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WHY DON'T WE WORK TOGETHER? - By Brian Taylor

In November 1978, Boatswain's Mate First Class Edward Micheals, Executive Petty Officer of Coast Guard Station Moriches, New York, got an idea for a cooperative training program between the Coast Guard on Long Island which would play an important role in the saving of 24 lives during the coming year.

Why don't we work together more

"I was handling a Search and Rescue case involving a disabled boat about 10 miles off shore which my crew and I were told to find and assist," said Micheals. "But when we got out there I couldn't find the guy and my radar wasn't working. An Air National Guard plane was flying in the area and diverted to assist me in locating the vessel after the Coast Guard Group office in Shinnecock asked the Air National Guard Base for help. In what seemed like no time at all the plane found the boat and circled over it to point out it's location. Then, after we had the boat in tow, the plane pointed the way home. That's when I asked myself, 'If we have these aircraft right next door, why don't we work together more?'"

One month later, Coast Guard Station Moriches and the Air National Guard's 102nd Aero Space Recovery Squadron (ARRS) began the Nation's first regular training program between these two military services.

"What actually occurs in our training with the Air National Guard is a hoisting operation in which we practice raising and lowering objects from their helicopter to our boat," said Micheals. "The method we use involves a 'tag line' or guide line. The tag line is lowered to the vessel first and then attached to the object to be hoisted. This enables the people on the boat to have some control in guiding the hoisted object."

During Training and the Rescue Mission.

The 102nd Aero Space Recovery Squadron performed 11 rescue missions that saved 24 lives during the past year. Most of those rescues utilized the tag line procedure. Although Coast Guard and Air National Guard units did not perform rescue missions together using this method during 1979, the training is important because the method can be used with any vessel.

On December 27, 1979, the 97-foot sailing vessel JOHN F. LEVITT (the first wooden commercial schooner built in the U.S. in over 50 years) began sinking 250

miles southeast of New York City with nine people aboard after its hull was damaged during an Atlantic storm.

Beyond the reach of Coast Guard helicopters based in Brooklyn and several days sailing from the nearest Coast Guard Cutter, the crew of the JOHN F. LEVITT was in serious danger of being lost to the cold Atlantic currents.

The need for fast, long range rescue action was apparent so Lieutenant (junior grade) William D. Angel of the Coast Guard Rescue Coordination center on Governors Island, New York, put through a call for assistance to the Air National Guard Base in West Hampton Beach, New York. Equipped with five long range helicopters and four fixed winged aircraft, the 102nd ARRS prepared to launch.

Two Air National Guard helicopters and a C-130 aircraft reached the sinking ship about 4 p.m. Within 45 minutes, nine crewmembers were airlifted from the JOHN F. LEVITT using rescue procedures learned in mutual training with Coast Guard Station Moriches.

"During the case of the JOHN F. LEVITT we got to the scene with very little daylight left," said Lieutenant Colonel David Hill, head of the Operations department of the 102nd ARRS. "But using the tag line procedure practiced with the Coast Guard we were able to drop our para-jumpers in the water, get the crew of the LEVITT into life rafts and hoist the crew members simultaneously. The tag line procedure enabled us to get the people out safer and quicker."

The case of the JOHN F. LEVITT is not the only example of the value of the "tag line" in a rescue case.

Other cases

"In another case," stated Hill, "we were called on to deliver a pump to a sinking vessel 80 miles off shore. By using the tag line we were able to drop the pump safer and with more accuracy than just having the pump dangling free. The tag line also allows the helicopter to move a safe distance from the vessel's superstructure. What we've learned from our training with the Coast Guard is a safer and more efficient manner to accomplish our mission. Combat rescue is what we train for all the time and this method fits right in."

On April 12, 1979, Air National Guard helicopters used the tag line procedure to rescue four persons in a life raft from the fishing vessel PATRIOT, that sunk 90 miles south of Montauk Point Long Island.

On May 30, 1979, the tag line aided in evacuating a 21 year old man with severed fingers from the 83-foot fishing vessel KOKINA. "The tag line was particularly useful in that case," said Captain Marty Ingrahm, the rescue pilot. "We had to lift the man from the front of the boat because the rear was full of fishing gear and lines. With the tag line we were able to accurately lower a litter and still move a safe distance from the vessel's superstructure."

Coast Guard boats and Air National Guard helicopters are now training on a monthly basis. Training in rescue operations is required for both Coast Guard coxswain's and Air National Guard pilots. "Our training in air-sea rescue has improved tremendously," said Micheals. "Our relationship with the men at the Air National Guard base has also improved vastly."

Proximity is the main advantage of working with the Air National Guard. If immediate response is needed in a local rescue case the Air National Guard can be on scene faster than a Coast Guard helicopter from Brooklyn. The Air National Guard is also asked to assist the Coast Guard in rescue cases far off shore where long range aircraft can be utilized.

