U.S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard

Commander
United States Coast Guard
Sector Sault Sainte Marie

337 Water Street
Sault Sainte Marie, MI 49783
Staff Symbol: vts
Phone: (906) 635-3299
Fax: (906) 635-3238
Email: mark.s.gill@uscg.mil

16150
11 June 2020

MEMORANDUM

From: P. S. Nelson, CAPT
CG SECTOR Sault Sainte Marie (s)

To: CGD NINE (d)
Thru: (1) CGD NINE (dpw)
(2) CGD NINE (dp)

Subj: OPERATION TACONITE, END OF SEASON REPORT

Ref: (a) Domestic Ice Breaking Operations Policy, COMDTINST 16151.1D
(b) D9 Ice Breaking Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), D9INST M16150.2B

1. During the 2020 domestic ice-breaking season, the eight U.S. Coast Guard cutters and one Canadian Coast Guard ship assigned to Operation Taconite spent a total of 2,298 hours in ice and assisted 250 commercial vessel transits. Of these transits, 40 (14 US, 21 CA, 05 other foreign) required direct icebreaker assistance to complete their intended movements.

2. Operation Taconite commenced on 11 December 2019 and ended on 31 March 2020 (a total of 111 days). Great Lakes maritime industry stakeholders estimate 4.9 million tons of dry bulk (iron ore, salt, coal, stone and cement) and liquid (gasoline, diesel, and home heating oil) cargoes received ice-breaking assistance during the 2020 winter navigation season. These cargoes, valued at more than $176 million, provided critical industrial production and power generation capability for the Great Lakes region during the operational period. Within the Operation Taconite area of responsibility (AOR), U.S. Coast Guard cutters conducted 133 hours of ice breaking activity in Canadian waters and Canadian Coast Guard ships conducted 6 hours of icebreaking in U.S. waters.

3. The National Oceanographic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with input provided by the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL), classified the 2020 ice season as "below average." An analysis of the 2020 winter weather and ice thickness measurements appears in enclosure 1. Enclosure 2 contains the performance measures and statistical data required by references (a) and (b).

4. My point of contact for domestic icebreaking operations is Mr. Mark Gill, the Director of Vessel Traffic Service St. Marys River. You can reach Mr. Gill at (906) 635-3299.

#

Enclosures: (1) Weather Analysis and Ice Thickness Measurements
(2) 2020 Operation Taconite Statistics

Copy: CG-5PW
CG-NAV-2
CG-WWM-3
CG SECTOR Lake Michigan
CG AIRSTA Traverse City
CGD9 Cutters