

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION**

Full Committee

Nominations Hearing

Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.

DEMOCRAT QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

Admiral Kevin Lunday

COVER PAGE

SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL (D-WA)

Cape Disappointment

The Coast Guard must address the emergency damage and shoaling that has taken place at Station Cape Disappointment (“Cape D”), a critical Coast Guard unit in the Pacific Northwest. We need a long-term strategy to invest in Cape D and the National Motor Lifeboat School overall. That plan must include solutions to stop the shoaling, new docks that can accommodate the replacement 52’s, and cutting-edge facilities to support the workforce such as housing and training facilities.

1. Yes or No: Will you commit that the entire funding included in the Coast Guard reconciliation spend plan will be used to rebuild the critical infrastructure at Cape D?

Response: [Yes, we will use approximately \\$115 million of the funding provided by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act to fund shore infrastructure projects at Station Cape Disappointment.](#)

2. Will you work with the Army Corps to come up with a more sustainable plan for dredging to protect search and rescue capacity in Ilwaco?

Response: [Yes, if confirmed, I will continue to work with the Army Corps of Engineers to address shoaling and persistent silting issues at Station Cape Disappointment.](#)

Base Seattle

Coast Guard Base Seattle is currently the homeport for all Coast Guard Polar icebreaking operations – a critical program for our national security.

The Coast Guard recently began a contract for Base Seattle’s modernization and homeporting program which includes dredging Slip 36 and construction of two modernized major cutter berths that are capable of hosting two Polar Security Cutters.

1. Will you work with stakeholders in Seattle, including labor groups and tribes, to ensure that future development at Base Seattle also supports the long-term economic growth of the region?

Response: [Yes, the Coast Guard will continue to work with stakeholders, including labor groups and tribes, to consider long-term impacts of any future development at Base Seattle.](#)

Yes or No: Will you commit to using all \$4.3 billion enacted in the reconciliation law to continue construction of the PSC fleet?

Response: [Yes.](#)

Tribal Engagement

The Coast Guard Authorization Act would provide the Coast Guard with new authorities to support habitat conservation and other resilience projects with state, local, and tribal governments. This new authority would ensure tribes can partner with the Coast Guard to protect treaty fishing rights and maintain access to cultural and natural resources – a priority in the state of Washington.

1. Do you support the Coast Guard having the authority to partner with Tribes, which would be parity with the Department of Defense?

Response: [Yes](#).

2. Do you commit to working with Tribes on Coast Guard Base Seattle negotiations and treaty fishing right issues?

Response: [Yes](#).

Operation Fouled Anchor

On June 30, 2023, a CNN article revealed that the Coast Guard had conducted a number of investigations, known as “Operation Fouled Anchor,” from 2014 to 2020 concerning cases of rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment that occurred at the Coast Guard Academy (the “Academy”) from 1988 to 2006. That same day, Senator Baldwin and I sent a letter to the Coast Guard seeking additional information regarding the investigations, and more specifically what the Coast Guard did in response to the “Operation Fouled Anchor” findings. Admiral Fagan began a 90-day review and identified 33 specific actions the Service needed to implement. You mentioned 24 of those have been completed.

1. What are the specific steps that you have taken since January 20, 2025, to address the issue of sexual assault and harassment within the ranks of the Coast Guard and at the Academy, specifically regarding “Operation Fouled Anchor”?

Response: [I have taken decisive action to combat and eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment from our Service. We have completed 24 of the 33 Commandant's Directed Actions, including six since January 20, 2025. We are on track to fully complete all 33 actions in 2026. Further, we will take additional actions to continue to combat and eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment from the Coast Guard.](#)

2. I appreciated your commitment to implement all 33 Directed Actions, as well as to continue the work to mitigate sexual misconduct in your ranks. When will the nine remaining Directed Action items be completed?

Response: [We continue to make progress on the remaining items and are on track to complete all in 2026. The Coast Guard will continue to provide updates on this progress.](#)

3. Have you changed any internal Coast Guard policies on sexual assault or sexual harassment since January 20, 2025? If so, what are they? How do any new internal policies specifically help members? If no new policies have been created, please explain why.

Response: [Yes, as part of the Commandant's Directed Actions, the Coast Guard implemented the new Servicemember Transformation and Readiness Training \(START\) course in Spring 2025. This course provides the Service's newest members a better understanding of sexual assault prevention, workforce resilience, suicide indicators and intervention, and alcohol awareness. This complements other key policies like our “Safe to Report” framework, which protects victims who come forward.](#)

[In May, we significantly upgraded the physical security at the Coast Guard Academy's Chase Hall with comprehensive camera surveillance and new electronic locks on all cadet room](#)

doors. Additionally, we improved career leadership courses to better prepare servicemembers for leadership roles.

In July, we improved the workforce resiliency organizational structure to enhance field support and victim care and staffed new regional coordinator positions to improve care coordination.

In November, the Coast Guard focused on improving tools for addressing improper conduct, reinforcing its commitment to fostering a safe and accountable environment for all personnel.

4. What steps have you taken since January 20, 2025, to institute cultural change within the Coast Guard (including at the training centers such as Cape May) to protect cadets and the Coast Guard workforce from sexual assault and harassment?

Response: On January 23, 2025, I issued my Acting Commandant's intent, which emphasized the Coast Guard Core Values and the importance of respect for each other. On February 21, 2025, I issued direction and expectations for all Commanding Officers, Officers-in-Charge, and Command Senior Enlisted Leaders that gave my intent and specific expectations on leadership and climate within the Service. In March 2025, I delivered a leadership address to the Coast Guard Academy cadets, faculty, and staff that reinforced our Core Values. Also, we have completed 24 of the 33 Commandant's Directed Actions, including six since January 20, 2025, including: establishing a preparatory course (START) for new recruits which they attend immediately following Basic Training; enhancing physical security in the Coast Guard Academy barracks; developing more effective career leadership courses; improving the workforce resiliency organizational structure; improving victim recovery policy by staffing new regional coordinator positions; and addressing improper conduct through non-judicial punishment reform.

5. What barriers, including any legislative, policy, cultural, institutional, or other, contributed to the failure of the Coast Guard to publicly release Operation Fouled Anchor?

Response: I was not aware of or part of this past decision. I will continue to lead by example to ensure the Coast Guard is transparent to enable Congress to conduct its constitutional oversight role and that we maintain the sacred trust of the American people we serve.

6. Is the Coast Guard fully cooperating with the Inspector General investigation into Operation Fouled Anchor, including providing access to all documents, personnel, and any other information requested?

Response: Yes.

7. Has the Inspector General requested any specific material that the Coast Guard has not provided? If so, please specifically identify what requested material the Coast Guard has thus far withheld and the basis for withholding.

Response: No, the Coast Guard has not withheld information from the Inspector General.

8. If confirmed as Commandant, will you hold perpetrators of sexual assault and harassment accountable to the fullest extent of the law?

Response: Yes.

9. I appreciated your acknowledgement at that the hearing that the Coast Guard independently stood up the Office of the Chief Prosecutor, in line with the other services following the Fiscal Year 2023 NDAA. Yes or No: Do you support the codification of the Office of the Chief Prosecutor, for the Coast Guard?

Response: [Yes](#).

Office of the Inspector General

The DHS Inspector General does not have the resources to meet all Coast Guard oversight needs, and they lack a dedicated staff to handle military law related matters.

1. Do you support establishing a Coast Guard Office of Inspector General to improve oversight of military crimes and to improve oversight of the Coast Guard?

Response: [Yes](#).

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is a national security threat with destabilizing effects on vulnerable coastal States and world markets. As the only agency with the infrastructure and authority capable of maintaining a law enforcement presence throughout the 3.36 million square mile U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and in key areas of the high seas, the U.S. Coast Guard is uniquely positioned to combat IUU fishing. Importantly, a major part of being able to effectively combat IUU fishing is the ability to create a presence in partner nations with limited enforcement capacity.

1. Is the Coast Guard actively working to identify partner nations with limited enforcement capacity? If so, are they adding counter-IUU fishing to existing U.S. bilateral enforcement agreements and pursuing new agreements with flag States and countries in the identified priority regions?

Response: [Yes](#).

2. As the primary U.S. agency responsible for monitoring at-sea compliance with bilateral enforcement agreements, does the Coast Guard find that it requires new policies and/or laws to ensure it is able to uphold current and future agreements effectively guaranteeing the management of transboundary and highly migratory fish stocks? If yes, what are the new policies and/or laws needed to ensure the Coast Guard can uphold current and future agreements?

Response: [Yes, the Coast Guard requires its own authority and funding to unilaterally provide training and other security assistance to international partners. The Service currently relies on the Department of State and the Department of War for both the funding and authority to conduct these security cooperation missions, which is inefficient and limits our ability to quickly respond to emerging opportunities.](#)

SENATOR BRIAN SCHATZ (D-HI)

The U.S. Coast Guard's adoption of a new policy that labels clearly hateful symbols, such as swastikas and nooses, as "potentially divisive" is appalling. There should be no room for discussion in the Coast Guard about whether symbols such as swastikas or nooses can be "considered" hateful.

