

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



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United States Coast Guard

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Agenda Item I.1.a

USCG Report 1

April 2018

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**MAR 16 2018**

Phil Anderson  
Chair, Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Mr. Anderson:

Please find attached the U.S. Coast Guard's 2017 Annual Report to the Pacific Fishery Management Council, presented on behalf of Coast Guard District Thirteen and my counterpart in Coast Guard District Eleven, Rear Admiral Sokalzuk.

The report provides an overview of Coast Guard enforcement efforts from 2017 in support of PFMC managed fisheries along the entire U.S. West Coast, which includes the respective programs in Coast Guard District Eleven (California) and Coast Guard District Thirteen (Washington and Oregon).

The Coast Guard appreciates our strong working relationship with the PFMC and our various associated partnerships. Senior Coast Guard leadership in the Council process is imperative to ensure the success of our fisheries enforcement program, as well as the overall management of the fisheries.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact me or my PFMC designees listed below:

LCDR Gregg Casad:	gregg.w.casad@uscg.mil	206-220-7305
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. G. Throop".

D. G. THROOP  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard  
Commander, Thirteenth Coast Guard District

Copy: Commander, Eleventh Coast Guard District (d)  
Commander, Coast Guard Pacific Area (PAC-3)



**U. S. COAST GUARD  
District Eleven & District Thirteen  
2017 Report**



**To The  
Pacific Fishery Management Council**

**April 2018**

*Prepared By:*

*Eleventh U.S. Coast Guard District (dre) &  
Thirteenth U.S. Coast Guard District (dre)*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This report provides an overview of U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) enforcement efforts from 2017 in support of PFMC managed fisheries along the entire U.S. West Coast, which includes the respective programs in USCG District Eleven (D11 – California) and District Thirteen (D13 – Washington and Oregon).

The USCG is represented on the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) by the Commander of the Thirteenth Coast Guard District, Rear Admiral David G. Throop. Rear Admiral Throop's designees on the Council are LCDR Scott McGrew, CDR Jason Brand, and Mr. Brian Corrigan. CDR Brand (D11) and Mr. Corrigan (D13) also represent USCG interests for their respective areas of operations as Co-Vice Chairs on the PFMC's Enforcement Consultants Committee.

The USCG places the safety of the nation's fisheries among its highest priorities. In addition, the USCG recognizes at-sea enforcement is an essential component for the success of the fisheries management plans the PFMC governs so diligently. The USCG appreciates the PFMC incorporating important safety and enforcement issues into its fisheries management considerations.

This report will provide an overview of the following topics:

- USCG's involvement in the fishery management process, both with the PFMC and with other management entities.
- Update on USCG resources used to accomplish the living marine resources (LMR) protection mission and impacts from competing responsibilities.
- Summary of USCG fisheries enforcement activity over the past year and engagement with partnering agencies.
- Review of commercial and recreational fishing vessel safety statistics from 2017, including efforts associated with observer safety and an update on regulatory changes associated with fishing vessel safety.

## **II. OCEAN GUARDIAN FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN**

The USCG's fisheries enforcement and LMR protection mission is guided by the Commandant's *OCEAN GUARDIAN* strategic plan. The strategy of the USCG is to provide effective and professional at-sea enforcement to advance national goals for fisheries management and conservation and management of LMR and their environments.

The *OCEAN GUARDIAN* strategic plan completes a comprehensive revalidation every five years (last was 2014), in order to ensure the strategy has adapted to reflect current domestic and international living marine resource management needs.

Although the regulations the USCG enforces often change and the strategies employed to enforce them must adapt, the objectives of the *OCEAN GUARDIAN* strategic plan remain the same:

- 1) Prevent encroachment of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and internal waters by foreign fishing vessels;
- 2) Ensure compliance with domestic LMR laws and regulations; and
- 3) Ensure compliance with international agreements for the management of LMR.

### **III. INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

As indicated in the framework for the USCG's *OCEAN GUARDIAN* strategic plan, productive partnerships are one of the plan's key concepts. Some of the USCG's most productive partnerships are through interactions associated with this Council. D11 and D13 highly value the relationship with the PFMC and involvement in the fisheries management process. The USCG strives to remain involved in all fisheries management issues having a potential impact on fisheries enforcement and fishing vessel safety considerations.

In addition to attending all PFMC meetings and pertinent PFMC sub-committee meetings, representatives from D11 and D13 also attend portions of North Pacific Fishery Management Council meetings when they are held locally. USCG representatives also have an affiliation with many other associated organizations, such as the International Pacific Halibut Commission, where the USCG also provides an annual report, National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils and Enforcement Working Groups, and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. D11 and D13 also partner with NOAA in the Marine Mammal Stranding Network and Whale Disentanglement Team, as well as providing representation to the U.S. Government delegation in the U.S./Canada Albacore Tuna Treaty deliberations.

Through affiliations with these various management and regulatory organizations, the USCG has been able to develop a rapport with valued stakeholder groups and individual members of the fishing industry. These relationships are extremely beneficial, allowing more seamless sharing of information and understanding of respective challenges and concerns, in order to foster constructive partnerships.

#### **IV. FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES**

D11's area of responsibility includes all waters off the coast of California out to 200 nautical miles, as well as California federal navigable waters. D13's area of responsibility includes all waters off the coasts of Washington and Oregon out to 200 nautical miles, as well as Washington and Oregon federal navigable waters and within the Columbia River system. Resources used for fisheries enforcement in both Districts include cutters, aircraft, and boats from coastal stations.

##### Cutters:

**Patrol Boats:** The primary surface fisheries law enforcement patrol resources are the 87' Coastal Patrol Boats and 110' Patrol Boats. Due to sea keeping and endurance limitations, patrol boats typically patrol within 50 nautical miles of shore. D11 patrol boats include thirteen 87' Coastal Patrol Boats located at coastal ports throughout the state and one 110' patrol boat in San Diego. D13 patrol boats include nine 87' Coastal Patrol Boats located in Puget Sound and Strait of Juan de Fuca ports, as well as one 110' Patrol Boat home-ported in Port Angeles, Washington, and one in Coos Bay, Oregon.

**Buoy Tenders:** Buoy tenders conduct periodic law enforcement, including fisheries enforcement, in conjunction with their primary mission of maintaining aids to navigation. D11 buoy tenders include one 225' Seagoing Buoy Tender home-ported in San Francisco and one 175' Coastal Buoy Tender in San Pedro. D13 uses one 225' Seagoing Buoy Tender, home-ported in Astoria, Oregon, for offshore fisheries enforcement.

**Medium Endurance Cutters (MECs):** Two 210' MECs, classified as major cutters, located in Astoria, Oregon, and one in Port Angeles are also occasionally assigned to dedicated patrols in D11's and D13's waters to monitor fisheries activity during transits to other operating areas. Competing mission demands and patrol requirements in other regions have significantly decreased West Coast fisheries enforcement patrols by major cutters during the past several years.