Cooperation a Success

Cooperative training between Coast Guard Station Moriches and the Air National

Guard has branched out into other areas during the past year. Boat crews and flight crews are cross training in aircraft and vessel familiarization, to aid in evacuating people from a downed aircraft or a distressed vessel. They are also training in emergency medical aid and practicing cold weather medical procedures.

"The big benefit of our new relationship with the Air National Guard," said Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate Jack D. Brown, Officer-In-Charge, Station Moriches, "is the ability to affect a rescue in a timely manner."

"I'm very proud of the way our two services are working together," said Captain Robert W. Miller, Chief of the Search and Rescue Branch for the Third Coast Guard District on Governors Island. "I think it's a good program."

"This is the first regular training program of its kind in the Nation and I think it should be encouraged where ever possible," said Micheals. "In the end, our missions are essentially the same, saving lives. And when it comes to that, we strive to be the best we can. It's only natural that we work together and learn from each other."

DIARY OF A MISSION - By Jerry Wellman

(Author's Note: The following is factually accurate, however no names or states are mentioned. Some may say the names should be used so fingers can be pointed. However I felt it best that the story be told without geographical reference. Facts presented were gleaned from professional contacts, i.e. fellow news reporters in the states involved, and from fraternal contacts in the SAR community.)

The Mission

A single-engine Cherokee is missing on a short flight to pick up some parts the company badly needs. The pilot, with about 350 hours, is VFR rated and in a hurry. He files no flight plan even though the weather is not the best. He gets no weather briefing.

The flight path crosses portions of two states and nears a third state. People waiting at the airport with the parts get concerned when the plane doesn't arrive. They know the pilot is in route. The weather is not good and getting worse.

A non-SAR person calls the local (destination) airport after he starts hearing an ELT on his scanner and, being a pilot, is concerned. The airport supervisor on duty begins a search using a hand-held (non-direction finding) monitor.

The people expecting the plane's arrival finally call the parent-company and they get concerned. The company officials, in one state, call the sheriff in the county of another state (destination point). The sheriff knows to call Scott AFB and the Civil Air Patrol.

Meanwhile commercial aircraft are reporting an ELT along the border of the destination state and a third state, so Scott AFB calls CAP in both states (but not the state where the pilot departed).

The third state calls the CAP in the departure state to see what they can do to help as they have no ground units close to the ELY area. The CAP in the destination state calls Scott AFB and fails to convince them to include them under the mission authorization.

One searcher in the departure state even goes as far to speculate "in this weather, the guy is dead."

Getting worried

Back at the destination airport, the sheriff calls the airport only to learn the airport supervisor on duty has gone off looking for the ELT source. About an hour later the airport man and the sheriff search team get together and decide they need some direction finding gear.

Meanwhile the third state and the departure states are bemoaning Scott AFB not including all three states. This ties up phone lines.

The sheriff puts in a request for direction finding equipment to Scott AFB, as there is none in the sheriff's county.

The company, hearing nothing, has called Scott AFB about this time and are told the plane is likely down in the area of the ELT reports and radar tracks have an approximate location. They are also told a direction finder (DF) is needed and Scott AFB will be trying to locate one.

So the company calls each of the three CAP search coordinators involved. The company volunteers to use one of their instrument rated, twin engine, high performance planes to transport a DF ("from any of the three states, or anywhere, to the destination airport for the sheriff's use") and are told by the destination CAP state that the CAP prefer to use their own planes and people due to insurance reasons.

The departure CAP state said "we're not on the mission," and the third CAP state said they'd confer with Scott AFB and the destination CAP state and "get back to them."

The company's other pilot knows a local CAP member (remember that they are in the destination state and that CAP wing is "not on the mission.") so they call him. He says he has just gotten an Elper DF unit and it works, although he has no practice using it.

Fine, says the company, can you fly with us to "destination" state to help find our lost pilot and downed plane. The "departure" state CAP member says OK and heads for the airport. Just before takeoff, he tries to call his state's CAP on call officer but the phone is busy, so he departs.

Prior to landing, the company pilot calls the airport man via unicom to let him know the DF is on board. The sheriff team and airportman say great, assuming it was manna from Scott AFB, and prepare to get underway as soon as the company plane lands.

Upon Landing

On landing, the sheriff team, the company officials and the "departure" CAP state member take off in four-wheel-drive vehicles. Call from Scott AFB and the CAP to the airport number now go unanswered.

The ground crew, about 90 minutes later, finds the plane and the pilot is injured and suffering from exposure. It's early in the day and not yet light.

The sheriff calls for a chopper from his office.