1. Your statement after news of this change was reported says that "any display, use or promotion of such symbols, as always, will be thoroughly investigated and severely punished" – why adjust Coast Guard policy to call these symbols only as "potentially divisive" when they are outright hateful?

Response: My November 20, 2025, policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags, and our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents.

The claims that the U.S. Coast Guard will no longer classify or are "downgrading" the classification of swastikas, nooses or other extremist imagery as prohibited symbols are categorically false. Through the November 20 policy and lawful order, I clarified that the display of divisive or hate symbols and flags is prohibited as a violation of Coast Guard policy and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. This action was to combat any misinformation and affirm that the U.S. Coast Guard forbids these symbols.

2. The policy change now gives 45 days to report an incident; the previous policy had no time limit – why limit how long a servicemember has to report hateful symbols?

Response: The November 13, 2025, version of the Harassing Behaviors Prevention, Response, and Accountability Instruction strengthens our ability to report, investigate and prosecute those who violate anti-harassment policy. The 45-day reporting requirement aligns Coast Guard policy with the Federal EEO complaint process reporting timeframes to facilitate timely investigations of allegations and effective resolutions.

However, the policy does not prevent an aggrieved individual from reporting harassing behavior after the 45 calendar days and provides broad discretion for accepting reports after the initial 45-day period. This timeline for reporting has no bearing on the responsibility of unit commanders to maintain good order and discipline within their command and respond to any harassing behaviors.

3. How does this time limit make servicemembers who may be deployed at sea for long stretches safer?

Response: The November 20, 2025, policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags, and strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. If a member is delayed in the opportunity to file a report beyond 45 days due to deployment, or another reasonable grounds, then they will still be able to file a complaint.

4. Before November 20, 2025, issuing of the "Coast Guard Policy and Lawful Order Prohibiting Divisive or Hate Symbols And Flags" general order, would the updated

policy have allowed a swastika or noose to remain displayed if no official report were made to have it removed?

Response: [No](#).

5. What rationales did the Coast Guard and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security use to describe a swastika or a noose as only “potentially divisive” and not hateful?

Response: [There was never an intent to change the absolute prohibition on the display of swastikas or nooses and other widely recognized symbols of hate. The Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST 5340.4E \(October 2020, updated 5 March 2025\), which categorically prohibits such hate incidents, remains in effect.](#)

6. Did the Coast Guard or the Department of Homeland Security consult with any civil rights groups, stakeholders, or other experts when crafting this new policy? If so, which groups?

Response: [Yes, the Coast Guard Office of Civil Rights was consulted.](#)

7. If not, why were credible civil rights stakeholders not consulted?

Response: [We did consult with the Coast Guard Director of Civil Rights, who is an expert in Federal government civil rights law and policy.](#)

8. If the Coast Guard was attempting to address a wider range of symbols that are problematic, what other symbols or views was this new policy attempting to account for?

Response: [Under the new policy commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, and supervisors can prohibit the public display of any symbol or flag co-opted or adopted by hate-based groups as representations of supremacy, racial or religious intolerance, or other improper bias when the display adversely affects good order and discipline, unit cohesion, command climate, morale, or mission effectiveness.](#)

9. Why would potentially broadening the categories of hateful symbols require downgrading imagery such as swastikas and nooses?

Response: [The new policy does not downgrade hate symbols such as swastikas and nooses. It absolutely prohibits them as hate symbols. It also broadens the scope to prohibit display of any other symbols that may be adopted or co-opted by hate or extremist groups as representations of supremacy, racial or religious intolerance, anti-semitism, and other improper bias.](#)

10. What steps is the Coast Guard taking to ensure the general order remains in force in perpetuity, so that it is not rescinded or modified in the future?

Response: [The November 20, 2025 policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags, and strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. This includes a body of existing Coast Guard policies that remain in place:](#)

- [Coast Guard Policy and Lawful Order Prohibiting Divisive or Hate Symbols \(November 2025\)](#)

- [Harassing Behaviors Prevention, Response, and Accountability, 5350.6A](#) (November 2025)
- [Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST 5350.4E](#) Chapters 3F (Hate Incidents and CO/OIC Responsibilities) and 3G (Notification and Processing for Potential and Actual Hate Incidents) (updated 5 March 2025)
- [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy Statement](#) (Updated February 2025)
- [Equal Opportunity Policy Statement](#) (Updated February 2025)
- [Tattoo, Branding, Body Piercing, and Mutilation Standards, COMDTINST 1000.1F](#) (Updated May 2024)

The U.S. Coast Guard plays a valuable role in the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy through addressing security threats that fall under its mandated mission. Its unique blend of law enforcement authority, humanitarian response capacity, and maritime domain expertise makes it a versatile tool for advancing U.S. interest in the region. One of the most visible elements of this presence are the bilateral Shiprider agreements with various Pacific Island Forum nations remain a cornerstone of U.S. presence, strengthening sovereignty and deterring illicit activities such as illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing and trafficking.

1. Given NOAA's analysis that Chinese IUU fishing imperils the global ocean ecosystem, what are your plans for the U.S. Coast Guard's international collaboration in the Indo-Pacific to fight IUU fishing and trafficking?

Response: [We will continue combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing that threatens our national and economic security by using existing bilateral ship rider agreements, enabling our partners to enforce their laws from our assets. The Coast Guard is expanding its presence in the Indo-Pacific to counter malign influence, strengthen partnerships, and enhance maritime domain dominance.](#)

2. How can the United States Coast Guard leverage recent Quad maritime exercises with Japan, Australia, and India to expand multilateral enforcement against IUU fishing and trafficking?

Response: [With increased collaboration and operational coordination, the Quad exercises can focus on additional threats including IUU fishing, maritime environmental response, or other illicit maritime activity. In addition to operational deployments, the Quad is working to provide joint training to partners in both Oceania and South/Southeast Asia. These combined activities, consistently exercised, are expected to serve as a force multiplier to address shared threats.](#)

3. Where should the Coast Guard be conducting more port visits and where should it have more sustained presence to best build key partner capacity, provide assurance, deter adversaries and address illegal and destabilizing activities to best support U.S. national security?

Response: [The Coast Guard is expanding its permanent presence in the Indo-Pacific, which will enable more port visits and operations throughout the region where partner nations face challenges that likewise threaten U.S. national and economic security.](#)

4. What role should Coast Guard assets play in multilateral exercises alongside allies to counterbalance China's growing maritime footprint?

Response: Coast Guard assets play a valuable role as our Nation's lead federal maritime law enforcement agency in multilateral exercises in the Atlantic and Pacific, including Operation North Pacific Guard, an annual multi-mission effort between the U.S., Canada, Japan, and South Korea.

The Fiscal Year 2023 *National Defense Authorization Act* (NDAA) required a report and briefing on the U.S. Coast Guard's resourcing strategy for the Western Pacific region. This report is nearly two years delayed.

1. If confirmed, can you guarantee that you will work in consultation with the U.S. Coast Guard Commander of the Pacific Area, the Commanders of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere to ensure that this report is submitted as soon as possible given the delay?

Response: Yes.

In July, the Coast Guard commissioned three new Fast Response Cutters in Guam to enhance Pacific coverage amid rising concerns over overfishing and strategic competition with China. Recent updates show cutters like the USCGC Frederick Hatch returning to Guam after extended deployments and maintenance while additional cutters are expected by 2026.

1. As Acting Commandant, how have these Fast Response Cutters been integrated into regional patrols?

Response: The Coast Guard's Fast Response Cutters (FRCs) are vital to the Service's efforts in the region to assure U.S. sovereignty, combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, and enhance cooperation with allies and partners in the face of malign influence by China. Coast Guard FRCs based in Hawaii and Guam are key enablers to control, secure, and defend the U.S. border and maritime approaches around Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. They also enable partnership growth and sustainment, appropriately situated to support regional partners across a range of missions from disaster response to shiprider programs.

2. How do you assess the need for additional cutters or offshore patrol vessels to meet rising demands, especially in Micronesia and the Philippines?

Response: The Coast Guard continues to explore options to stretch its limited resources to meet the rising demand for operations, activities, and security cooperation requests in the Western Pacific region. Additional cutters will increase our capacity to control, secure, and defend our border and maritime approaches, while enabling the Coast Guard to strengthen partnerships, deter our adversaries, and counter malign influence. However, to operate more cutters in the region, the Coast Guard requires a significant and sustained investment in robust shore-based operating locations with the appropriate shoreside logistical, operational, and administrative support and increased funding. Ports that can viably meet the Coast Guard's needs in the region are scarce. Traditional homeporting of a fleet of cutters at ports

other than Guam and Hawaii is challenged by port size and the ability to adequately support assigned cutter families and crews.

3. If confirmed, will you commit to protecting these resources and advancing U.S. maritime priorities in the Pacific?

Response: [Yes](#).

Given its international role, the U.S. Coast Guard works closely with the U.S. Department of State and other federal agencies to conduct international port security assessments and share information on foreign maritime security. To support these efforts, the U.S. Coast Guard of the Pacific Area is seeking to lay down a Coast Guard Liaison Officer (CGLO) or attaché billets in the region.

1. How would the establishment of a Coast Guard Liaison Office or related attaché billets impact current U.S. Coast Guard operations in the Indo-Pacific region?

