



United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Resources, Community, and  
Economic Development Division

B-265942

June 11, 1996

The Honorable Mark O. Hatfield  
Chairman  
The Honorable Frank R. Lautenberg  
Ranking Minority Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation  
and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

During fiscal years 1991 through 1994, the Congress provided funding to the Coast Guard to add 875 billets (positions) to its Marine Safety Program to strengthen the agency's marine safety and environmental protection missions. In its report<sup>1</sup> on the Department of Transportation's 1995 appropriations bill, the Senate Committee on Appropriations expressed concern that the Coast Guard was not adequately filling some billets to take full advantage of the additional funding for marine safety billets.<sup>2</sup>

To address your concerns, you requested that we provide you with information about staffing practices and availability of training for the Marine Safety Program. As agreed with your offices, this report addresses the following questions: (1) What has been the overall change in the total number of billets that the Coast Guard authorized for the Marine Safety Program since fiscal year 1991? (2) How many vacant billets are there in the Marine Safety Program? (3) To what extent were the Marine Safety Program's military billets

---

<sup>1</sup>Senate Report 103-310, July 14, 1994.

<sup>2</sup>In this report, the Marine Safety Program refers to Coast Guard staff who participate mainly in marine safety and environmental protection activities. These staff are located primarily in 50 field offices (which include Marine Safety Offices, Marine Inspection Offices, and Captain of the Port Offices), 10 district offices, and the Office of Marine Safety, Security, and Environmental Protection at Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C.

filled with staff whose grade levels were the same as the authorized grade levels for those billets? (4) How has the availability of Marine Safety Program training changed since 1991?

### RESULTS IN BRIEF

Although the Congress provided funding for 875 additional billets for the Marine Safety Program, from October 1990 to October 1995, the Coast Guard increased the total number authorized by 706. The authorized staffing level did not increase by the full 875 billets because the Coast Guard (1) allocated 97 billets to a "general detail" category<sup>3</sup> rather than the program, (2) allocated 27 billets to nonprogram offices (e.g., personnel, legal) that support the program, and (3) eliminated the remaining 45 billets because of budget cuts and agency-initiated savings efforts.

Overall, the program was near its authorized staffing levels in January and October 1995, the two time periods we reviewed. Specifically, the program had 3,481 billets and 3,498 staff in January, and it had 3,449 billets and 3,453 staff in October. Headquarters and field offices were slightly overstaffed in January. In October, headquarters offices were slightly understaffed, while field offices, in total, were overstaffed, averaging about 4 percent more staff than authorized. District offices were slightly understaffed in both January and October 1995.

Many of the military officer billets assigned to the program in headquarters and district offices (92 billets in January 1995 and 74 billets in October 1995) were filled with staff whose grade levels were different—some at higher grades and some at lower grades—than the authorized grade levels for those billets. Reliable information on individual billet assignments at field offices was not available because of internal rotations of personnel. Headquarters and district offices had grade-level mismatches averaging 25 percent in January 1995 and 22 percent in October 1995. In about two-thirds of the cases, the billets were filled with people whose grades were lower than the grade level authorized (for example, a Lieutenant Commander assigned to a billet authorized for a Commander).

---

<sup>3</sup>This is a category that the Coast Guard routinely uses for all of its programs to account for staff who are away at training or in the process of rotating to a new location.

Since fiscal year 1991, the number of training slots and the number of Coast Guard staff attending the Marine Safety Program's four required training courses has increased significantly for two courses and remained about the same for the other two. Training requests for all four courses usually exceeded the available training slots in fiscal years 1993 through 1995.<sup>4</sup> Coast Guard officials said that most staff who are not admitted to a course they apply for initially are usually selected to attend the next available session.

### BACKGROUND

The Coast Guard's organizational structure consists of (1) headquarters offices, which are responsible for the overall management of a specific program; (2) 10 district offices, which are responsible for the general administration of the field offices within a district's area; and (3) field offices, which are responsible for the operational implementation of a specific program or several programs of the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard has a personnel allowance list that identifies all billets established for every Coast Guard office. The Coast Guard authorizes these billets on the basis of the available funding. In the Marine Safety Program, about 82 percent of the authorized positions are military billets; the remainder are civilian billets. The majority of these billets have been allocated by the Coast Guard to the program's field offices.

### OVERALL CHANGE IN BILLETS AUTHORIZED

During fiscal years 1991 through 1994, the Congress provided funding for 875 additional billets for the Marine Safety Program. These billets represented an increase of about one-third in staffing levels for the program. The Congress provided these additional billets for such activities as oil pollution prevention and response, container inspection, and fishing vessel safety inspection. The Coast Guard allocated to the field offices 61 percent of the billets that went to the program while the districts received 9 percent and headquarters offices<sup>5</sup> received 30 percent. (See enc. I for more information on the billets funded by the Congress.)

---

<sup>4</sup>Data were not available for the fiscal years prior to 1993.

<sup>5</sup>For this report, the term "headquarters" refers to both the headquarters offices in Washington, D.C., and the headquarters-related offices located elsewhere. Headquarters-related offices perform Coast Guard-wide specialized support and services (such as the National Pollution Funds Center) and specialized operational missions (such as Strike Teams).