**High Endurance Cutters (HECs):** The HECs, also classified as major cutters, belong to the Pacific Area command and are assigned to patrol throughout the Pacific Area Theater. The West Coast has two 378' HECs in Seattle. Also, four out of six of the USCG's newest class of major cutter, the 418' National Security Cutter, are home-ported in Alameda, California. The CGC MUNRO became the latest member of this fleet when it was commissioned in April 2017. Although their primary operational obligations are elsewhere, these larger cutters have occasionally conducted brief domestic fisheries patrols, in conjunction with other patrol tasking, in D11's and D13's areas of responsibility during the past several years.

##### Aircraft:

**Rotary-wing:** The primary aviation fisheries law enforcement resources on the West Coast are H-60 Jayhawk and H-65 Dolphin helicopters. Due to endurance and safety limitations, offshore patrols are typically conducted as far as 50-75 nautical miles offshore. D11's three helicopter air stations and one Fixed Operating Base (FOB) are located in San Diego, Naval Station Ventura County, San Francisco, and Humboldt Bay (McKinleyville). D13's three helicopter air stations are located in Port Angeles, Washington, and Astoria and North Bend, Oregon, including a satellite Air Facility in Newport, Oregon.

Fixed-wing: Air Station Sacramento provides fixed-wing aircraft to conduct surveillance flights along the entire West Coast and throughout the Eastern Pacific, deploying in support of missions as far north as Alaska and as far south as Central America. Since 2016, Air Station Sacramento has been operating a new platform, the HC-27J Spartan aircraft, to conduct medium range patrols. Varying fixed-wing missions will continue to compete for time with domestic fisheries enforcement patrols.

#### Boat Stations:

Small boats from coastal stations have the primary mission of search and rescue. However, small boat crews are also trained in the fisheries law enforcement mission and conduct patrols to enforce fisheries and safety regulations, typically within 20 nautical miles of shore. D11 has fourteen small boat stations located along the California coast, with one boat station manned entirely by the Coast Guard Auxiliary, an all volunteer component of the service, in Crescent City. D13 has eleven coastal small boat stations along the Washington and Oregon coasts, as well as three stations in Washington internal waters (Port Angeles, Bellingham, and Seattle) and one on the Willamette River (Portland). Two additional seasonal stations are also operated in Central and Southern Oregon during summer months with higher boating activity. Typical boat types at West Coast stations include the 47' motor lifeboat, the 45' response boat, the 29' response boat, and the 25' response boat. In addition, several D13 boat stations are equipped with 52' motor lifeboats, which, similar to the 47' motor lifeboats, are specifically designed and manned for operations in heavy surf conditions, as well as having the capability to respond as far as 150 nautical miles offshore.

## V. U. S. COAST GUARD MISSIONS

LMR protection and enforcement is just one of several important missions the USCG is required to accomplish. The USCG is tasked with eleven statutory missions, which encompass protecting the maritime economy and environment, defending maritime borders, and assisting those in distress. A comprehensive list of USCG missions includes:

- **Aids to Navigation:** The USCG sets and maintains aids to mark the waters of the United States and its territories to assist boaters in navigation and alert them to obstructions and hazards.
- **Defense Readiness:** In support of the National Military Strategy and Department of Defense operations, USCG assets are capable and equipped to deploy and conduct joint operations in support of critical needs of combatant commanders.
- **Drug Interdiction:** The USCG is the lead federal agency for maritime drug interdiction and shares lead responsibility for air interdiction with the U.S. Customs Service.
- **Ice Operations:** The USCG conducts icebreaking services to assist vessels and communities in emergency situations and facilitate essential commercial maritime activities in the Great Lakes and Northeast regions.
- **Living Marine Resources:** **The USCG enforces fisheries laws at sea, as tasked by the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act. The USCG also shares marine protected species responsibility and authority based on legislation under the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Sanctuaries Act.**
- **Marine Environmental Protection:** The USCG develops and enforces regulations to avert the introduction of invasive species into the maritime environment, stop unauthorized ocean dumping, and prevent oil and chemical spills.
- **Marine Safety:** The USCG inspects commercial vessels, responds to pollution, investigates marine casualties and merchant mariners, manages waterways, and licenses merchant mariners.
- **Migrant Interdiction:** The USCG enforces immigration law at sea by conducting patrols and coordinating with other federal agencies and foreign countries to interdict undocumented migrants at sea.
- **Other Law Enforcement:** **Preventing illegal foreign fishing vessel encroachment in the U.S. EEZ is a primary USCG role vital to protecting the integrity of the nation's maritime borders and ensuring the health of U.S. fisheries.**
- **Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security:** The USCG is responsible for protection of the U.S. Maritime Domain and Marine Transportation System.
- **Search and Rescue (SAR):** Minimizing the loss of life, injury, property damage or loss by rendering aid to persons in distress and property in the maritime environment is the USCG's highest priority mission.

Although certain USCG units primarily focus on specific missions, such as small boat stations conducting SAR and buoy tenders maintaining aids to navigation, almost all USCG units participate in multiple missions, often simultaneously, requiring extensive training and operational expertise to remain proficient.

## **VI. LIVING MARINE RESOURCES TRAINING**

Due to the multi-mission nature of the Coast Guard and the dynamic and complex fisheries regulations, all operational USCG units involved in the LMR enforcement mission receive training at least every 18 months. Training is provided by the Pacific Regional Fisheries Training Center (PRFTC) located on Coast Guard Island in Alameda, California – which provides training to units in Washington, Oregon, California, Hawaii, and Guam.

PRFTC is one of five Coast Guard Regional Fisheries Training Centers (RFTCs) solely dedicated to training focused on the preservation and protection of living marine resources. In addition to its state-of-the-art training room, PRFTC has commercial and recreational fishing vessel training platforms specifically designed to facilitate performance based training and evaluations for student boarding officers. PRFTC hosts eight resident courses per year – four sessions for California LMR Boarding Officers and four for Oregon/Washington LMR Boarding Officers. During 2017, PRFTC hosted and trained 99 USCG personnel at its LMR Boarding Officer courses. Additionally, PRFTC completed eight LMR workshops for operational command centers and air stations throughout the West Coast.

