



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD COMMANDANT VISITS IMLI

Commandant of the United States Coast Guard Admiral Robert J. Papp Jr., visited IMLI on 20 November 2012 and delivered a lecture to the 24th generation of IMLI lawyers on “The Coast Guard’s Role in Stopping International Trafficking of Persons and Drugs, and Recent Developments in that Arena”. The very interesting lecture was also attended by Professor Stephen Calleya (Director of the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies) and the students and representatives of the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Dr. Bruce King (Maritime Law Practitioner), officers of Malta Armed Forces and of the United States Coast Guard. Admiral Papp was accompanied by Master Chief Michael P. Leavitt (Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard) and Captain Gary P. Weeden (Chaplain of the Coast Guard).

Admiral Papp was welcomed by Professor David Attard (Director of IMLI) who introduced Admiral Papp to the IMLI Class and expressed his pleasure at welcoming him for the first time to the Institute. Professor Attard also acknowledged the strong ties that exist between the United States Coast Guard and IMLI through the training which Coast Guard Officers receive from the different programmes of the Institute. He then invited Admiral Papp to deliver his lecture.



Admiral Robert Papp with Professor David Attard and the Class of 2012/2013

Admiral Papp commenced his lecture by setting out the history of the United States Coast Guard. The Coast Guard's official history began on 4 August 1790 when President George Washington signed the Tariff Act that authorized the construction of ten vessels, referred to as "cutters," to enforce federal tariff and trade laws and to prevent smuggling. They later became known as the US Revenue Cutter Service and expanded in size and responsibilities as the nation grew.

The United States Coast Guard received its present name in 1915 under an Act of Congress that merged the Revenue Cutter Service with the US Life-Saving Service, thereby providing the nation with a single maritime service dedicated to saving life at sea and enforcing the nation's maritime laws. The Coast Guard began maintaining the country's aids to maritime navigation, including lighthouses, when President Franklin Roosevelt ordered the transfer of the US Lighthouse Service to the Coast Guard in 1939. In 1946, Congress permanently transferred the Commerce Department's Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation to the Coast Guard, thereby placing merchant marine licensing and merchant vessel safety under its purview.

During his lecture Admiral Papp emphasized that the United States Coast Guard is simultaneously and at all times a military force and federal law enforcement agency dedicated to safety, security, and stewardship missions. Through practical examples, Admiral Papp explained the role of the Coast Guard in combating maritime security threats such as the trafficking of persons and drugs. The United States Coast Guard is looked up to by many countries as a model in the sphere of maritime governance.



Admiral Robert Papp and Professor David Attard

Admiral Papp stated, "Thank you very much for the opportunity to address the International Maritime Law Institute students. It was a pleasure to discuss various maritime law issues with them and I'm thankful they asked such thought-provoking questions. I talked to several students during the reception and they were most appreciative. But the Coast Guard benefitted a great deal from this engagement as well. Many of your students will return to influential positions upon graduation, and I'm certain that Coast Guard officers will be among their trusted colleagues as they work together to implement IMO standards worldwide and "Serving the Rule of International Maritime Law.""

Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr. assumed the duties of the 24th Commandant of the United States Coast Guard on May 25, 2010. He leads the largest component of the Department of Homeland Security, comprised of 42,000 active duty, 8,200 Reserve, 8,000 civilian and 31,000 volunteer Auxiliarists.

As a flag officer, Admiral Papp served as Commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area, where he was operational commander for all U.S. Coast Guard missions within the eastern half of the world and provided support to the Department of Defense; as the Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard and Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Headquarters; as Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District, with responsibilities for Coast Guard missions on the Great Lakes and Northern Border; and as Director of Reserve and Training where he was responsible for managing and supporting 13,000 Coast Guard Ready Reservists and all Coast Guard Training Centers.

Admiral Papp has served in six Coast Guard Cutters, commanding four of them: RED BEECH, PAPA W, FORWARD, and the training barque EAGLE. He also served as commander of a task unit during Operation ABLE MANNER off the coast of Haiti in 1994, enforcing United Nations Sanctions. Additionally, his task unit augmented U.S. Naval Forces during Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY.

He is a 1975 graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy. Additionally, he holds a Master of Arts in National Security and Strategic Studies from the United States Naval War College and a Master of Science in Management from Salve Regina College.

Admiral Papp is the 13th Gold Ancient Mariner of the Coast Guard. The Gold Ancient Mariner is an honorary position held by an officer with over ten years of cumulative sea duty who has held the qualification as a Cutterman longer than any other officer.

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