

**ORAL STATEMENT OF
U.S. COAST GUARD
REAR ADMIRAL PAUL F. ZUKUNFT
BEFORE THE
HOUSE APPROPRIATION SUBCOMMITTEE
ON HOMELAND SECURITY
MARCH 16TH, 2011**

Good morning Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Price and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to be here today to discuss the Coast Guard's role in Southwest border security.

As the lead U.S. agency for maritime security, the U.S. Coast Guard employs a three-layered maritime strategy to Southwest border security that begins in the departure and transit zones well South of Mexico; reaches across the approaches to Mexico; and culminates along our common maritime border. To complement this strategy, the Coast Guard leverages its role within the National Intelligence Community to bolster situational awareness, as well as our inter-service, interagency, and international partnerships to advance the "interdiction continuum" against drug trafficking organizations. That is, intelligence drives interdictions, while the follow-on forensics and ultimate prosecutions gleaned through the interagency process and programs such as PANAMA EXPRESS perpetuate the intelligence cycle leading to further interdictions.

Our unambiguous goal is to meet threats far from the US border, and the first layer of attack is at the source or in the transit zone where transnational criminal organizations are most vulnerable. To this end Coast Guard Area Commanders work with NORTHCOM and SOUTHCOM and with Joint Interagency Task Force South to detect, monitor, interdict and apprehend threats well beyond U.S. customs waters, in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific. Coast Guard cutters and aircraft provide the necessary range, speed, command and control and authorities to effect success in the transit zone from South America. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments embarked on US and Allied Navy vessels, combined with maritime patrol aircraft flow by DoD and CBP provide defense in depth to conduct interdiction operations in the transit zone while exploiting our expansive authorities through the 37 counter drug bilateral agreements that the US maintains with source and transit zone signatory nations. During 2010 the Coast Guard removed over 200,000 pounds of cocaine and over 36,000 pounds of marijuana bound for the U.S. This represents 45% of the National Drug Control Strategy annual target for FY10, which is a 30% removal rate that equates to 445,000 pounds of cocaine.

The second layer of attack is the approach to Mexican coastal waters where the Coast Guard works closely with the Mexican Navy and the Mexican Secretariat for Communications and Transportation to interdict transnational criminal organizations. Working through the North American Maritime Security Initiative (NAMSI), the Coast Guard has established protocols with Mexican authorities for OPCEN-to-OPCEN communications, Right of Visit boardings, and boardings of Self Propelled Semi-submersible and fully submersible vessels. Since the inception of NAMSI in December 2008, there have been 21 cases totaling 47,022 lbs of contraband seized by leveraging the joint US and Mexican efforts and agreements.

The third layer of our attack is in US Customs waters to include the US maritime border with Mexico. Here, the Coast Guard works closely with CBP, ICE and state and local partners to detect and interdict maritime incursions, typically by small vessels. At Coast Guard Sector San Diego, tactical information and operations among our DOD, interagency, State and local partners

are coordinated by the Joint Harbor/Interagency Operations Center (IOC). In FY 2010, this IOC was responsible for the interdiction of nearly 800 Mexican migrants which is more than twice the number of migrants interdicted in FY09. And FY11 is on pace to set a new high water mark for migrant interdictions at-sea.

Our maritime borders also includes the internal waters of Falcon Lake and Lake Amistad where the Coast Guard conducts surge operations for periods of up to one-week each quarter by trailering personnel and boats over 130 miles from Sector Corpus Christi.

Border security includes much more than protection against drugs and migrants. On our Southwest border it includes protecting EEZ from foreign fishing vessel incursions. **U.S. Commercial and recreational fisheries** in the Gulf of Mexico, Exclusive Economic Zone generates billions of dollars in regional sales impacts and support 326,600 local jobs. Coast Guard efforts to secure our EEZ directly support these key industries. In January 2011, 20 lanchas were detected illegally fishing in the U.S. GOM EEZ, the greatest number of monthly incursions detected since 2006. The Coast Guard is countering this threat with improved air and surface assets that have greater range, endurance and detection capability.

Conclusion

Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member Price, we are proud of the great strides the Department has made to enhance security on our Southwest border. The United States Coast Guard has a clear strategy of layered attack that leverages joint services, interagency and international partnerships and resources to prevent terrorism, enforce immigration laws and secure our maritime borders. We are actively pursuing acquisition strategies that will deliver more capable and reliable operational assets and systems to enhance the Coast Guard's capacity in this layered attack.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.