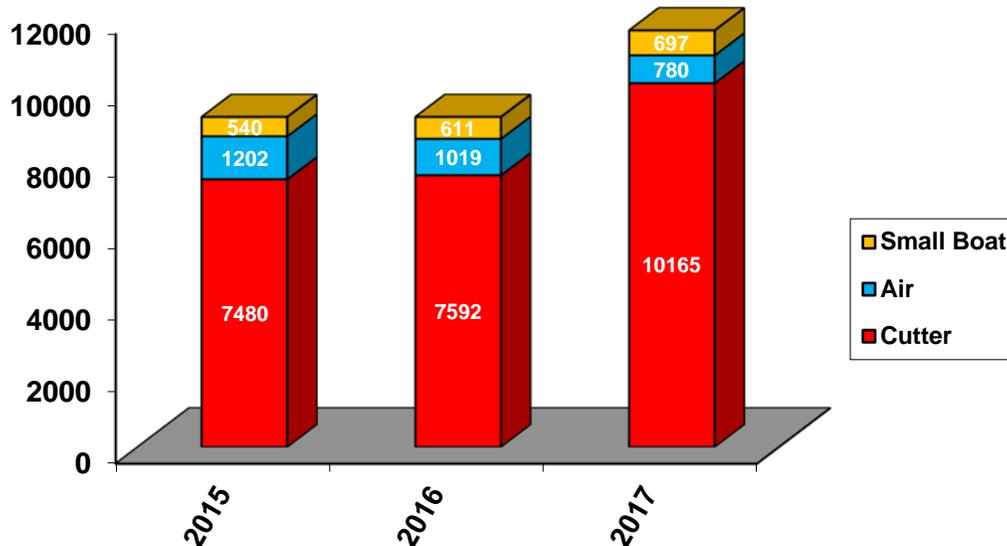
Partner agency involvement has been vital to the success of all resident courses. NOAA Office of Law Enforcement has graciously provided representation at nearly all California and Northwest courses since their inception. Also, since 2015, a NOAA Supervisory Enforcement Officer has occupied an onsite office at the schoolhouse. OLE presence at the training center has proven invaluable with further fostering the partnership between the agency and the USCG, helping to ensure the success of the training program.

In an effort to support the LMR enforcement mission, the five RFTCs implemented an LMR Field Advisor Program in 2016. This program provides a qualified RFTC instructor to travel to operational units to assess the quality of training offered at the RFTC and to support the units' LMR training programs. During 2017, PRFTC sent Field Advisors underway on three USCG cutters and during one Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) patrol where they assisted in the execution of 39 LMR boardings.

In addition to formal LMR training, District staffs also participate in impromptu LMR training at local units, often specifically in preparation for upcoming fishing seasons or enforcement emphasis operations. These training sessions also frequently rely on partner agency participation to enhance the learning environment and to ensure the consistency of our shared enforcement responsibilities throughout the coast.

## VII. FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

### 2017 U.S. West Coast Living Marine Resources Enforcement Resource Hours



**Figure 1** depicts the total resource hours dedicated to the Living Marine Resources mission on the West Coast during the last three years. Further details are below.

- Cutter: The majority of West Coast offshore fisheries enforcement efforts continue to be conducted by D11's and D13's 110' and 87' patrol boats (WPBs). D11 and D13 WPBs conducted 52 dedicated fisheries enforcement patrols during 2017.
- Air: In addition to routine helicopter patrols, Air Station Sacramento conducted 84 fixed-wing C-27 patrols during 2017.
- Small Boat: Small boat hours consist of dedicated fisheries enforcement efforts by coastal small boat stations throughout the West Coast.
- Since most WPBs spend the majority of the year conducting missions other than offshore fisheries, riders from other units and agencies with fisheries enforcement experience are often arranged to augment WPB boarding teams to maximize their effectiveness.
- In addition to offshore fisheries patrols, USCG units enforced federal safety regulations and monitored tribal and non-tribal fisheries activity during 23 dedicated enforcement patrols by D13 patrol boats in Washington internal waters, as well as monitoring Columbia River Buoy 10 recreational salmon fisheries during the summer. Operations were also conducted in internal waters to monitor high volumes of vessel traffic associated with certain fisheries openers. The majority of these efforts included joint patrols, embarking riders, or sharing of information with state and NOAA fisheries enforcement personnel, as highlighted in Section VIII of this report.

## **2017 Fisheries Boardings and Violations**

**829 Fisheries Boardings**

**39 Fisheries Violations**

- Of the 829 commercial and recreational fisheries boardings conducted by USCG D11 and D13 units in Washington, Oregon, and California waters, approximately 75% of the overall total involved enforcement of regulations associated with federal fisheries managed by the PFMC, while the remainder of the boardings were on vessels participating in fisheries administered by Treaty tribes and the states. Approximately 45% of the boardings were on commercial fishing vessels, while approximately 55% were on recreational vessels engaged in fishing.
- The violations involved documentation of non-compliance with federal fisheries regulations, which were forward to NOAA for adjudication, as well as suspected violations of state and tribal regulations which were forwarded to the appropriate agencies for disposition. Of the total number of violations, a large percentage were documented during joint operations or as a result of information sharing with federal and state enforcement partners, as summarized in section VIII of this report.

## VIII. JOINT ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES

Some of the USCG's most effective efforts are the result of working collaboratively with partners from NOAA OLE, Treaty Tribes, and California, Oregon, and Washington state fisheries enforcement personnel – California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Oregon State Police (OSP), and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). An open flow of communications throughout the year is vital to evaluating trends observed by respective agencies and planning operations to support PFMC managed fisheries and other important enforcement concerns throughout the West Coast region, ensuring shared success.

Not only does collaboration occur at the management level, but operational units also work closely with their federal, tribal, and state counterparts in the field. For the past several years, USCG Station Grays Harbor has hosted detachments of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and NOAA OLE personnel, as well as providing dock space for WDFW's enforcement vessel CORLISS. A NOAA enforcement officer is also co-located at USCG Station Coos Bay and a NOAA supervisory enforcement officer is co-located on Coast Guard Island in Alameda, California at the USCG's Pacific Regional Fisheries Training Center. Co-location of partner agency personnel has greatly enhanced collective efforts and additional future opportunities will continue to be pursued.

Some specific examples of *joint planning efforts and interactions* during 2017 include:

- Leveraging the USCG/NOAA Cooperative Maritime Strategy to facilitate development of regional LMR enforcement priorities, which feed funding decisions under the NOAA West Coast Division's Joint Enforcement Agreement with State partners.
- Coordinating a joint operational planning meeting on board CGC FIR between USCG and senior partner fisheries enforcement personnel (NOAA, OSP, WDFW) in preparation for the 2017-2018 state offshore commercial Dungeness crab season, as well as other federal and state fisheries enforcement priorities.

Some specific examples of *joint operational efforts and interactions* during 2017 include:

- Embarking riders in support of investigations and to monitor fisheries activity:
  - During January 2017, USCG Station Quillayute River provided transportation to WDFW officers to respond to intelligence regarding suspected illegal activity in the Quileute Tribe's Tribal Special Management Area, closed to non-tribal harvest of Dungeness crab. WDFW seized non-tribal gear and followed up with applicable citations.
  - During April 2017, USCG Sector Los Angeles-Long Beach patrol boats conducted Operation Nearshore, embarking CDFW wardens, to monitor groundfish and salmon season openers in vicinity of Morro Bay, CA. Two violations were documented for illegal activity inside the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and the Gull Island State Marine Protected Area.
  - During July 2017, USCG Station Neah Bay embarked a WDFW officer to monitor the commercial salmon fleet off Northwest Washington. One commercial troller was cited for retention of unmarked coho salmon.

