



# Training for the Unspeakable



## By Vincent Pica

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Many of us speak about the “next 9/11” as being inevitable. We have to be perfect everyday. “They” have to be lucky just once.

As part of that “being perfect everyday”, US Coast Guard Forces Active-Duty, Reservists and Auxiliarists – train in a near-continuous rotation. Under the coordinated efforts of Chief Warrant Office (CWO) Dennis Casey (then



Commanding Officer (CO) of Station Shinnecock) and Auxiliary Division Captain (DCP) Jim Cornell (Division 18 is the east end of Long Island from William Floyd Parkway to Montauk), USCG Auxiliarists from across Division 18 “took over” Station Shinnecock. The scenario was that an event of “National Significance” had occurred in New York City and all active-duty and reservists (a.k.a. “the regulars”) were directed en

masse to NYC to serve as part of the armed forces addressing that event. From there, it went something like this...

At “zero-900” (9am), CWO/CO Casey called DCP Cornell and told him that such an event had occurred. He and his men and women had been directed by National Authority to sortie to NYC ASAP. Through DCP Cornell, the “butchers, bakers and candle stick makers” that comprise the civilian component of the USCG, i.e., the USCG Auxiliary a.k.a. the “Minutemen of the 21st Century per USCG Captain Boynton, were requested to take over the orderly running of StaShinn “for the duration.”

Within minutes, DCP Cornell was calling the four flotilla commanders that comprise Division 18: Flotilla 18-02 East Hampton/Montauk, 18-03 Riverhead, 18-06 Moriches and 18-08 Southold. Directives were to secure what resources were available – people and boats – and get back to the DCP for assignments. Within a short period of time, auxiliarists were under way with boats being deployed to Moriches Bay, Shinnecock Bay and the Peconics to stand-in for the patrols normally conducted by the regulars. Other members were sorted to StaShinn to man the USCG Communications Center. Even the kitchen was manned by auxiliarists since even armadas move on their bellies...

To add to the realism, USCG vessels “acted” as if they were under distress and auxiliary vessels had to take them in tow. If you recall the weather that day, only the ducks were happy – and that was if they were out of the 20 knots winds! Further, the regulars threw “Oscar”, their life-sized/real-weight dummy into Shinnecock Bay, and called “Man Overboard.” Auxiliarists had to run search-patterns to find Oscar and “rescue” him.

Was it fun? Absolutely. Was it sobering to think about what we were training for. Absolutely. Is it necessary? 1,000% absolutely. “They” have to be lucky, just once. We have to be perfect everyday.

**If you are interested in being a volunteer member of USCG Forces, email me at [JoinUSCGAux2008@aol.com](mailto:JoinUSCGAux2008@aol.com) or go direct to MaryJo Cruickshank, who is in charge of new member matters, at [FSO-PS@emcg.us](mailto:FSO-PS@emcg.us) and we will help you “get in this thing...”**

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