Response: [Establishing additional Coast Guard Liaison Officer or attaché billets in the Indo-Pacific would enhance our operational effectiveness by strengthening day-to-day engagement and trust with key partner nations. This persistent engagement allows for more seamless coordination, targeted training to build partner capacity, and improved information sharing to counter Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing and other maritime threats.](#)

2. What are the potential locations for additional positions?

Response: [The Coast Guard continues to assess locations for additional Coast Guard Liaisons and attaché billets.](#)

Those who live in Pacific Island countries face difficulties accessing U.S. consular services due to travel restrictions. The *Pacific Ready Coast Guard Act* that I introduced this Congress alongside Senator Wicker aims to conduct a feasibility assessment of attaching U.S. Department of State consular officers to U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy missions in Pacific Island countries.

1. What challenges do you anticipate in integrating Department of State consular officers into U.S. Coast Guard mission in the Indo-Pacific region?

Response: [The Coast Guard has not assessed the feasibility of integrating Consular officers into Coast Guard missions in the region.](#)

2. How would you coordinate with the U.S. Navy to ensure consular support missions are feasible, efficient, and aligned with broader U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy?

Response: [The Coast Guard defers to the Department of State.](#)

3. What operational adjustments would the Coast Guard need to make to host consular officers aboard cutters or during deployments?

Response: [The Coast Guard has not assessed the operational adjustments necessary to host Consular officers aboard cutters.](#)

4. What resources or authorities would be necessary to make consular integration into Coast Guard missions viable?

Response: The Coast Guard has not assessed the resources or authorities necessary to integrate Consular officers into Coast Guard missions in the region.

The U.S. Coast Guard is facing significant challenges with its shore infrastructure for both new construction and deferred maintenance projects. These shortfalls were analyzed in a recent GAO report (GAO-25-108064), which highlighted an estimated \$7 billion backlog.

1. If confirmed, how to plan to address this infrastructure backlog?

Response: The \$24.6 billion capital investment provided in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act for depot maintenance and recapitalization of shore facilities will help the Coast Guard begin to emerge from its decades long readiness crisis. The Coast Guard requires significant and sustained investments in depot maintenance and shore infrastructure to fully address the backlog and appreciates the support of Congress already provided.

2. Given the role of Hawaii as a hub for the Oceania District, what infrastructure improvements are most urgent to sustain operations in the Indo-Pacific region?

Response: Coast Guard assesses that port facilities in Hawaii and Guam are currently insufficient to meet the Service's growing needs in the region. Furthermore, many of the Western Pacific islands' infrastructure is currently insufficient to meet traditional homeporting requirements due to lack of adequate maintenance facilities, access to supplies, medical care, and servicemember housing options. The Service needs resources in addition to, and not at the expense of, continuing progress on our major cutter acquisitions and sustainment of our current fleet.

The heroic response of the U.S. Coast Guard to various disasters, including the Maui wildfire in August 2024, underscores the critical role of search and rescue operations. However, a GAO report (GAO-25-107224) indicates a shortfall of 2,600 active-duty staff and projections of nearly 6,000 enlisted members missing by 2025

1. As Acting Commandant, where have you identified personnel shortfalls, and how are they impacting mission execution?

Response: Our most significant personnel shortfall is in the active duty enlisted workforce. While our recruiting efforts last fiscal year were the most successful in over three decades, bringing in more than 5,200 active-duty recruits, we are still working to close a gap of nearly 1,500 members.

This shortage is most acute in our technical ratings. We need the specialists who maintain our cutters and aircraft and execute complex operations. Specifically, we project critical shortages through in ratings like Aviation Survival Technician, Electrician's Mate, Electronics Technician, and Operations Specialist. This creates a strain on our experienced members and impacts the maintenance and long-term health of our assets.

To manage this risk, we made difficult but necessary decisions under the Force Alignment Initiative. This was not a move to reduce missions, but a strategic reallocation of our most vital resource - our people - during a time when that resource was terribly strained. We temporarily ceased operations on four of our oldest medium endurance cutters and laid up

eleven 87-foot patrol boats. This allowed us to consolidate our skilled crews onto our most capable assets and prioritize readiness where it was needed most.

2. If confirmed, how will you make necessary adjustments to address these gaps, including recruitment and retention?

Response: If confirmed, my top priority will be our people. To address workforce gaps, we will build on our recent recruiting success – the best since 1991 – by expanding our recruiting force, opening new recruiting offices, and professionalizing our recruiting enterprise. To keep our best personnel, we will use targeted monetary and non-monetary incentives to fill critical vacancies and expand career-broadening opportunities. With the support of Congress, will also invest in quality of life by expanding housing options, fixing our childcare funding gap, and increasing access to medical care, especially for members and their families at remote units. Through Force Design 2028, we will pursue growing both our workforce and annual budget to reflect the value and need for a dependable, responsive Coast Guard.

3. What role can Coast Guard auxiliarists play in filling manpower gaps while long-term solutions are pursued?

Response: Auxiliarists are critical partners in our mission. They are already filling gaps in recreational boating safety, marine environmental protection, and search and rescue support and are expanding their role in vessel safety checks, public education, chaplain programs, and administrative support.

1. Can you describe your vision for leveraging uncrewed systems across the service, and particularly in the Pacific?

Response: The Coast Guard plans to acquire multi-mission unmanned systems and counter-unmanned systems capabilities that seamlessly integrate with and amplify existing capabilities across all domains, including in the Pacific. We stood up the Robotics and Autonomous Systems Program Executive Office to consolidate disparate efforts and rapidly operationalize our Unmanned Systems Strategic Plan. The data collected from these systems will contribute to the robust, integrated sensor network the Coast Guard is developing through our Coastal Sentinel initiative to inform the Service's common operating picture and enhance operational decision making.

2. How would you propose analyzing the data and information from uncrewed systems?

Response: The Coast Guard will analyze data and information collected from unmanned systems using artificial intelligence and trained Coast Guard professionals to enhance efficient and effective operational decision making. The expansion and formalization of data processes and creation of data teams will further enable the Service to focus efforts and maximize utility of resources.

3. Would you be willing to partner with other Federal agencies to include additional sensors for any uncrewed systems the Coast Guard might deploy?

Response: Yes, if confirmed I will work with our Federal partners to consider including additional sensors on Coast Guard uncrewed systems.

4. Do you have any plans on how the Coast Guard might use its uncrewed systems data and analysis to collaborate with allied nations?

Response: The Coast Guard maintains operational information sharing agreements with numerous partner nations. When appropriate, those agreements may be updated to include unmanned systems' data and analysis.

In October, the U.S. Coast Guard launched Operation River Wall indicating that U.S. Coast Guard assets, such as aircraft, cutters, small boards, and crews, were diverted under its "operational control" to the southern border.

1. How did the Coast Guard make up for the withdrawal of resources that were redistributed to the southern border?

Response: Operational commanders have the authority and responsibility to allocate resources based on mission demand and evaluate the risk associated with the current operational environment.

2. Where were these resources diverted from?

Response: The Coast Guard shifted resources from units across the organization to support Operation River Wall while minimizing the impact on individual units or specific regions.

3. If confirmed, how will you ensure that any continuation of redistributing resources does not weaken our national security?

Response: Operation River Wall is vital to U.S. national security. If confirmed, I will continue to evaluate mission demands and ensure operational commanders apply the necessary resources, informed by risk considerations, to support national security priorities.

Recently, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) visited U.S. Coast Guard base Fort Wadsworth in New York, which could potentially be used as a new ICE detention center. Since then, there has been additional reporting that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security relocated an essential Coast Guard helicopter away from Newport, Oregon and is working to relocate other Coast Guard assets away from Newport to make room for a new ICE detention facility in Newport.

1. Do you support the use of U.S. Coast Guard facilities as ICE detention centers and the relocation of essential Coast Guard resources away from communities that rely on these services to make room for detention centers?

Response: The Coast Guard will continue to assist our Department of Homeland Security partners to control, secure, and defend the U.S. border. I have not relocated essential Coast Guard resources for the purpose of making room for detention centers.

2. If confirmed, how will you ensure that, if these facilities are used as ICE detention centers or if there is a removal of Coast Guard assets from other communities throughout the U.S., the Coast Guards' ability to do their job and support these communities will not be negatively impacted?

Response: The Coast Guard's dedication to the American public remains resolute. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure we meet operational requirements, support our maritime communities, and evaluate the use of all assets as part of Force Design 2028.

3. If confirmed, will the Coast Guard work closely with ICE and allow ICE to use the Coast Guard's facilities or relocate the Coast Guard's resources to make room for new ICE facilities?

Response: If confirmed, I will continue to assist our law enforcement partners to control, secure, and defend the U.S. border and allocate Coast Guard resources to fulfill all our statutory missions.

Women in the Service

Women represent 14.5 percent of the active-duty force in the Coast Guard. Leadership changes along with a recent decline in top female leaders across all services are compounding this issue. Furthermore, recent policy shifts, such as changes in physical standards and the disbanding of advisory groups, have raised concerns among female service members about their place in the military.

1. As Commandant, do you believe women play an important role to the Coast Guard's success as a military service?

Response: Yes.

