ports, and protected straits and bays. Our American prosperity remains inextricably linked to the fate of the maritime environment.

"Our waterways, a wealth of natural resources and marine transportation networks, remain critical to our prosperity, our security and our identity as a nation. Americans have come to expect goods to be shipped safely and efficiently, and the Coast Guard has a vision for how our nation's waterways can meet the increased demand."

In the "Maritime Commerce Strategic Outlook", the Coast Guard outlined three lines of effort (LOEs) that are critical to the success of the strategy.

■ LOE 1, "Facilitating Lawful Trade and Travel on Secure Waterways. The ease of moving people and cargo on America's

waterways is a competitive advantage and wellspring for economic prosperity and national security. The Coast Guard will manage risks to critical infrastructure, ensure efficient delivery of Coast Guard services, support vessel and facility standards, and promote resiliency and unity of effort among Marine Transportation System stakeholders."

■ LOE 2, "Modernizing Aids to Navigation and Mariner Information Systems. Through technological advancements such as artificial intelligence, mobile and cloud-based computing, and data analytics, the Coast Guard will keep the service in step with emerging trends in the maritime industry. The Coast Guard must modernize information technology networks and applications that enable the Coast Guard to assess, monitor, and manage risk. The service will optimize maritime planning in order to address competing uses and growing demands for commerce, energy, food, resources, and recreation in U.S. waters. The service must also balance traditional navigation systems while building next generation waterway management systems, modernizing inland and coastal aids-to-navigation cutters, and applying emerging technologies. Regulatory frameworks, applications, and standards will be adapted to accurately incorporate the implementation of emerging technologies that will transform maritime operations, such as autonomous systems."

■ LOE 3, "Transforming Workforce Capacity and Partnerships. The Coast Guard needs to develop an adaptive force that is proficient operating in a highly complex environment amid rapid acceleration of technology. The service needs to strengthen the workforce with the digital competencies to respond to changes in commercial markets and the maritime industry. The Coast Guard will leverage robust auditing capabilities of third-party organizations to improve vessel plans, surveys, and certain required certificates to ensure the highest standards of compliance oversight. It is imperative to transform the workforce and roles of other

enabling organizations to have the capability, experience, and expertise to address the broad spectrum of threats to our national interests.”