After the chopper arrives and takes the pilot to the hospital, doctors say the pilot might not have lived until morning. The sheriff, company people and "departure" state CAP member (who had the DF that lead them to the crash site) are pleased and return home for much needed sleep.

Early in the morning a plane from the "destination" CAP state arrives and gets mad no one told them the pilot was rescued. (The fact they had not called the sheriff's office to coordinate prior to their take off didn't occur to them.)

The "third" CAP state, who never really got beyond the phone call stage, just "dealerted" the troops.

But, now get this, the "departure" CAP state official were upset because one of their members participated in a misioY their state wasn't "authorized by Scott AFB" to be in.

But the sheriff, being the politician he is, passed his thanks to three state

CAP wings, Scott AFB, the local SAR patrol, and others, saying how glad he was for all the "cooperation."

The company never did get a call back from any CAP coordinator (or even Scott AFB once the plane had been found).

Bottom line: Sure the pilot was perhaps wrong to take a flight without a briefing -- but it happens all the time. When a life is at stake, is there a reason to NOT use all available CAP wings and private (volunteered) resources?

I'll bet the pilot will agree that anything used to get him out alive was "super." He's alive to prove that.

There will be some of you reading this who will say "that's not us!" and if it isn't -- "super." Then there will be those who "have to know who it is!!!" if only to point the finger and say how wrong it all was.

Then there will be those SAR coordinators who will take a moment to say "glad he's alive by what ever means" and might remember this next time that call comes at 1 a.m. and cooperation (for the victim) seems non-existent.

And, who's to say "he has no chance to be alive?"

Not me.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON FIRST AID TO THE INJURED - "Het Oranje Kruis"

On June 8, 1984 the Royal National Association for Life-Saving and First Aid "Het Oranje Kruis," which is a coordinating association of a great many organizations active in the field of rendering aid and assistance to man in need, will celebrate its 75th anniversary.

To mark the occasion the Board of "Het Oranje Kruis" has decided to organize an international congress on First Aid, to be held in The Hague from 4 to 7 October 1984, where special attention will be devoted to the developments in resuscitation and the treatment of injuries to the (cervical) vertebrae which are of importance to First Aid.

The theme "First Aid to the Injured" has been chosen because "Het Oranje Kruis" is particularly active in this field. As opposed to many other countries the Netherlands has only one uniform First Aid Certificate, which is officially recognized by the national authorities. They have entrusted "Het Oranje Kruis" with the training of First-Aiders and with conducting the examinations for the First Aid Certificate. The activities include making guidelines for the various training courses and for the examination, establishing the examination requirements and the curriculum, etc.

The draft programme for the international congress is as follows:

Thursday 4th October 1984

Registration at the desk of the Netherlands Congress Centre in The Hague from 12:00 hours.

At 15:30 hours cocktails to welcome the participants; at 17:30 hours official opening of the congress.

Friday 5th October 1984

The congress begins at 10:00 hours with a lecture on the developments in resuscitation by Dr. J.W. Criley, head of the Cardiology, Harbor - UCLA Medical Centre in Torrance, California

At 11:00 hours the meeting continues with a lecture on the use of

resuscitation in practice by Dr. P.J.F. Baskett, chairman of the resuscitation commission of the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists.

After lunch the congress is continued at 13:45 hours with a lecture on injuries to the (cervical) vertebrae by Dr. R. Braakman, professor of neurosurgery in the Erasmusuniversity of Rotterdam, followed by a lecture by Dr. W. Erdmann about the effects of the developments in resuscitation and the treatment of injuries to the (cervical) vertebrae on First Aid. Dr. Erdmann is a professor of anaesthesiology in the Erasmusuniversity of Rotterdam.

After the lectures the panel of speakers, presided by the congress chairman, will answer questions from the audience. Dr. A.N.P. Van Heyst, professor of resuscitation and toxicology and chairman of the resuscitation commission of "Het Oranje Kruis," has accepted our invitation to act as congress chairman.

Three languages will be used during the congress, viz. English, German, and Dutch. Interpreters will translate simultaneously.

For the entire duration of the congress participants may put up posters in order to publicize new developments and points of view of interest to First Aid and First Aid training.

The day will be concluded with an official dinner for all participants.

Saturday 6th October 1984

In the morning the summaries of the lectures will be prepared and the congress chairman will close the congress. After lunch a First Aid Demonstration will be given. At 16.00 hours the Board holds a reception on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of "Het Oranje Kruis."

An exhibition will show 75 years of First Aid. 150 experts from all over the world will participate in the congress. The registration fee is 250,-- and includes lunch and dinner on Friday 5th October, lunch on Saturday 6th October, refreshments and a copy of the report on the congress.

Those interested please write to:

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for an application form. Please send before January 1984.

Thank you!