2. As Commandant, what actions will you take to ensure women in the Coast Guard are treated as equals to their male counterparts?

Response: Women are vital members of the Coast Guard with the ability to fill every role the Coast Guard conducts. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize taking care of all Coast Guard men and women.

3. The Commandant is ultimately liable for any policies that are enacted in the Service. Will you stand up for all female service members in the Coast Guard by not enacting policies that are biased or promote unfair treatment of women?

Response: Yes.

Search and Rescue

During the hearing we discussed the 23 search and rescues stations the Coast Guard has temporarily closed. You told me that you have no plan to currently re-open them. I am deeply concerned about the fishermen in my state, and their ability to have the necessary resources for their safety.

1. Please explain your plan in detail for ensuring all areas impacted by the 23 stations will have the necessary coverage for their safety.

Response: The safety of all mariners, including fishermen, remains a top priority for the Service. The Coast Guard has not made final decisions regarding permanent closures or reopening of any station impacted by temporary changes made in the Force Alignment Initiative. All communities currently impacted by the Force Alignment Initiative temporary

changes are served by nearby stations with overlapping areas of responsibility, enabling us to adhere to our rigorous response standards.

2. How many additional stations does the Coast Guard intend to close (temporary or otherwise)?

Response: The Coast Guard has not made final decisions regarding permanent closures or reopening of any station impacted by Force Alignment Initiative. As part of Force Design 2028, the Coast Guard is evaluating force posture and structure, which will include deliberate evaluation of these stations.

3. As you noted at the hearing, the law requires the Coast Guard to hold public meetings and seek comment prior to any station closures. Have you done that or initiated that process with any stations?

Response: No.

4. Is the Coast Guard considering privatizing any aspect of search and rescue operations?

Response: No, the Coast Guard is not seeking to privatize or reduce its role in Search and Rescue.

Former Coast Guard Commandant

The former Commandant, Admiral Fagan, was fired without reason and then evicted from her home with effectively no notice.

1. Yes or No: were you involved in this decision to evict Admiral Fagan? If so, please detail the role you played and who else was involved in making this decision.

Response: No, I was not part of the decision.

2. Did you try recommending alternative courses of action?

Response: I was not part of the decision.

Limited Coast Guard Resources Used for the Secretary of Homeland Security

The Secretary of Homeland Security moved into the home traditionally reserved for the Commandant, where she's been living for months.

Coast Guard resources—which are always stretched thin—are being diverted away from purchasing critical search-and-rescue aircraft to instead buy two luxury executive jets costing more than \$172 million.

1. As the highest-ranking attorney in the Coast Guard, what is the legal justification for a civilian DHS Secretary living in Coast Guard military housing?

Response: I was not part of this decision and refer you to the Office of the Secretary regarding this matter.

2. Was Secretary Noem or other DHS political appointees involved in the Coast Guard's decision to purchase the Gulfstream 700 jets? If so, please specify whom and to what extent.

Response: [As Acting Commandant of the Coast Guard, I made the decision to purchase the two newer model Long Range Command and Control aircraft in coordination with Department of Homeland Security and Office of Management and Budget.](#)

Hate Symbol Policies at the Coast Guard

On November 20, 2025, media reports documented a new Coast Guard policy under which the Nazi swastika, nooses, and other abhorrent symbols would no longer be classified as a hate symbol, instead reclassifying them as “potentially divisive.” Admiral Lunday, I understand you met with my staff on November 20, 2025, and committed to changing this policy within 24 hours. Later on November 20, you issued a memorandum to all Coast Guard personnel stating: “Divisive or hate symbols and flags are prohibited. These symbols and flags include, but are not limited to, the following: a noose, a swastika, and any symbols or flags co-opted or adopted by hate-based groups as representations of supremacy, racial or religious intolerance, antisemitism, or any other improper bias.” The memo further stated: “The display of any divisive or hate symbol is prohibited and shall be removed from all Coast Guard workplaces, facilities, and assets.”

1. Admiral Lunday, will your November 20 memorandum be formally reflected in the Coast Guard Harassing Behavior Prevention, Response, and Accountability policy (COMDTINST 5350.6A)?

Response: [The November 20, 2025, policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of existing Coast Guard policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags and strengthens the Service’s processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. This includes a body of existing Coast Guard policies:](#)

- [Coast Guard Policy and Lawful Order Prohibiting Divisive or Hate Symbols \(November 2025\)](#)
- [Harassing Behaviors Prevention, Response, and Accountability, 5350.6A \(November 2025\)](#)
- [Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST 5350.4E Chapters 3F \(Hate Incidents and CO/OIC Responsibilities\) and 3G \(Notification and Processing for Potential and Actual Hate Incidents\) \(updated 5 March 2025\)](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy Statement \(Updated February 2025\)](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Policy Statement \(Updated February 2025\)](#)
- [Tattoo, Branding, Body Piercing, and Mutilation Standards, COMDTINST 1000.1F \(Updated May 2024\)](#)

2. Will you formally rescind the provisions of the Coast Guard Harassing Behavior Prevention, Response, and Accountability policy regarding “potentially divisive symbols and flags”?

Response: [No. The updated 2025 policy will not be rescinded; I issued a November 20, 2025 lawful order that clarifies and doubles down on current policies prohibiting the display, distribution or use of divisive or hate symbols and flags by Coast Guard personnel.](#)

3. Please explain why the Coast Guard had classified the display of Nazi swastikas, nooses, and similar abhorrent symbols as only “potentially” divisive?

Response: The November 2025 changes strengthened the policy on divisive or hate symbols and flags. There was never an intent to change the absolute prohibition on the display of swastikas or nooses and other recognized symbols of hate. The Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST 5340.4E (updated 5 March 2025), which categorically prohibits such symbols, remains in effect.

4. Did anyone outside of the Coast Guard direct you or anyone else Coast Guard leadership to classify Nazi swastikas, nooses, or other abhorrent symbols as “potentially divisive”?

Response: No.

Jones Act

There is bipartisan agreement that it is critical we increase American-built ships to support our economy, our national security, and to shore up our maritime industrial base. Despite this, the Coast Guard is planning to build four Arctic Security Cutters in Finland.

1. Yes or No: Do you support the Jones Act and other build-America requirements that apply to the Coast Guard under U.S. law?

Response: Yes, the Coast Guard supports and fully complies with U.S. law.

2. Yes or No: Putting the Arctic Security Cutter aside for the moment, if you are confirmed will you approve the construction of any additional Coast Guard cutters overseas?

Response: If confirmed, I will not. The Commandant does not have authority under U.S. law to approve construction of Coast Guard cutters overseas.

SENATOR GARY PETERS (D-MI)

Operational Adjustments:

1. For each unit, please provide data points and analysis used by USCG to determine the locations in Michigan selected for operational adjustments in 2023.

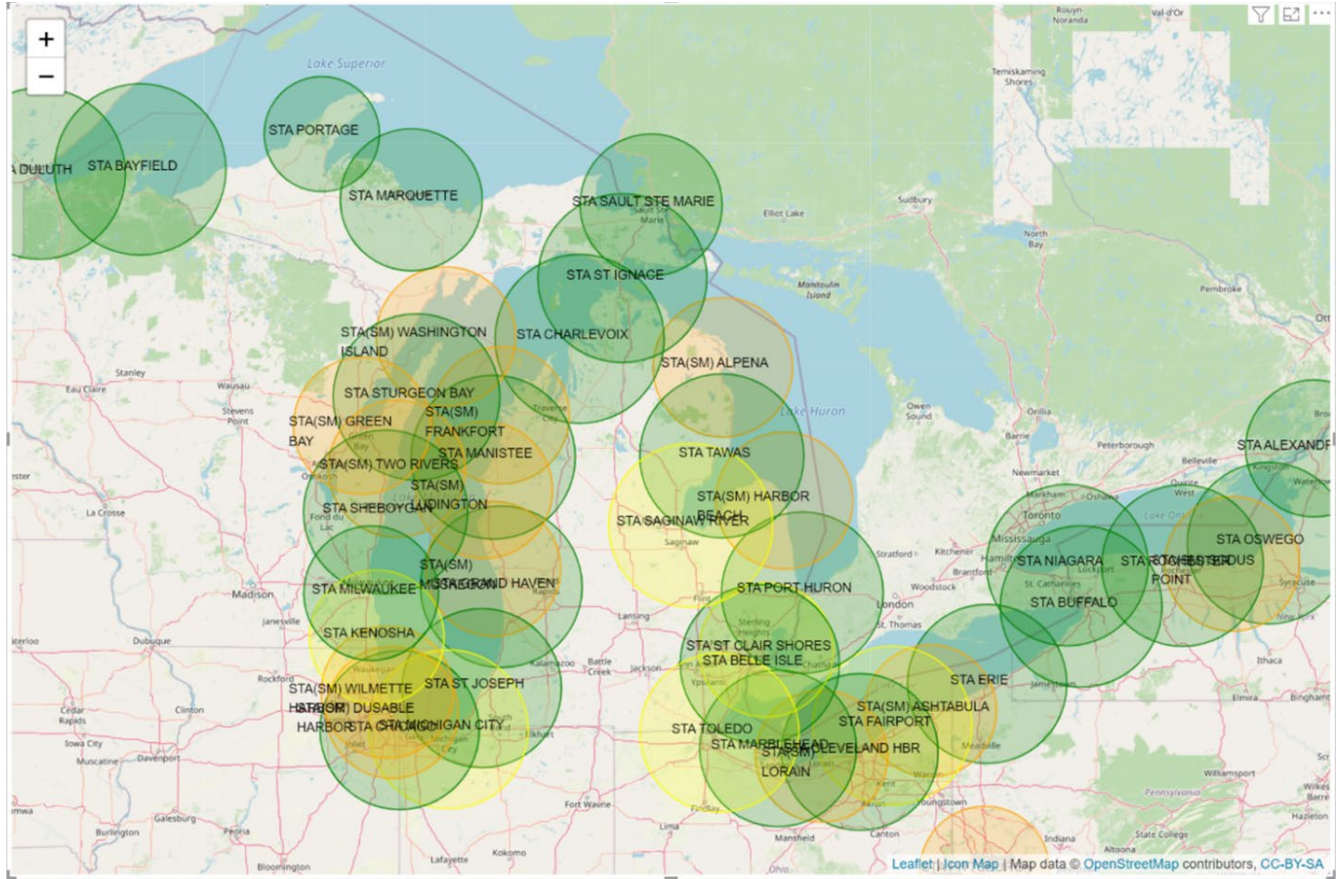
Response: We made necessary operational adjustments across the country, including in Michigan, to manage a critical, service-wide workforce shortage in 2023.