- During December 2017, a WDFW officer embarked on CGC WAHOO cited a recreational crab harvester for failing to properly report catch in Puget Sound.
- Some specific examples of dedicated joint operations to enforce general fisheries regulations, as well as monitoring activity of particular concern:
  - During May 2017, USCG Sector Puget Sound boat stations and Air Station Port Angeles helicopters assisted WDFW with monitoring activity associated with recreational halibut openers off the Northwest Washington coast and in the Western Strait of Juan de Fuca. Several citations were issued for fishing in closed areas.
  - During September 2017, USCG Sector San Francisco and Sector Humboldt Bay conducted Operation Salmon Steward and Operation Yelloweye in conjunction with CDFW, resulting in 21 boardings and one documented fishery violation.
  - During October 2017, USCG Sector San Francisco conducted Operation Whale Warden, totaling 230 patrol hours in the National Marine Sanctuaries, resulting in five boardings and documentation of one sanctuary violation.
  - During November 2017, Sector San Francisco conducted joint fisheries operations in conjunction with CDFW, resulting in 35 boardings and one documented fishery violation.
  - During December 2017, while conducting joint operations with OSP, USCG Station Tillamook Bay interdicted a commercial Dungeness crab vessel using illegal gear. A citation was issued by OSP.

Finally, similar to the benefits gained from working with enforcement partners, an open flow of communications between the USCG and fishing industry stakeholders is also vitally important to successful mission execution. Industry reports of potential enforcement concerns, whether they are in coastal waters or several hundred miles offshore, are extremely valuable to enhancing the USCG's maritime domain awareness. Reports from stakeholders are most effective when they are as timely, as accurate, and as detailed as possible. Even if an immediate response isn't possible, these reports often assist in making the case for the need of more assets to be devoted to a particular area of concern.

## IX. MARINE PROTECTED SPECIES

In addition to fisheries enforcement, the USCG has an active Marine Protected Species protection program, with a strategic plan titled OCEAN STEWARD. Patrolling surface units and routinely provide information on ESA species, migratory birds, and marine mammal sightings and interactions, as well as working closely with agency partners and other stakeholders through stranding networks and National Marine Sanctuaries.

- D11 and D13 participated in ten marine protected species response operations during 2017, with highlights of some of them summarized below:
  - On January 14<sup>th</sup>, CGC PETREL came upon a deceased sea lion ten miles off the coast of Del Mar, CA. The sea lion was severely decomposed and appeared to have three gunshot wounds. Due to the distance offshore, the animal was not recovered, preventing a more thorough investigation into the gunshot wounds.
  - Also on January 14<sup>th</sup>, a USCG Station Los Angeles-Long Beach boat crew observed a distressed juvenile sea lion. The crew took immediate and appropriate actions to respond to the distressed animal and safely transfer it to the Pacific Marine Mammal Center in Laguna Beach, CA.
  - On March 5<sup>th</sup>, a USCG Air Station Astoria helicopter sighted a dead sperm whale, partially decomposed, off the NW Oregon coast. The whale was observed floating belly up with what appeared to be a gash on the belly. No other signs of physical injury were reported and the whale did not appear to be entangled. NOAA and the local Marine Mammal Stranding Network were notified and another USCG helicopter relocated the deceased whale on the beach at Fort Stevens State Park the following day.
  - On April 24<sup>th</sup>, USCG Sector San Diego was notified by the Oceanside Lifeguards of a deceased 50 foot humpback whale off Del Mar Beach, CA, near Camp Pendleton. The lifeguards attempted to tow the whale to prevent it from beaching in Oceanside, CA. A USCG helicopter was diverted to the scene to deploy a data marker buoy, which the lifeguards attached to the whale to track its location. Five USCG cutter hours, ten USCG aircraft hours, and 15 Oceanside Lifeguard hours were expended over the following week to track the whale and ensure it did not land on the beach in a heavily trafficked area. The last known sighting of the whale was 9.5 miles off the coast of Encinitas, CA.
  - On August 20<sup>th</sup>, Sector San Diego received a report from a merchant vessel of an entangled blue whale five miles northwest of Point Loma, CA. NOAA and Sea World San Diego were notified and Sea World dispatched a vessel in an attempt to locate and disentangle the whale. The merchant vessel remained on scene until the whale dipped below the surface. The merchant vessel crew later observed the whale swimming and apparently no longer in distress. No additional sightings were reported.
- Additional USCG efforts associated with marine protected species during 2017 included:
  - USCG D13 continued to strengthen trust and partnership with NOAA Fisheries by coordinating a discussion between policy and legal staffs regarding consideration of an orca whale protection zone in vicinity of San Juan Island in Washington internal waters.

- USCG D13 revitalized standard operating procedures with the Oregon Whale Entanglement Working Group, mitigating whale entanglements and enhancing a shared understanding of capacity and capabilities for future marine mammal stranding responses.

## **X. FOREIGN FISHERIES: ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED FISHERIES / INTEGRITY OF THE U.S. EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE**

Foreign fisheries enforcement, involving illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fisheries, as well as ensuring the integrity of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), fall under the USCG's Other Law Enforcement (OLE) mission, as described in Section V of this report. 2017 efforts associated with specific components of the OLE mission are summarized below.

### IUU Fisheries:

USCG high seas drift net (HSDN) fisheries enforcement efforts are typically conducted out of District 17 (D17-Alaska) and District 14 (D14-Hawaii). Although direct involvement with specific HSDN activities have historically been relatively low on the West Coast, as summarized below, D11 and D13 remain alert to potential issues involving portions of respective areas of responsibility or activity with the potential to impact fisheries or stakeholder representatives related to the PFMC.

NOAA and the USCG work closely with enforcement agencies from Canada, China, Japan, and the Russian Federation to enforce the North Pacific Anadromous Fisheries Commission (NPAFC) prohibition on directed fishing for anadromous stocks in the high seas areas of the North Pacific Ocean. The USCG's annual fisheries enforcement operation, known as Operation North Pacific Guard, was conducted from June 25 to September 25, 2017. The focus of this Operation is to detect, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing activity on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean. The operation includes identifying large-scale HSDN fishing activity and any prohibited high seas capture of anadromous species. In addition, Operation North Pacific Guard implemented the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China on Effective Cooperation and Implementation of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/215 of December 20, 1991.

Three deployments by USCG HC-130 maritime surveillance aircraft from USCG Air Station Kodiak were staged out of Misawa Air Base, Japan. With these aircraft, the USCG conducted 262 patrol hours during 29 maritime air sorties in the North Pacific Ocean. The USCG Cutter DOUGLAS MUNRO patrolled the NPAFC Convention Area from July through September 2017, for a total of 91 days. While this year's operations did not result in the detection of any fishing vessels suspected of employing large-scale HSDN, the coordinated USCG enforcement efforts covered a significant portion of the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean and visually identified 1,119 vessels operating in compliance with international standards.

