FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DATE: 08/18/2011
SUBJECT: MARITIME ANTI-TERRORISM FULL-SCALE EXERCISE, SECURITY TRAINING SET FOR PORT OF DULUTH-SUPERIOR
BY: Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator

MARITIME ANTI-TERRORISM FULL-SCALE EXERCISE, SECURITY TRAINING SET FOR PORT OF DULUTH-SUPERIOR

DULUTH, Minn. -- A multi-agency full-scale exercise and maritime security training and exercise program called Operation Down Under is scheduled to take place Wednesday, August 24, 2011 in the Port of Duluth-Superior.

U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Duluth, in coordination with the transportation industry, the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin, local law enforcement agencies and fire and emergency management agencies will conduct a full scale underwater terrorism response exercise at various pre-designated sites within the Duluth-Superior area.

The exercise scenario is not based on any specific credible threat to the Port of Duluth-Superior. The U.S. Coast Guard and its state and local area partners conduct emergency preparedness and response exercises every year as part of established strategies to build response capabilities and improve readiness levels for first responders.

Planning, training and exercising are important components of the nation's homeland security strategy. The 2011 Operation Down Under full-scale exercise is a part of the Area Maritime Security Training and Exercise Program and the National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program. The goal of the exercise is to validate current processes in the Western Lake Superior Area Maritime Security Plan and the Underwater Terrorism Preparedness Plan.

Individuals may see Coast Guard assets carrying mounted automatic weapons during the exercise. In a place as strategically important as the Port of Duluth-Superior - critical to the economic vitality of not just Minnesota but the entire Great Lakes - armed waterborne patrols are a key part of the Coast Guard's ability to defend others and itself in response to maritime security threats. The Coast Guard routinely carries mounted automatic weapons when and where appropriate as part of its mission to detect, deter, and disrupt maritime threats to the people and infrastructure of our Great Lakes. This is not a live-fire training exercise. The Coast Guard does not conduct any live-fire training on the Great Lakes. It trains its crews in the use of these weapons at a Department of Defense facility outside of the Great Lakes region.

Activities scheduled throughout the Duluth-Superior area include marine dive operations and other underwater technologies; and water patrols available for viewing throughout the day.

Representatives with the media are requested to check in and register for credentialing between 9:45 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. at the Edge Hotel (2400 London Road, Duluth, MN) in the Catamaran Conference Room. An overview presentation of the exercise will take place, followed by photo and interview opportunities.

Media concerns and questions can be directed to Lt. Edward Mosley, with the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Unit Duluth at 218-720-5286, ext 9-138, or to Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator with the City of Duluth at (218) 730-5309.

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Maritime anti-terrorism full-scale exercise, security training set for Port of Duluth-Superior

News Release

DATE: August 18, 2011

A multiagency, full-scale exercise and maritime security training and exercise program called Operation Door Under is scheduled to take place Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2011, in the Port of Duluth-Superior.

Coast Guard Sector Upper Great Lakes, in coordination with the transportation industry, the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin, local law enforcement, fire and emergency management agencies will conduct a full-scale underwater terrorism response exercise at pre-determined sites within the Duluth-Superior area.

The exercise scenario is not based on any specific credible threat to the Port of Duluth-Superior. The Coast Guard and metropolitan and local area partners conduct emergency preparedness and response exercises every year as part of established strategies to build response capabilities and improve readiness levels for future scenarios.

Planning, training and exercising are important components of the nation's homeland security strategy. The 2011 Operation Door Under full-scale exercise is part of the Area Maritime Security Training and Doctrine Program and the National Preparedness Response Doctrine Program. The goal of the exercise is to validate current training efforts of the Duluth-area Coast Guard, local, state and federal partners as shown in the Western Lake Superior Area Maritime Security Plan and the Underwater Terrorism Preparedness Plan.

Individuals may see Coast Guard assets carrying mounted automatic weapons during the course of the exercise. In a phase as strategically important as the Port of Duluth-Superior - critical to the economic vitality of the entire region - the Coast Guard maintains a heightened presence to deter and defend against itself to a credible threat to maritime security threats. The Coast Guard routinely carries mounted automatic weapons when those are appropriate as part of its mission to detect, deter, and defend maritime threats to the people and infrastructure of our Great Lakes. This is not a live-fire training exercise. The Coast Guard does not conduct any live-fire training in the Duluth area. It must be clear to all those observing any activity near Duluth that this is a Department of Defense activity outside of the Duluth region.

Activities scheduled throughout the Duluth-Superior area include marine dive operations and other underwater technologies, as well as waterpens, which will be available for viewing throughout the day.

Media representatives are required to check-in and register for credentialed between 9:45 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. at the DFC Hotel (500 London Road, Duluth, Minn.), in the Consensus Conference Rooms. An overview presentation will take place at 10:30 a.m. at the DFC Hotel followed by a tours of the Duluth-Superior area at 11:30 a.m.

Media contacts and questions for discussion are Paul McLaury, public information officer, City of Duluth, 218-730-5009, pmlaury@duluthmn.gov; Coast Guard spokesman, 218-232-5386, and 9-108.

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