Seven Michigan stations were impacted. Five seasonal stations were transitioned to forward operating locations: Harbor Beach, Alpena, Frankfort, Ludington, and Muskegon. Two stations were adjusted to scheduled mission stations: St. Clair Shores and Saginaw River.

Our analysis focused exclusively on maintaining Search and Rescue (SAR) coverage to protect the maritime public. We performed a data-driven review to identify stations that provided redundant SAR response capabilities. This allowed us to make adjustments while ensuring adjacent primary and secondary stations could still meet our rigorous response standard.

Below is an overview of the range ring analysis involving the State of Michigan's Coast Guard Boat Stations and across the Coast Guard Great Lakes District. Green circles indicate SAR coverage for primary stations, yellow circles indicate SAR coverage for secondary stations, and orange circles indicate SAR coverage for tertiary stations.

- Primary: Stations that provide the first layer of multi-mission response boat coverage.
- Secondary: Stations that provide the second layer of multi-mission response boat coverage
- Tertiary: Stations that are currently seasonal Stations (Station Smalls), non-response Stations & detachments, or Stations that provide additional (3+) layers of response boat coverage.



Recruitment and retention:

1. Please provide the number of enlisted members, officers, and reserve members onboard for fiscal years 2023-2025 and identify where shortages exist.

Response:

	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Active Duty Enlisted	29,638	30,638	31,930
Active Duty Officer	7,196	7,348	7,558
Active Duty Warrant Officer	1,797	1,787	1,835
Selective Reserve	6,185	6,347	6,406

Our most significant personnel shortfall is in the active duty enlisted workforce. While our recent recruiting efforts have been the most successful in over three decades, bringing in more than 5,200 active duty recruits last fiscal year, we are still working to close a gap of nearly 1,500 members.

2. Please provide the number of personnel accessed for fiscal years 2023-2025.

Response: The below table provides the requested information, but does not reflect the regular departure of members from the Service through regular processes (retirement, end of enlistment, etc.). To overcome the workforce gap, the Coast Guard must continue to seek

ways to retain personnel, but also increase accessions, particularly as we seek to grow the military workforce by 15,000 under Force Design.

FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
3,126	4,422	5,204

Healthcare:

1. Please provide your plans to address challenges with healthcare access for Coast Guard members in Michigan and their dependents.

Response: If confirmed, through Force Design 2028, and with the continued support of Congress, the Service will increase the number of Coast Guard medical care providers and support staff by at least 500 people. Additionally, as we pursue growing to a \$20 billion Service, we will expand access to primary healthcare medical services for Coast Guard men, women, and their families in remote locations, including those located in Michigan, by leveraging deployable medical capabilities and optimizing the use of telehealth.

Policy Changes:

1. Please provide an explanation of the changes made to USCG policy as described in ALCOAST 459/25- NOV 2025 UPDATE TO HARASSING BEHAVIOR PREVENTION, RESPONSE, and ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY and in Harassing Behavior Prevention, Response, and Accountability (COMDTINST 5350.6A, November 2025) and what entities were included in making these changes. In particular:
 - a. Why USCG policy is no longer using the term “hate incident” and why the handling of hate incidents has been changed.

Response: The November 2025 changes clarified and strengthened the policy on divisive or hate symbols and flags. There was never an intent to change the absolute prohibition on the display of swastikas or nooses and other recognized symbols of hate. The Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST 5340.4E (updated 5 March 2025), which categorically prohibits such hate incidents, remains in effect.

- b. Whether there are any activities that would be labeled under hate incident that would now neither be classified as harassment nor display of “divisive flags and symbols.” For example, how will the USCG categorize incidents that are more severe than harassment, like bullying or hazing, that are motivated by hate against a protected class?

Response: No, the scope of prohibited conduct covered under Coast Guard policy has not changed, including hate incidents, sexual harassment, harassment, bullying or hazing.

- c. Why the terminology “potentially divisive” was used to describe known hate symbols.

Response: My November 20, 2025 policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing Coast Guard policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags and our processes for preventing and responding to potential and actual hate incidents. This

includes an absolute prohibition on displays of hate symbols, such as a swastika or noose, that are widely identified with oppression or hatred, anti-semitism, racial or religious intolerance, or other improper bias. Further, Coast Guard policy more broadly also prohibits display of other divisive or hate symbols and flags that may be co-opted or adopted by hate or extremist groups. Hate incidents or potential hate incidents will be immediately reported, thoroughly investigated, and severely punished.

There is no change to effective Coast Guard policy governing notification and processing for potential and actual hate incidents, including responsibility for inquiry or investigation into reported incidents contained in Chapter 3F and 3G of the Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST M5350.4E. The policy, which remains unchanged, directs the unit commanding officer or officer-in-charge in the case of a hate incident, such as display of swastika or noose, to immediately conduct an investigation. In the case of a potential hate incident, where there may be insufficient evidence of a hate incident at the start, the commanding officer or officer-in-charge is authorized to conduct a preliminary inquiry to gather evidence to inform the conduct of an investigation. In either case, however, the actual or potential hate incident must be immediately reported up the chain of command and to the Civil Rights Service Provider.

- d. The requirement for reports of harassing behavior to be filed within forty-five calendar days and any analysis of whether this might limit reporting of such incidents.

Response: The 2025 version of the Harassing Behaviors Prevention, Response, and Accountability Instruction strengthens our ability to report, investigate and prosecute those who violate such policy. The 45-day reporting requirement aligns Coast Guard policy with the Federal EEO complaint process reporting timeframes to facilitate timely investigations of allegations and effective resolutions.

That said, the policy does not prevent or limit a person from reporting harassing behavior after the 45 calendar days if there is a reason for the extension and provides broad discretion for accepting reports after 45 calendar days. This timeline for reporting has no bearing on the responsibility of unit commanders to maintain good order and discipline within their command and respond to any harassing behaviors.

2. Please confirm whether any of these changes are intended to be reversed in an updated version of this policy document.

Response: No. The November 20, 2025, policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of existing Coast Guard policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags, and strengthens the Service's processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents.

3. Please explain who will be responsible for determining what is a divisive symbol or flag.

Response: For known and widely recognized divisive or hate symbols and Flags, there is no discretion to determine that they are not prohibited. For other potentially divisive or hate symbols and flags, including those adopted or co-opted by hate or extremist groups, the determinations are made by unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, and

supervisors, in consultation with their servicing legal office, with immediate notification to their chain of command and the Anti-Harassment Program Office, as appropriate.

- Given the lack of definition of divisive and the possibility that there are disagreements on issues unrelated to hate, how will you ensure that this policy will not be improperly used?

Response: I have directed that unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, and supervisors remain vigilant to strictly enforce the prohibitions on divisive or hate symbols and flags in Coast Guard policy, including my letter and lawful order of 20 November 2025.

Drug Interdictions and Prosecutions:

- Please provide monthly drug interdiction data for fiscal years 2023-2025.