During the patrol, DOUGLAS MUNRO conducted four boardings pursuant to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's (WCPFC) Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2006-08 – High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSB&I) Procedures. The vessels boarded were the TAKE MARU (Japan), YUJIN MARU NO. 2 (Japan), HE JI FA (Taiwan), and SHUN MAN FA NO. 2 (Taiwan). The TAKE MARU and YUJIN MARU NO. 2 were found to be in violation of the WCPFC's CMMs. The enforcement results are expected to be reported during the WCPFC annual meeting, per below:

TAKE MARU was boarded by DOUGLAS MUNRO on September 8 on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean. TAKE MARU was a longliner targeting highly migratory tuna stocks inside

the WCPFC Convention Area. The boarding was conducted to evaluate compliance with WCPFC CMMs. The boarding team observed that the vessel failed to maintain sufficient records of catch and catch related data in accordance with the Commission's reporting requirements. DOUGLAS MUNRO's boarding team suspected that the vessel was in violation of WCPFC CMM 2006-08 and WCPFC CCM 2013-05, which are both designed to require tracking of catch and effort while fishing with a longline within the convention area. TAKE MARU was also found to be in violation of CMM 2008-03 requiring sea turtle safe release mitigation measures. The USCG boarding team documented the WCPFC CMM violations and educated the master on the proper protocol. D17 reported the boarding and results to both the WCPFC Secretariat and flag of registry (Japan) in accordance with standard WCPFC reporting procedures.

YUUIJIN MARU NO. 2 was boarded by DOUGLAS MUNRO on September 11 on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean. YUUIJIN MARU NO. 2 was a longliner targeting highly migratory tuna stocks inside the WCPFC Convention Area. The boarding was conducted to evaluate compliance with WCPFC CMMs. YUUIJIN MARU NO. 2 was found to be in violation of CMM 2008-03 requiring sea turtle safe release mitigation measures. The USCG boarding team documented the WCPFC CMM violations and educated the master on the proper protocol. D17 reported the boarding and results to both the WCPFC Secretariat and flag of registry (Japan) in accordance with standard WCPFC reporting procedures.

The WCPFC HSB&I regime, developed in part with USCG involvement, has proven to be a critical tool for patrolling USCG cutters to employ in pursuit of addressing IUU fishing activity on the high seas; including enforcement against the practice of large-scale HSDN fishing. In cases where a species regulated by the WCPFC could be found on a vessel in the North Pacific, the WCPFC HSB&I regime provides USCG patrol assets with a mechanism for establishing jurisdiction to board foreign fishing vessels on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean. Boardings conducted pursuant to these procedures ensure compliance with the provisions of the Convention and the CMMs adopted by the Commission (including a prohibition against large-scale HSDN fishing). The WCPFC HSB&I regime facilitates reporting to flag state authorities and requires transparency on flag state actions taken pursuant to reports of suspected violations of WCPFC regulations.

#### Integrity of the U.S. EEZ:

Efforts specific to the West Coast were primarily associated with fisheries associated with the U.S./Canada Tuna Treaty. During 2017, the first year of the most recent three-year reciprocal access regime under the Treaty, the USCG continued to focus on robust air and surface surveillance along the U.S./Canada EEZ boundary as resource availability allowed. USCG efforts such as these, which are in support of ensuring the integrity of the U.S. EEZ, fall under D13's Operation Olympic Shield, a comprehensive and multi-agency enforcement plan to deter illegal incursions into the U.S. EEZ.

USCG D13 participated in pre-season U.S./Canada bi-lateral discussions pursuant to the Treaty on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017. D13's law enforcement staff also coordinated a pre-season tabletop exercise on June 12<sup>th</sup>, with federal and state enforcement partners, NOAA General Counsel, and the U.S. Attorney's Office, to review potential international enforcement scenarios associated with the fishery.

In addition to routinely scheduled cutter and helicopter surveillance patrols, a C-27 patrol from USCG

Air Station Sacramento also flew in support of Operation Olympic Shield, monitoring the opening of the reciprocal access season on 15 June. Ten additional C-27 flights took place to specifically monitor activity in the U.S. EEZ throughout the reciprocal access season, and a C-27 patrol then monitored the closure of the reciprocal access season for Canadian tuna trollers in the U.S. EEZ, effective September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

No Canadian tuna trollers were boarded while fishing in the U.S. EEZ during 2017. However, the presence of 30 of the 45 vessels authorized to harvest albacore in the U.S. EEZ was documented by USCG cutters and patrol aircraft throughout the reciprocal access season. All Canadian vessels observed were determined to be in compliance with applicable Treaty provisions. In addition to the Canadian tuna trollers observed within the U.S. EEZ, once Canadian tuna troller, not on the list of vessels authorized to fish in the EEZ, contacted USCG D13 received a report of a 44' Canadian troller disabled and adrift 220 miles west of Grays Harbor, WA. USCG Sector Columbia River established communications with the vessel and issued a maritime assistance request broadcast with negative results. A USCGC patrol boat was sortied to respond, but was later stood down from its response with the fishing vessel was able to restart its engines and resume safe operations.

As alluded to above, in order to ensure the integrity of the EEZ, the USCG works closely with various agency partners, including NOAA OLE and General Counsel, state enforcement, and the U.S. Attorney's Office to ensure collaborative preparation for potential attempts by un-authorized (i.e. non-permitted) Canadian tuna trollers to fish in the U.S. EEZ. For the past six seasons, the USCG has also provided the U.S. albacore fleet with 24x7 contact information and a list of information to report if they observe suspected illegal foreign fishing in the EEZ. No illegal activity has been detected or reported since reciprocal access was resumed under the Tuna Treaty from 2013 to 2016, then again with a new reciprocal access regime in effect from 2017 through 2019. The USCG will remain engaged in potential discussions regarding the future of reciprocal access under the Treaty and enforcement strategies will be developed and patrol assets will be deployed, as available, to ensure compliance.

#### Additional International Partnership Efforts:

In addition to the operational efforts summarized above, USCG D11 and D13 engaged in the following activities, focused on meeting USCG Pacific Area's Strategic Objectives of combatting IUU fishing.

- In June 2017, D13 enforcement staff was invited by NOAA Fisheries to discuss USCG efforts to combat IUU fishing during a capacity-building workshop for the Korea Ministry of Fisheries, Coast Guard, and National Police.
- In August 2017, initiated a meeting with Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans National Fisheries Intelligence Service to coordinate law enforcement efforts with regard to shared interests. The initial meeting was followed up by a subsequent meeting in December 2017 to discuss a more focused scope of issues associated with collaborative intelligence sharing and coincidental operations related to local fisheries activity straddling or adjacent to the international and EEZ boundaries.

- In September 2017, D13 enforcement staff represented the Department of Homeland Security and USCG at the U.S.-China Fisheries Bilateral dialogue, led by Department of State and Department of Commerce to advance U.S. Government objectives, focused on optimizing bilateral and multilateral partnerships and coordination to reduce IUU fishing in the North Pacific.
- Throughout 2017, USCG staff coordinated meetings between NOAA OLE, WDFW, and the USCG's Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center Pacific to enhance USCG support to international King Crab investigations (>\$500 Million value) with a nexus to the Pacific Northwest.

