



## Action MDA

### The Maritime Domain Awareness Newsletter of the USCG Auxiliary

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#### *Airport Security*

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The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary MDA mission continues after our patrols end, and should be a consideration in our everyday lives. The focus of this edition of the "Action MDA" is on airport security. Many of us are pilots, and indeed, many of our pilots participate in Auxiliary air operations. Whether or not we fly for the Auxiliary, any of us who spends time at airports can contribute to the MDA mission by being observant and reporting suspicious activities or people. This list, provided by the Airplane Owners and Pilots Association, should help to identify potential problems.

The AOPA Airport Watch program is patterned after the Neighborhood Watch program. It is designed to enhance airport security, particularly at small, local airports where most of Auxiliary aircraft are based. Pilots and passengers who are frequent users of these airports (such as Auxiliary Air observers) are frequently in a position to know what is routine and what is out of the ordinary.

Be careful to take the context into consideration with some of these items. For example, "being too eager to use all the lingo" is something we often see in new student pilots and people who want to become pilots.

- People or groups who seem determined to keep to themselves.
- Any members of your airport neighborhood who work to avoid contact with you or other airport tenants.
- Anyone who appears to be just loitering, with no specific reason for being there.
- Any out-of-the-ordinary videotaping of aircraft or hangars.
- Aircraft with unusual or obviously unauthorized modifications.
- Dangerous cargo or loads — explosives, chemicals, openly displayed weapons — being loaded into an airplane.
- Anything that strikes you as wrong — listen to your gut instinct, and then follow through.
- Pay special attention to height, weight, and the individual's clothing or other identifiable traits.
- Anyone wishing to obtain aircraft without presenting proper credentials.
- Anyone presenting apparently valid credentials who does not have a corresponding level of aviation knowledge.
- Anything that doesn't look right!

Remember that this watch doesn't end when the patrol is finished. Whether you travel for business, pleasure or the CG Auxiliary, keep a sharp lookout!

## *Auxiliary White Paper on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)*

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Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is an evolving concept that has emerged as the United States seeks to improve the safety and security of its citizens in the wake of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 (9/11). This document provides additional information on the United States Coast Guard's response to these events and the potential contribution of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to MDA.

The President set the tone ("We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.") and the direction of America's fight on terrorism. His key thrust is clearly "preemption." Since 9/11, the federal government has been undergoing a massive reorganization and transformation to meet this challenge. Our world and the way we operate in it have forever changed. It is the policy of the United States to strike at the terrorists where they live and, at the same time, take all necessary measures to protect the homeland.

While many actions have been taken, both foreign and internal, the one with greatest impact on the USCG and the Auxiliary is the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the inclusion of the Coast Guard in this department. Since the department was established, the USCG has become engaged in an overarching transformation in which MDA issues have become a vital component of all Coast Guard missions, both operations and support. The challenge to secure U.S. transportation systems and borders is substantial—there are 5,525 miles of border with Canada, 1,989 miles with Mexico, as

well as a maritime border that includes 95,000 miles of shoreline, 350 official ports of entry, and 3.4 million square miles of exclusive economic zone.

The Auxiliary, a key component of Coast Guard forces, is involved in this transformation and is fully aligned with the Active Duty component. To better understand what the Coast Guard is doing concerning MDA, the letter of promulgation and executive summary (reproduced from a Coast Guard white paper on MDA) provide an excellent broad overview of Coast Guard aims and directions.

In December 2002, the Coast Guard published its "Maritime Strategy for Homeland Security," which established key objectives and means to achieve them to mitigate the risks associated with threats to our Nation's maritime security and to prevent terrorist attacks. The primary components of this strategy include awareness of threats and vulnerabilities, prevention and protection against these threats, and response to potential attacks.

Awareness is clearly a key component, because the success of prevention, protection, and response clearly requires awareness.

**Maritime Domain Awareness is defined as "the effective understanding of anything associated with the global maritime environment that could impact the security, safety, economy or environment of the United States."**

*Info Bits....*



The entire USCG Auxiliary MDA Whitepaper can be found at

<http://www.uscgaux.org/~opr/index.html>.

To learn more about the AOPA Airport Watch program, go to

<http://www.aopa.org/>.