Response:

	Fiscal Year		
	2023	2024	2025*
October	3,288 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana	7,691 kgs cocaine 2,140 lbs marijuana	32,056 kgs cocaine 2,771 lbs marijuana
November	12,811 kgs cocaine 9,730 lbs marijuana	14,183 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana	6,972 kgs cocaine 5,740 lbs marijuana
December	3,633 kgs cocaine 4,200 lbs marijuana	3,212 kgs cocaine 9,473 lbs marijuana	19,033 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana
January	1,232 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana	2,470 kgs cocaine 3,180 lbs marijuana	38,172 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana
February	8,643 kgs cocaine 8,456 lbs marijuana	18,946.3 kgs cocaine 7,604 lbs marijuana	19,458 kgs cocaine 5,141 lbs marijuana
March	6,895 kgs cocaine 8,416 lbs marijuana	16,794 kgs cocaine 3,094 lbs marijuana	10,332 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana
April	7,922 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana	7,780 kgs cocaine 3,802 lbs marijuana	12,285 kgs cocaine 6,502 lbs marijuana
May	11,582 kgs cocaine 1,636 lbs marijuana	5,751 kgs cocaine 97 lbs marijuana	26,976 kgs cocaine 2,599 lbs marijuana
June	7,822 kgs cocaine 2,091 lbs marijuana	1,503 kgs cocaine 2,229 lbs marijuana	22,336 kgs cocaine 3,317 lbs marijuana
July	7,253 kgs cocaine 6,547 lbs marijuana	5,404 kgs cocaine 0 lbs marijuana	15,725 kgs cocaine 9,168 lbs marijuana
August	8,842.8 kgs cocaine 5,325 lbs marijuana	9,689 kgs cocaine 4,418 lbs marijuana	30,947 kgs cocaine 8,030 lbs marijuana
September	16,299 kgs cocaine 4,967 lbs marijuana	12,869 kgs cocaine 5,763 lbs marijuana	29,293 kgs cocaine 150 lbs marijuana
TOTAL	96,222.3 kgs cocaine 51,368 lbs marijuana	106,293 kgs cocaine 41,800 lbs marijuana	263,584.2 kgs cocaine 43,418 lbs marijuana
* Data validated through Q3 FY 2025			

2. As it relates to drug interdictions, please provide the following data broken down by month for fiscal years 2023-2025:

- a. The total number of detainees taken into USCG custody and the unique number of detainees taken into custody.

Response: The Coast Guard does not maintain data for the unique number of detainees taken into custody. The table below lists the totals number of detainees taken into custody.

	FISCAL YEAR		
	2023	2024	2025*
October	16	33	50
November	27	32	15
December	13	16	37
January	5	12	66
February	26	44	45
March	24	32	25
April	32	16	30
May	33	10	36
June	15	24	40
July	21	10	28
August	17	26	64
September	38	33	52
TOTAL	267^	288^	488^
* Data validated through Q3.			
^ Detainees not landed ashore in the U.S. or a partner nation for prosecution were either medically evacuated or treated as SAR survivors if no contraband was located.			

- b. Detainees remanded to U.S. for possible prosecution.

Response: Starting in April 2025, the monthly totals below do not include detainees landed ashore in the U.S.

	Fiscal Year		
	2023	2024	2025*
October	16	31	44
November	27	29	15
December	13	12	32
January	2	10	63
February	22	42	39
March	22	32	25
April	27	10	2**
May	29	9	0
June	14	21	0
July	21	10	0

August	17	26	11
September	35	30	2^^
TOTAL	245^	262^	233^
* Data validated through Q3 ^ Detainees not landed ashore in the U.S. or a partner nation for prosecution were either medically evacuated or treated as SAR survivors if no contraband was located. ** Detainees were prosecuted for assault on federal officers, not drug related charges. ^^ Detainees were U.S. citizens and therefore not subject to the MDLEA pause.			

c. Detainees not remanded to U.S. for possible prosecution.

Response: Data includes detainees turned over to partner nations but does not include SAR survivors or detainees that were medically evacuated.

	Fiscal Year		
	2023	2024	2025*
October	0	2	6
November	0	3	0
December	0	4	0
January	3	0	0
February	0	2	6
March	2	0	0
April	0	6	28
May	4	0	36
June	0	0	40
July	0	0	27
August	0	0	53
September	3	2	50
TOTAL	12^	19^	246^
* Data validated through Q3 ^ Detainees not landed ashore in the U.S. or a partner nation for prosecution were either medically evacuated or treated as SAR survivors if no contraband was located.			

3. Please indicate any changes made to USCG operations, processes, and criminal referrals based on the implementation of the memorandum titled "Total Elimination of Cartels and Transnational Criminal Organizations," issued by Attorney General Pam Bondi on February 5, 2025.

a. Please provide any guidance or memorandum issued to USCG personnel related to implementation.

Response: The Coast Guard has not made any changes to its operations, processes, or criminal referrals based on the implementation of the referenced DOJ memorandum.



InterimMOTRprotocol.pdf

Flight Operations:

1. Please provide the total number of flights Coast Guard has conducted in support of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in calendar year 2025, with a description of the purpose of each flight.

Response: 763 flights. The purpose of each flight is the transfer of illegal aliens between ICE detention centers within the continental U.S.

2. Please provide the total number of noncitizens the Coast Guard has transported in support of ICE in calendar year 2025.

Response: The Coast Guard transported 8,234 aliens in support of ICE in calendar year 2025.

3. Please provide the total cost per flight, including the personnel costs, fuel costs, and other expenditures.

Response: The average total cost per flight is approximately \$56,485.00 for a HC-130 and \$77,834.00 for a C-27 flight.

4. When conducting a transportation flight in support of ICE, does USCG maintain its own manual for operations or is ICE guidance utilized? If USCG maintains its own manual, please provide.

Response: The Coast Guard operates in accordance with its own Standard Operating Procedure.



Alien Transportation Ope

5. Do USCG personnel operating flights in support of ICE receive training before conducting a transport flight?

Response: Coast Guard personnel arrive having completed and been certified in standardized Law Enforcement qualifications. Deployed personnel receive additional on-the-job training from ICE for mission-specific parameters prior to their first operational sortie.

6. Please provide a list of any non-Coast Guard personnel present on flights in support of ICE and a description of each of their roles for the flight.

Response: As described in the provided Standard Operating Procedure, non-Coast Guard personnel present on flights in support of ICE include U.S. Federal Deportation Agents, who maintain legal custody and accountability of all aliens and associated personal belongings onboard the flight. Deportation Agents will direct embarkation and disembarkation procedures (with concurrence of the Security Team and aircrew), orderly security and care of aliens during the flight, and tasking/positioning of Security Team members. Deportation

Agents are responsible for any follow-on LE investigative activity resulting from actions of aliens during AEO. The lead agency is responsible for providing food, water, and consumables for the care of aliens in flight. The Coast Guard defers to the Department of Homeland Security and ICE regarding any other specific roles and responsibilities of personnel outside of the Coast Guard.

Support to other agencies:

1. When USCG receives a request for support from another agency, what is your process of reviewing such requests and determining USCG's ability to fulfill its statutory missions?

Response: Decisions are typically delegated to the Coast Guard operational commander to assess current operations and capacity to dedicate or provide assets in support of an agency request. For larger, planned events requesting Coast Guard support, such as the United Nations General Assembly or Boston Marathon, the Coast Guard evaluates the events through an executive board to recommend the level of planned support. Operational commanders have the authority to divert resources from planned support if more emergent mission needs arise.

2. Beyond the flight operations discussed above, please provide a list of all support provided to ICE or U.S. Customs and Border Protection pursuant to 14 USC §701(a) for calendar year 2025.

Response: In addition to the flight operations above, the Coast Guard has provided temporary personnel augmentation for missions such as alien intake, transport, and processing functions at ICE staging facilities in Florida and Texas, and deployable specialized forces support to CBP at Border Control Tactical Unit operations.

3. In calendar year 2025, have any USCG facilities been used for ICE holding or immigration detention? If so, please provide:
 - a. The name of the facility, the dates the facility was used for detention, the number of individuals detained (broken down by minors and adults), the maximum number of individuals detained at one time, and the maximum amount of time any minor and adult has been detained at each of the facilities.

Response: No Coast Guard facilities have been used for immigration detention.

4. What, if any, USCG resources are being used for operations at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay?

Response: There is a permanent Aviation Detachment at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay consisting of four Coast Guard members who primarily support cutter logistics and aircrew deployments.

Operation River Wall

1. Please provide operation details for Operation River Wall, including:
 - a. The Federal agency that is the lead on Operation River Wall and other participating agencies.

Response: The Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for Operation River Wall. Other agencies operating in this area include Joint Task Force – Southern Border, the Texas Military Department, the Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the U.S. Border Patrol, and the U.S. Custom and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations.

- b. Duties of USCG personnel supporting the operation.

Response: Coast Guard forces lead maritime law enforcement operations to control, secure, and defend approximately 260 river miles of the Rio Grande River along the U.S. maritime border in eastern Texas.

- c. The planned duration for the operation.

Response: The Coast Guard has not determined the duration for the operation.

- d. The geographic locations covered by the operation.

Response: The operation includes the Rio Grande River in Cameron and Hidalgo counties in eastern Texas, extending to the sea.

- e. USCG assets being used for the operation.

Response: The Coast Guard has employed various small boats and air boats capable of operating in the shallow waters along the Rio Grande.

- f. The number of USCG personnel supporting the operation, and whether any personnel have been reassigned from other operating locations or USCG missions.

Response: There are currently (as of 24 November 2025) 364 personnel supporting Operation River Wall, reassigned from various units and deployable specialized forces to minimize the impact at any single unit or region.

- 2. Please provide the number of apprehensions made by USCG as part of Operation River Wall.

Response: As of November 22, 2025, the Coast Guard supported the apprehension of 79 aliens and deterred 98 aliens from reaching the United States.