## XI. COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHING VESSEL SAFETY

One of the USCG's primary objectives during the PFMC process is to attempt to identify ways to improve the safety of all fishing activity, whether it is related to commercial or recreational trips; whether the fisheries are administered by the federal government, the states, or the tribes; and whether the activity takes place in the ocean or within navigable internal waters. In addition to USCG representation at the main PFMC table, multiple USCG personnel attend Council meetings in order to engage with stakeholders to answer questions, especially with regard to safety. USCG representatives are also available at similar venues throughout the year to collect information, provide advice, and pursue opportunities to enhance safety among the maritime community.

### Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety:

#### Commercial Fishing Vessel Lives Lost U.S. West Coast

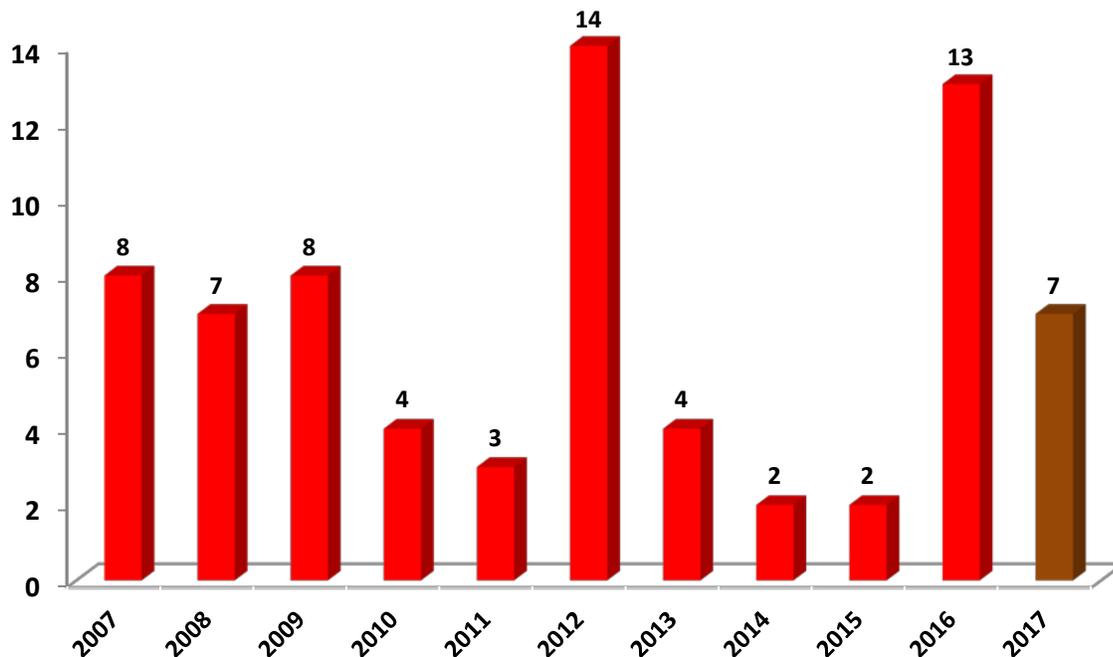


Figure 2 depicts a comparison of lives lost from West Coast commercial fishing vessels since 2007. Further details are below.

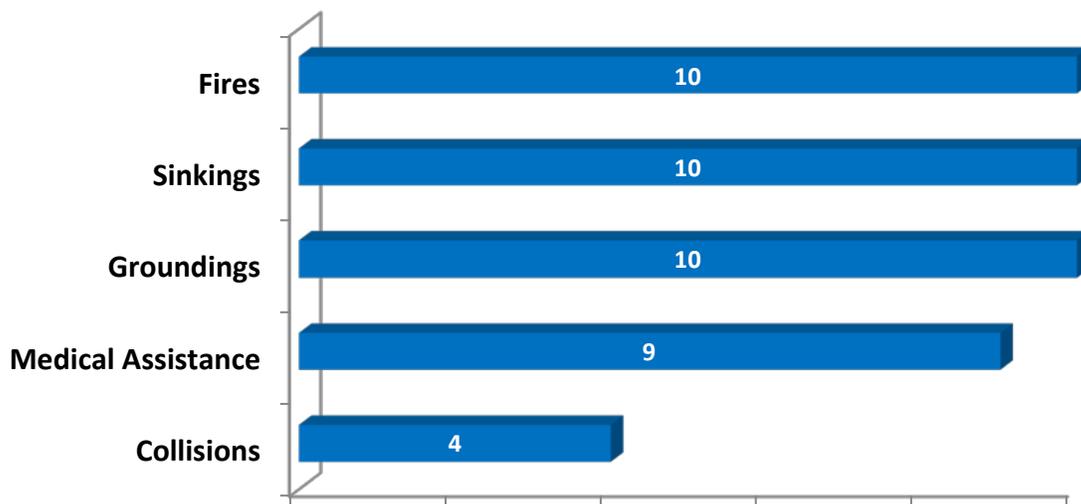
Seven lives were lost in West Coast commercial fisheries during 2017, as described in the paragraphs below. The number of lives lost is slightly above the average from the preceding ten-year period (6.5 lives lost per year). The USCG remains diligent in efforts to determine contributing factors to past losses and steps are being taken to mitigate and reduce potential future losses.

- On January 12<sup>th</sup>, the 62' F/V INSEINER, had one of its four crewmembers fall overboard while fishing for hagfish (a.k.a. slime eel) off Southwest Washington. The individual was under water for approximately fifteen minutes before being recovered, unresponsive, by the fishing vessel's crew, who commenced CPR. An H-60 helicopter was launched from USCG Air Station Astoria and a motor lifeboat was sortied from USCG Station Grays Harbor. CGC CUTTYHUNK was also diverted from an ongoing patrol in the vicinity to respond. The motor lifeboat crew arrived on scene and embarked the vessel with an AED, but CPR had been stopped for approximately an hour prior to the USCG crew's arrival. The motor lifeboat escorted the F/V INSEINER into Grays Harbor, where the deceased crewmember was transferred to the local sheriff and coroner.
- On February 1<sup>st</sup>, the 40' wooden salmon troller MARY BETH's owner was found deceased outside the vessel's pilothouse while moored in San Diego. The death was determined to be of natural causes.
- On August 16<sup>th</sup>, USCG Sector Columbia River received notification from the F/V LUNA, six miles west of Tillamook Bay, reporting the master was experiencing heart attack symptoms, including shortness of breath and chest pains. During communications with the USCG, the only other crewman on the salmon troller reported the master lost consciousness and stopped breathing. A USCG Air Station Astoria helicopter and Station Tillamook Bay motor lifeboat arrived on scene to assess the master's medical condition. Two crewmembers from the motor lifeboat and the helicopter's rescue swimmer continued CPR, relieving the fishing vessel crewmember. Air Station Astoria's flight surgeon was briefed on the master's updated status and recommended ceasing CPR. The motor lifeboat crew assisted the surviving crewmember with returning the fishing vessel to Garibaldi, where the deceased master was transferred to the local coroner.
- On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, USCG Sector North Bend received a report from the F/ V SUMMER BREEZE of a crewmember who had fallen overboard and became entangled in fishing gear, while the vessel was trolling for albacore tuna 140 miles off Depoe Bay, OR. The deceased crewmember was recovered by the fishing vessel's crew and returned with the vessel to Ilwaco, WA, where the vessel was met by a USCG investigating officer.
- On October 19<sup>th</sup>, the 54' squid purse seine vessel PAMELA ROSE was operating eight miles north of Point Piedras, CA, with five people on board, when her mast collapsed. The vessel had recently had structural modifications completed in Mexico. The mast fell on to the deck, fatally crushing one crewmember and seriously injuring another. The cause of the mast collapse was determined to be multiple structural weak points not addressed during the modification.

