

US Coast Guard and Hurricane Harvey

Coast Guard Atlantic Area personnel respond to Hurricane Harvey from Hampton Roads, Virginia

In a report from Portsmouth, Virginia, over the weekend 2/3 September it was learnt that US Coast Guard Atlantic Area personnel stationed in the Hampton Roads, Virginia, area continue to respond to the impacts of Hurricane Harvey.

Local Coast Guard units providing support include the Fifth Coast Guard District, Force Readiness Command, Maritime Security Response Team, USCG Communications Command, Incident Management Assistance Team and members assigned to Base Portsmouth and the Portsmouth Federal Building.

A primary responsibility for Atlantic Area Command is to mobilize people and assets as well as provide command oversight. More than 250 Coast Guard members are actively participating in a response effort here in the Tidewater Area, and an additional 70 locally-sourced surge staff are scheduled to join the effort.

More than 50 active duty and reserve personnel from the Tidewater Area are deployed to the affected areas in Texas and Louisiana. The Coast Guard expects this response to continue for an extended period, and to rotate personnel as necessary for clean up and port assessments. The search and rescue portion of the response is slowly winding down, with more than 10,600 lives saved so far.

Captain Edward St. Pierre, Atlantic Area Chief of Staff commented: *‘Due to the overwhelming amount of emergency calls in Texas and Louisiana, Coast Guard staff in the Portsmouth Federal Building stood watch taking relayed distress calls and disseminated them to search and rescue coordinators along the Gulf Coast. Coast Guard members in the Portsmouth Federal Building provided 24 by 7 support to the Hurricane Harvey response in various ways including arranging for helicopters, boats and people to deploy from around the country to conduct some of the over 10,000 rescues, pollution response and port reconstitution operations.’*

If Hurricane Irma impacts the Tidewater Area, the Coast Guard will answer the call, as always, it is understood. At the beginning of hurricane season, the Coast Guard requires personnel to develop family plans for tropical weather. This enables members to focus on their duties, knowing their loved ones are prepared and evacuated if necessary. Additionally, local Coast Guard commands have established procedures to prepare units, ports and the maritime community for

forecasted severe weather. If the storm is predicted to be dangerous, the Coast Guard will surge forces to the area of projected impact ahead of and after the storm.

Picture caption

USCG Hurricane Harvey 1

Watchstanders in the Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command Center in Portsmouth, Virginia, monitor search and rescue cases on 1 September, 2017.

Due to the high volume of emergency calls in Texas and Louisiana related to Hurricane Harvey earlier in the week, Coast Guard staff in the Portsmouth Federal Building stood watch taking relayed distress calls and disseminated them to search and rescue coordinators along the Gulf Coast.

US Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Nate Littlejohn/Released.

Photo USCG ©.

USCH Hurricane Harvey 2

Coast Guard Lieutenant-Commander Sarah Ernst and Lieutenant-Commander David Twomey (left) work from the Portsmouth Federal building in Portsmouth, Virginia, 1 September, 2017, to support Hurricane Harvey response efforts in Texas and Louisiana.

More than 250 Coast Guard members are actively participating in a response effort in the Tidewater Area of Virginia and more than 50 active duty and reserve personnel from the Tidewater Area are deployed to the affected areas of the Gulf Coast.

US Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Nate Littlejohn/Released.

Photo: USCG ©.