- a. Of these apprehensions, please provide the number of individuals have been referred for criminal prosecutions, broken down by charges.

Response: The Coast Guard defers to U.S. Border Patrol on criminal prosecution data.

- b. Of these apprehensions, please provide the number of individuals that have been charged with civil immigration violations, broken down by charges.

Response: The Coast Guard defers to U.S. Border Patrol for charges brought against illegal aliens.

Maritime Migration

1. Please provide the number of migrants interdicted at sea by USCG and transferred to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in calendar year 2025, broken down by month. ‘

Response:

Calendar Year 2025 Migrant Transfers to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay	
Month	# of Migrants
January	1
February	1
March	0
April	1
May	0
June	0
July	1
August	0
September	1
October	0
November	1
December	-

- a. Of these individuals, please identify whether any are minors.

Response: No aliens transferred were minors.

SENATOR TAMMY BALDWIN (D-WI)

Since the public disclosure of Operation Fouled Anchor regarding the investigation of sexual assault and sexual harassment, the Coast Guard has issued 33 directed actions to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. Of those actions, 24 have been completed.

1. If confirmed, what is your plan to fully implement the remaining recommendations?

Response: I have taken decisive action to combat and eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment from our Service. We have completed 24 of the 33 Commandant's Directed Actions, including six since January 20, 2025. We are on track to fully complete all 33 actions in 2026. Further, we will take additional actions to continue to combat and eliminate sexual assault and sexual harassment from the Coast Guard.

2. How much funding is required to fully implement the remaining recommendations and sustain the already completed recommendations each fiscal year?

Response: The Fiscal Year 2026 President's Budget provides adequate resources to complete the Commandant's Directed Actions, including targeted investments to support sexual assault prevention, trauma-informed survivor services, and independent investigations.

In addition, the Fiscal Year 2026 Unfunded Priorities List includes a request for \$18.4 million for additional Commandant's Directed Actions Enhancements to further cultivate and maintain a workplace free of sexual assault and other harmful behaviors.

3. How is the Coast Guard measuring the success of these directed actions in preventing and responding to sexual misconduct?

Response: As part of the Commandant Directed Action "Survey Analysis and Trend Development," the Coast Guard is developing a tool utilizing data from existing workforce surveys to track the effect of the directed actions. Additionally, the Coast Guard seeks direct feedback from the force through commanding officers, officers-in-charge, supervisors, and command senior enlisted leaders on the success of these actions.

Due to the unique nature of the Coast Guard, Coast Guardsmen are often stationed in remote or rural locations that lack many key services they depend on for the quality of life of themselves and their families.

1. If confirmed, what actions would you take to improve the quality of life of Coast Guardsmen and their families stationed in remote or rural locations?

Response: Supporting our members at remote units is one of my top priorities, and Force Design 2028 offers the Coast Guard a way to deliver on this priority. If confirmed, I will work with Congress to increase medical staff, improve housing options, and enhance childcare services for our members and their families, particularly at remote units.

2. If confirmed, how would you ensure that Coast Guardsmen and their families in remote or rural duty stations have access to broadband internet?

Response: We are modernizing our network infrastructure by transitioning to Enterprise Infrastructure Services and deploying OneWeb satellite services in remote locations. We have already upgraded 58 percent of our legacy data circuits and will complete the transition

by the end of fiscal year 2026. We intend to deploy OneWeb satellite internet to all areas lacking reliable terrestrial connections by the end of calendar year 2026.

This effort will provide high-speed, low-latency broadband that supports mission and mission support activities, such as telehealth, remote education, and communications with family members.

3. If confirmed, how would you ensure that Coast Guardsmen and their families in remote or rural duty stations have access to high quality medical care?

Response: If confirmed, through Force Design 2028 we will increase the number of Coast Guard medical care providers and support staff by at least 500 people to ensure the ability to meet the health care needs of the workforce. Additionally, as we pursue growing to a \$20 billion Service, we will expand access to primary healthcare medical services for Coast Guard members and their families in remote locations by leveraging deployable medical capabilities and optimizing the use of telehealth.

SENATOR TAMMY DUCKWORTH (D-IL)

Military Personnel Career Management

1. If confirmed, do you commit that you will not support firing flag officers simply for executing lawful policies of a past administration?

Response: [Yes](#).

2. If confirmed, do you commit not to retaliate against flag officers or military servicemembers for executing lawful policies enacted by a previous administration?

Response: [Yes](#).

3. If confirmed, do you commit that you will not use military officers' record of executing policy or their personal beliefs as promotion criteria either formally or informally?

Response: [Yes](#).

4. If confirmed, do you commit to providing timely documented justifications to this Committee for any removals or re-details of flag officers from command?

Response: [Yes](#).

5. If confirmed, do you commit to providing timely documented justifications to this Committee for any actions taken to execute the Secretary of Homeland Security's direction to reduce the flag officer corps?

Response: [Yes](#).

6. If confirmed, you will be the senior-most Coast Guard officer, setting the tone for professionalism and integrity across the service. In an environment where officers worry about retaliation for providing candid advice, what would you say to reassure Coast Guard officers and enlisted servicemember that their duty to provide their best military judgment will be respected and protected?

Response: [Coast Guard personnel have a duty to provide candid advice based on their professional judgment, consistent with their oath of office or oath of enlistment.](#)

7. How will you ensure that the Coast Guard continues to provide honest military advice to civilian leaders—even when those recommendations may be politically inconvenient?

Response: [Coast Guard personnel are bound by duty and their oath of office or oath of enlistment to provide honest military advice to civilian leaders.](#)

On January 21, 2025, an unnamed “senior DHS official” defended President Donald Trump’s firing of Admiral Linda Fagan by stating, “She was terminated because of her leadership deficiencies, operational failures, and inability to advance the strategic objectives of the U.S. Coast Guard.”

8. Please describe in detail the leadership deficiencies, operational failures and inability to advance the strategic objectives of the U.S. Coast Guard that you witnessed Admiral

Fagan engage in while serving as Commandant—or if you disagree with the assessment of the senior DHS official, please explain why.

Response: [I was not part of the decision to relieve Admiral Fagan and refer you to the Department of Homeland Security.](#)

9. If the Trump administration truly believes it terminated Admiral Fagan for cause, why do you believe that you were not also removed, given your tenure as Vice Commandant under Commandant Fagan, as well as your significant command responsibilities in the years leading up to becoming Vice Commandant?

Response: [I was not part of the decision to relieve Admiral Fagan and refer you to the Department of Homeland Security.](#)

Oversight Responsibilities

1. If confirmed, do you commit that your deliberations and decisions will only be communicated through official, secure channels and any decisions properly documented for both oversight and institutional memory?

Response: [Yes.](#)

2. Would you follow an illegal, unlawful or immoral order?

Response: [No.](#)

3. If confirmed, do you commit to executing the Coast Guard budget faithfully, and rooting out instances of waste, fraud and abuse?

Response: [Yes.](#)

4. How do you plan to balance shipbuilding challenges with ensuring the timely delivery of the critical polar icebreaker program?

Response: [The Coast Guard restructured its acquisition organization with single points of accountability for each program area. The Deputy Commandant for Systems oversees all major programs, and I chair a weekly Investment Council to ensure rigorous oversight for management and execution of all funding provided by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. For Polar Security Cutters, we achieved design maturity, resolved contract issues, and are on track to deliver PSC #1 in 2030.](#)

5. Will you commit to increased transparency and engaging with Congress on considered cuts or changes to ensure the full impacts are understood prior to decisions being made?

Response: [If confirmed, I will ensure transparency and engage with Congress as required on decisions I make.](#)

6. Will you commit to ensuring a timely response to requests for information?

Response: [Yes.](#)

Station Closures

During our call, you stated you would provide data on station closures and manning decisions, particularly in the Great Lakes region. I am concerned by recent actions of this Administration to withhold funding from constituents solely because they did not vote for this President.

1. If confirmed, do you commit to providing any and all data and requirements used in determining Coast Guard station manning requirements to the Committee?

Response: [Yes](#).

2. If confirmed, do you commit to non-partisan decision making when determining staffing decisions?

Response: [Yes](#).

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Recent reporting indicates that earlier this month, the Coast Guard attempted to rewrite its policy on “Harassing Behavior, Prevention, Response, and Accountability” to classify nooses and Nazi-era swastika insignia as only “**potentially** divisive (emphasis added),” which triggered intense backlash and forced the Coast Guard to issue a new policy on Thursday, November 20, 2025, clarifying that the Coast Guard “specifically sees swastikas and nooses as hate symbols” and that they are “expressly prohibited.”

1. Did you personally approve or reject any effort, formally or informally, to cease considering nooses and swastikas to be hate symbols and instead merely “potentially divisive?”

Response: [My November 20, 2025 policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags and strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. The claims that the Coast Guard will no longer classify or are “downgrading” the classification of swastikas, nooses, or other extremist imagery as prohibited symbols are categorically false. There is no reversal in Coast Guard policy on this matter.](#)

2. Were you aware of any effort, formally or informally, to cease considering nooses and swastikas to be hate symbols and instead merely “potentially divisive?”