- On November 1<sup>st</sup>, the 37' wooden salmon troller RUTH R was operating 13 miles off Humboldt Bay with two people on board, a long-time commercial fishing husband-and-wife team. The husband fell overboard while working on deck. Sector Humboldt Bay received a mayday call on from F/V RUTH R and launched a USCG helicopter and patrol boat to the fishing vessel's position. The helicopter arrived on scene and located the husband's body face down and unresponsive. The patrol boat arrived on scene shortly after, retrieved the patient, and conducted CPR while returning to shore. The patient was transferred to paramedics on shore and pronounced deceased.
- On December 11<sup>th</sup>, the 35' fiberglass urchin vessel JOSEFINA DOS was operating offshore Santa Barbara with two people on board when the USCG received a report of a diver in distress. Santa Barbara Harbor Patrol responded with emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. The diver was being transported back to Santa Barbara Harbor when the EMS personnel onboard pronounced the diver deceased.

In addition to the losses of life, further examples of significant safety incidents on commercial fishing vessels are summarized below.

### Significant Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Incidents



**Figure 3** depicts a summary of other types of significant safety incidents occurring on commercial fishing vessels during 2017. Further details are below.

- Fires: D11 and D13 units responded to ten commercial fishing vessel fires - five in ports, including a squid purse seiner, a shrimper, and a salmon troller in Los Angeles Harbor, a transient vessel in San Diego Bay, and another vessel in the North Puget Sound; as well as five at sea, including a fixed-gear groundfish vessel three miles southwest of Los Angeles; a crabber fifteen miles off San

Francisco, another crabber fifteen miles off Central Oregon, a groundfish trawler twenty miles off Central Oregon, and a squid vessel close to shore off Southern California.

- Sinkings: D11 and D13 units responded to three commercial fishing vessels sinking at sea, including a crabber two and a half miles off the Columbia River, a tuna troller 52 miles off Central Oregon, and a vessel transiting inside Puget Sound. Seven fishing vessel survivors were rescued by USCG crews. USCG units also responded to or received reports of seven additional vessels sinking at piers in port, with none involving significant personnel injuries.
- Groundings: D11 and D13 units responded to ten vessel groundings, including two squid light boats, a hagfish (a.k.a. slime eel) vessel, and a lobster vessel in Southern California, a salmon troller in Central California, two salmon trollers in Central Oregon, a groundfish trawler in Northwest Washington, a shrimp trawler in Southwest Washington, and a vessel transiting in Puget Sound. Nineteen fishing vessel survivors were recovered, including one receiving a MEDEVAC with non-life threatening injuries.
- Medical Assistance / MEDEVAC: D11 and D13 units responded to nine separate incidents involving significant medical concerns or injuries to fishing vessel crewmembers requiring medical assistance or MEDEVAC. Five were from injuries sustained during vessel operations and four were due to medical conditions.
- Collisions/Allisions: D13 units responded to four commercial fishing vessel collisions, one of which involved a commercial fishing vessel hitting a recreational vessel in Charleston Harbor, OR. Three other vessels collided with stationary objects in Washington and Oregon ports. None of the incidents involved significant personnel injuries.

These incidents from 2017, as well as past incidents involving vessel losses and losses of life in commercial fisheries, make clear the hazards in the fishing industry are not isolated to a particular fishery or gear type or a specific geographic area or time of year. The USCG is constantly working to identify trends and take preventive actions in fisheries where incidents occur more frequently; as well as taking steps to attempt to improve the overall safety of the industry.

2017 boarding statistics indicate approximately 29% of commercial fishing vessels boarded had some type of discrepancy involving safety gear carriage requirements or other federal safety regulations (up from 26% in 2016). The rate of vessels with fishing vessel safety discrepancies when boarded subsequent to search and rescue cases, per standard USCG protocol, was 31% (up from 25% in 2016). Approximately 4.6% of all commercial fishing vessels boarded had their voyages terminated at sea or were issued a Captain of the Port Order during a post-SAR boarding in port for existence of especially hazardous conditions. Especially hazardous conditions, which are defined in Section 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations, can include conditions such as the lack of adequate immersion suits, lack of adequate firefighting equipment, and other conditions having the possibility of presenting an immediate threat to a vessel and its crew. The USCG very carefully considers all circumstances related to the potential termination of a vessel's voyage and issuance of a Captain of the Port Order. The final decision will only be made by the cognizant District Commander or a senior officer to whom the authority has been delegated. Following the termination of a vessel's voyage and issuance of a Captain of the Port Order, the vessel's operator must correct the discrepancies noted and receive permission

from the USCG Captain of the Port prior to getting underway again.

Examples of USCG initiatives to enhance the overall safety of commercial fisheries are described below:

Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act rulemaking:

- As noted in the 2015 and 2016 USCG reports to the PFMC, starting in October 2015, mandatory dockside safety examinations became required for certain commercial fishing vessels, including: vessels operating outside 3 nautical miles from the baseline, vessels carrying more than 16 individuals on board regardless of where the vessel is operating, and vessels, engaged in the Aleutian Trade. As previously reported to the PFMC and its constituents, this requirement was mandated by the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 and the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012. The new regulations require a USCG commercial fishing vessel safety examination to be completed at least once every 5 years. Having a current safety examination may reduce the extent and time boarding officers will examine safety and survival equipment, which have been determined to be in compliance at the time of the dockside examination. However, successful completion of an exam will not limit boardings for fisheries enforcement purposes.
- Also as mandated by the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 and the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2012, the USCG initiated the Alternate Safety Compliance Program (ASCP) on vessels over 50' in length and 25 years old. The ASCP was subsequently suspended and the Coast Guard has temporarily replaced it with Voluntary Safety Initiatives and Good Marine Practices, implemented in January 2017.

Further details, as well as updates on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act rulemaking and other important commercial fishing vessel safety information are available at:

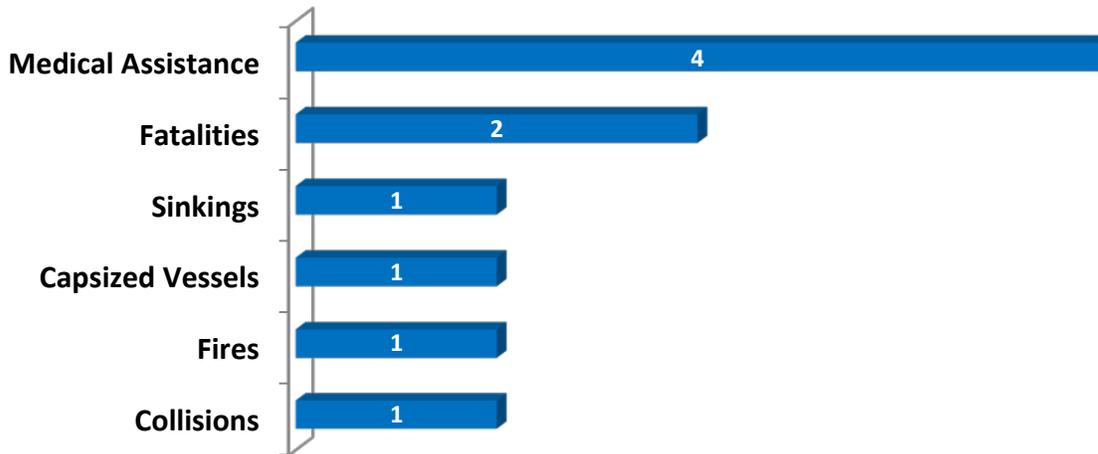
[www.fishsafewest.info](http://www.fishsafewest.info)

Navigational Safety: In addition to verifying the status of safety gear during at-sea boardings, USCG units also place a significant emphasis on ensuring compliance with Rule 5 of the International Rules of the Road, which requires all vessels to maintain an appropriate bridge watch or lookout. Not maintaining a bridge watch has been identified as a contributing factor to several vessel accidents at sea. For example, the report of investigation from the December 2015 sinking of the F/V NORN off Northwest Washington was completed during 2016 and failure to maintain a proper lookout was identified as a contributing factor to the casualty. The report recommended West Coast USCG units conduct focused offshore boardings on small commercial fishing vessels to ensure and compel adherence to maintaining a lookout while underway.

Observer Safety: USCG fishing vessel safety personnel also work closely with the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program to identify safety concerns on vessels carrying observers. USCG personnel are involved in drill conductor classes and other outreach opportunities to promote at-sea safety, as has been the case for over a decade. USCG fisheries enforcement and commercial fishing vessel safety staff have also worked with NOAA to develop a standard protocol for observers to report to enforcement personnel regarding vessel safety or other concerns at sea. The USCG has a close working relationship with NOAA OLE, which shares information regarding observer debriefings after vessel deployments resulting in observations of suspected safety or MARPOL violations requiring potential follow up by the USCG.

**Recreational Fishing Vessel Safety:**

**Significant Recreational Fishing Vessel Safety Incidents**



**Figure 4** depicts a summary of significant recreational fishing vessel safety incidents, including fatalities.

Recreational boaters fishing in ocean waters off the West Coast face similar dangers as their commercial vessel counterparts which are inherent when operating within the coastal environment. The incidents illustrated in the chart above and further described below involve private pleasure vessels, as well as charter vessels required to be inspected by the USCG and licensed by the states. Similar to efforts being made to improve the safety of commercial fisheries, every coast Guard District has a Recreational Boating Safety program focused on enhancing the safety of recreational boaters, including those engaged in fishing.

- **Fatalities:** Two deceased individuals were recovered from vessels engaged in recreational fishing during 2017.
  - On September 8<sup>th</sup>, USCG Sector North Bend received notification from a good Samaritan vessel, F/V TITAN 2, that they came across a capsized recreational fishing vessel with debris in the water one mile north of Depoe Bay. A USCG Sector North Bend helicopter and motor lifeboats from Station Depoe Bay and Yaquina Bay were sortied to respond. A motor lifeboat arrived on scene and identified the vessel. Oregon State Police were contacted and assisted with attempting to conduct a welfare check at the vessel owner’s home in McMinnville, OR. In the interim, a USCG patrol boat was also dispatched to the scene to join the search. Two deceased individuals were eventually located, neither wearing personal flotation devices. The wife of the vessel owner was able to confirm only two people were on the vessel when it departed Depoe Bay.
- **Medical Assistance / MEDEVAC:** D13 units responded to four separate incidents involving significant injuries or medical concerns on board charter fishing vessels, requiring medical assistance or MEDEVAC. One incident involved a charter vessel passenger breaking an ankle and another sustaining a back injury during heavy weather in the vicinity of the Umpqua River mouth. Another

charter vessel passenger with stroke symptoms was removed from the vessel by a USCG helicopter from Air Station Astoria and transferred to local EMS. A third charter vessel captain, operating thirteen miles off Bandon, OR, reported a 54-year-old male passenger suffering from severe sea sickness and chest pains. The individual was removed from the vessel by a USCG helicopter which was diverted from an ongoing patrol out of Air Station North Bend. Finally, another severely seasick passenger on a charter vessel off the Columbia River mouth was removed from the vessel by a USCG motor lifeboat, diverted from a first light bar assessment out of Station Cape Disappointment.

- Sinkings: On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, USCG Sector Columbia River received notification of a sunken 28' recreational fishing vessel off the North Jetty of the Columbia River entrance with four passengers in the water. All four individuals were recovered by a good Samaritan vessel as a USCG Station Cape Disappointment motor lifeboat arrived on scene. The four survivors were returned to shore with no significant injuries.
- Capsized Vessels: USCG Sector North Bend coordinated a response to the capsized recreational fishing vessel resulting in the two fatalities summarized above.
- Fires: On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, USCG Sector Columbia River received a report of a fire on board a recreational fishing vessel with five passengers on board. An emergency radio broadcast was made by Sector Columbia River, as a USCG Station Cape Disappointment motor lifeboat and Air Station Astoria helicopter were diverted to the scene. The personnel on the vessel were able to extinguish the fire prior to the USCG assets arriving on scene and there were no significant injuries.
- Collisions: On June 25<sup>th</sup>, Sector Puget Sound received a report of a recreational fishing vessel colliding with a commercial tug in the Puget Sound. Neither vessel sustained significant damage and there were no personnel injuries.

These incidents from 2017, as well as past incidents involving vessel losses and losses of life in recreational fisheries are clear indications vigilance is equally as important to recreational boaters as it is to professional mariners. D11 and D13 units work closely with fisheries enforcement and first responder partners to place a particular emphasis on being present to monitor activity associated with fisheries openers and other timeframes anticipated to result in significant offshore vessel participation. These operations are examples of efforts undertaken by the Coast Guard to mitigate the risks associated with engaging in recreational fisheries at sea.