Response: [My November 20, 2025 policy and lawful order clarified the display of divisive or hate symbols and flags remains prohibited as a violation of Coast Guard policy and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. This action was to combat any misinformation and affirm that the U.S. Coast Guard forbids these symbols. The claims that the Coast Guard will no longer classify or are “downgrading” the classification of swastikas, nooses, or other extremist imagery as prohibited symbols are categorically false.](#)

3. If you neither approved, rejected or were aware of this effort to change Coast Guard policy to remain open to the possibility that nooses and swastikas are not divisive in the Coast Guard, why do you believe despite serving as Acting Commandant, Coast Guard personnel sought to make such a deeply alarming policy change without your knowledge or approval?

Response: The claims that the Coast Guard will no longer classify or are “downgrading” the classification of swastikas, nooses, or other extremist imagery as prohibited symbols are categorically false. The term “potentially divisive” was used to broaden the scope of prohibited divisive or hate symbols and flags to include not only those known and widely recognized hate symbols (e.g., swastikas and nooses), but also prohibit those symbols and flags that are adopted or co-opted by hate groups or extremists and displayed as symbols of supremacy, racial or religious intolerance, anti-semitism, or other improper bias.

4. Do you believe this scandal may be fairly interpreted as a negative reflection of the command climate you have fostered since President Trump’s firing of Admiral Linda Fagan on January 21, 2025?

Response: No.

5. What actions have you personally taken to address the concerns that even a failed attempt by the Coast Guard to classify nooses and Nazi swastikas as potentially unifying undermines unite cohesion, weakens trust and calls into question Coast Guard leadership’s commitment to foundational constitutional principles, including equal protection under the law and religious freedom?

Response: My November 20, 2025, policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags and strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. The claims that the Coast Guard will no longer classify or are “downgrading” the classification of swastikas, nooses, or other extremist imagery as prohibited symbols are categorically false.

6. If confirmed, how will you ensure non-white and non-Christian members of the Coast Guard are confident that segments of leadership—especially individuals involved in the scandal related to the failed effort to reclassify nooses and swastikas as only “potentially divisive” symbols—do not harbor hatred toward them and sympathy towards the Nazis and/or racists that lynched Black Americans?

Response: The Coast Guard prohibits and does not tolerate the display of divisive or hate symbols and flags, including those identified with supremacy, racial or religious intolerance, anti-semitism, or other improper bias. Display of these and other hate symbols violate Coast Guard policy, military law, and our core values.

7. Have you ever owned or displayed swastikas in a professional or personal setting?

Response: No.

8. Have you ever owned or displayed a noose in a professional or personal setting?

Response: No.

9. Do you believe a noose is a symbol of hate?

Response: Yes.

10. Do you believe a swastika is a symbol of hate?

Response: Yes.

11. Do you believe a swastika can be a unifying symbol for the United States Coast Guard?

Response: No.

12. Do you believe a noose can be a unifying symbol for the United States Coast Guard?

Response: No.

13. Given the Trump administration's gaslighting denials that this scandal ever took place, will you commit to immediately requesting the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General conduct an independent investigation into this deeply troubling incident that occurred under your leadership?

Response: The claims that the Coast Guard will no longer classify swastikas, nooses or other divisive or hate symbols and flags as prohibited are categorically false. I welcome the Office of Inspector General's review of Coast Guard policy on the matter.

SENATOR BEN RAY LUJAN (D-NM)

The Coast Guard has done an admirable job interdicting vessels, which often leads to arrests and information that can be used to prosecute drug traffickers and those associated with their operations. It is my understanding that the Department of Justice (DOJ) has lost over 5,000 employees since January 2025.

1. How many lawyers does the U.S. Coast Guard currently have detailed to the Department of Justice to assist with prosecutions of drug related crimes?

Response: Four full-time and two part-time Coast Guard attorneys are detailed to the Department of Justice. However, their portfolios are not exclusively to assist with prosecutions of drug offenses.

2. Do you think that the Department of Justice could more effectively use Coast Guard attorneys to prosecute these drug smugglers given their successful history?

Response: The Coast Guard legal program has long had a mutually beneficial relationship with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and worked collaboratively to ensure accountability for those who violate federal law. We will continue to work closely with our DOJ partners.

On November 20th multiple news outlets reported that the Coast Guard would no longer classify certain symbols or flags co-opted or adopted by any hate-based groups, such as swastikas and nooses, as hate symbols. While I understand a new policy memo was released that re-classified these symbols and flags as hate symbols, I am concerned about the processes and decision that allowed this change to even be under consideration.

1. What approval process did the policy memo that de-classified these symbols go through?

Response: There is no reversal in Coast Guard policy on this matter. The November 20, 2025 policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags, and strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. The claims that the Coast Guard de-classified these symbols or are “downgrading” the classification of swastikas, nooses, or other hate symbols as prohibited are categorically false.

2. Did you, as acting commandant, approve the release of the policy memo?

Response: Yes.

3. What involvement did the Department of Homeland Security have in the drafting and approval of this policy memo?

Response: None.

4. The reported policy change would only trigger a supervisory inquiry instead of an investigation. In light of your statement that “any display, use, or promotion of such symbols, as always, will be thoroughly investigated and severely punished,” can you explain how these cases will be investigated differently than before this policy change?

Response: My November 20, 2025 policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags, and

strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. As always, hate incidents will be immediately reported, thoroughly investigated, and severely punished. There is no change to effective policy governing notification and processing for potential and actual hate incidents, including responsibility for inquiry or investigation into reported incidents, contained in Chapter 3F and 3G of the Coast Guard Civil Rights Manual, COMDTINST M5350.4E.

SENATOR JOHN FETTERMAN (D-PA)

Admiral Lunday, while the Coast Guard's station in Erie, PA has not been included in the Coast Guard's lists of stations to be closed, the station in Ashtabula, OH – about 50 nautical miles west of Erie – was included. In 2025, Station Ashtabula was adjusted from a seasonally operated station to not being staffed at all.

As a result, Station Erie and local first responders in Pennsylvania are now expected to cover hundreds of nautical miles more for search and rescue missions, without any additional resources or manpower.

In 2025, five people tragically lost their lives across three separate incidents along the Pennsylvania coast of Lake Erie, which is an abnormally high number for the area. Two of those three incidents occurred on the same weekend in July.

In response to Senator Baldwin questions on the closure of Coast Guard stations along the Great Lakes, you said you took part in the decision on where to reduce staffing at [Coast Guard] stations" and that these decisions were made "due to a shortage in the enlisted workforce".

In your response to Senator Peters' questions, you mentioned that the Coast Guard "recruited more this year than any other time since 1991".

1. Given the increase in drownings this past year along the Pennsylvania coast of Lake Erie and the fact that the Coast Guard's recruitment numbers are at the highest levels since 1991, will you commit to either reopening Station Ashtabula or committing additional staffing to Station Erie to ensure adequate coverage along the Lake Erie coast?

Response: [The Coast Guard has not made final decisions on any stations impacted by the Force Alignment Initiative. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure adequate search and rescue coverage along the Lake Erie coast.](#)

In your response to Senator Baldwin's question regarding the Coast Guard's plans to close stations in Wisconsin, you mentioned there will be an assessment as part of Force Design 2028 on the Coast Guard's force structure and where its stations are.

2. Will you commit to completing this assessment and implementing any necessary changes before next April, to ensure that stations along Lake Erie and the Great Lakes are staffed adequately for the summer of 2026?

Response: [If confirmed, I will direct the assessment and implementation of any necessary adjustments as swiftly as possible.](#)

SENATOR ANDY KIM (D-NJ)

Cape May Training Center

1. Admiral Lunday, Cape May is the Coast Guard's only enlisted basic training facility. It produces every new Coast Guardsman we send into the field, yet the infrastructure has suffered from decades of deferred maintenance—crumbling foundations, outdated barracks, and systems that simply aren't built for today's recruitment demand. With record enlistments and \$425 million now headed to Cape May, we must finally bring this facility into the 21st century. Can you commit to me that, if confirmed, you will make Cape May's modernization a top leadership priority and work with me to ensure the facility is fully restored to meet the demands of the Coast Guard's growing workforce?

Response: [Yes](#).

Coast Guard Policy on Extremism

2. [Recent reporting](#) revealed that a November 2 Coast Guard policy update appeared to reclassify extremist symbols—including swastikas and nooses—from 'potential hate incidents' to 'harassment' or 'divisive symbols,' removing the term 'hate incident' from policy language, before the service later issued a clarification reaffirming that such symbols remain prohibited. This inconsistency raises concerns about internal policy clarity, communication, and oversight. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that extremist symbols such as swastikas, nooses, and other hate-based imagery are consistently and explicitly classified, reported, and treated as prohibited hate symbols across all Coast Guard policies, and that any future changes to classification or reporting protocols are communicated transparently and handled with the seriousness they warrant?

Response: [Yes](#). There is no reversal in Coast Guard policy on this matter. My November 20, 2025, policy and lawful order doubles down and clarifies the strength of our existing policies that prohibit divisive or hate symbols and flags and strengthens our processes for preventing and responding to hate incidents. Claims that the Coast Guard will no longer classify or are "downgrading" the classification of swastikas, nooses, or other hate symbols as prohibited symbols are categorically false.