B-265942

The program's authorized staffing level actually grew by 706 rather than 875. Three reasons account for the difference:

- First, 97 billets were placed in the Coast Guard's "general detail" category.
- Second, 27 billets were allocated to non-Marine Safety Program activities, such as personnel and legal offices, to support the increase in the program's activities.
- Third, the Coast Guard reduced the program's size by 45 billets as part of cost-cutting measures initiated by the Congress or by the Coast Guard itself. For example, 20 billets were eliminated as a result of the consolidation of the agency's Vessel Documentation Centers. Also, when the Coast Guard decided in a fiscal year 1995 initiative to reduce the number of billets for instructors agencywide, two instructor billets were cut from the Marine Safety Program. Similarly, another fiscal year 1995 initiative, aimed at reducing the overall staffing levels at headquarters, resulted in the elimination of four Marine Safety Program billets at headquarters.

#### EXTENT OF BILLET VACANCIES

The data limitations of the Coast Guard's personnel information system precluded us from comparing year-to-year vacancies for billets in the Marine Safety Program. However, we were able to determine the number of vacancies at two recent points—January and October 1995. According to agency officials, January and October are the most stable staffing time periods because the fewest staff rotations occur then. (See enc. V for more information on our methodology.)

Our analysis covered all authorized billets in the program—3,481 in January 1995 and 3,449 in October 1995. Taken as a whole, the program was almost fully staffed at both times. In January, the program had 3,498 staff, while in October, it had 3,453 staff. (See enc. II for marine safety staffing information for different organizations and types of staff for these time periods.)

The staffing levels were not uniform across offices. Headquarters offices were fully staffed in January 1995 and 12 percent understaffed in October 1995. District offices were 2 percent understaffed in January 1995 and 6 percent understaffed in October 1995. Field offices were fully staffed in January 1995 and overstaffed by 4 percent in October 1995. However, variations among the field offices occurred; some were understaffed and some were overstaffed. In January 1995, the staffing levels in the field offices ranged from 26 percent

understaffed<sup>6</sup> to 21 percent overstuffed;<sup>7</sup> half of the offices were overstuffed to some degree. In October 1995, the staffing levels ranged from 14 percent understaffed to 23 percent overstuffed;<sup>8</sup> more than half were overstuffed. (See enc. II for a summary of the staffing rates for each field office.)

#### GRADE-LEVEL STAFFING

We were not able to analyze the staffing patterns at field offices because the Coast Guard does not track field unit staff in the same manner as headquarters and district staff. Field offices are authorized to move personnel from their originally assigned billet to another billet on the basis of the units' specific needs and to expand the experience levels of individuals.

Although we could not compare grade-level staffing for field offices, we were able to do so for military officer billets assigned to headquarters and district offices. These billets account for about 10 percent of the program's total billets. Many of the officer billets assigned to these offices in January and October 1995 were filled with personnel whose grade levels were either above or below the authorized grade levels for their respective billets. Mismatches occurred for 25 percent of the total officer billets occupied in January 1995 and 22 percent for those billets occupied in October 1995.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>All of the vacancies at this unit involved civilian billets left vacant as a result of the Coast Guard's efforts to consolidate its vessel documentation activities.

<sup>7</sup>The office that was 26 percent understaffed was authorized 27 people and had 20 people actually on board; the office that was 21 percent overstuffed was authorized 24 people and had 29 people actually on board.

<sup>8</sup>The office that was 14 percent understaffed was authorized 72 people and had 62 people actually on board; the office that was 23 percent overstuffed was authorized 39 people and had 48 people actually on board.

<sup>9</sup>We did not assess the grade-level mismatches for warrant officers or enlisted personnel. According to the Coast Guard, all of the warrant officer billets in the Coast Guard are authorized at the highest grade level—Warrant Officer Grade 4. However, the program has few grade-4 staff. Enlisted personnel will typically be promoted while they are in a billet, thus creating a natural mismatch at the time of the promotion or when they are assigned to a new billet after a promotion.

About two-thirds of the mismatches at headquarters and district offices involved personnel whose grades were lower than the authorized grade levels for the billets they were occupying. Almost all of the mismatches (96 percent), whether above or below the authorized grade, involved variances of one grade level. The remaining mismatches involved variances of two grade levels. For example, four officers were in billets two grade levels above their grades. Two Lieutenant Junior Grades and one Ensign were assigned to billets authorized for Lieutenant Commanders;<sup>10</sup> a Warrant Officer was assigned to a billet authorized for a Lieutenant. Conversely, two officers were in billets two grade levels below their grades: A Captain was assigned to a Lieutenant Commander billet and a Lieutenant was assigned to a Warrant Officer billet. (See enc. III for more information on grade-level mismatches.)

Coast Guard personnel officials told us that these billet mismatches occurred for a variety of reasons, such as an over- or undersupply of staff at certain grade levels and promotions. They said that it is not possible at present to totally eliminate the mismatches because of the shortages of people at the Lieutenant Commander and Lieutenant grade levels. These shortages have occurred largely because promotions have not kept pace with the influx of people coming into the program.

#### CHANGES IN THE MARINE SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM

The Coast Guard requires that all personnel complete at least one of four resident training courses at the start of their first assignment at a marine safety field unit. These courses are Marine Inspector, Port Operations Department, Marine Investigations, and Marine Safety Petty Officer.<sup>11</sup> Personnel are scheduled for one of these courses depending on their assigned program specialty.

The number of slots for and the number of Coast Guard personnel attending two of these courses, Marine Inspector and Marine Investigations, have risen substantially from fiscal year 1991 levels, while the number of slots for personnel attending the remaining two courses has stayed about the same.

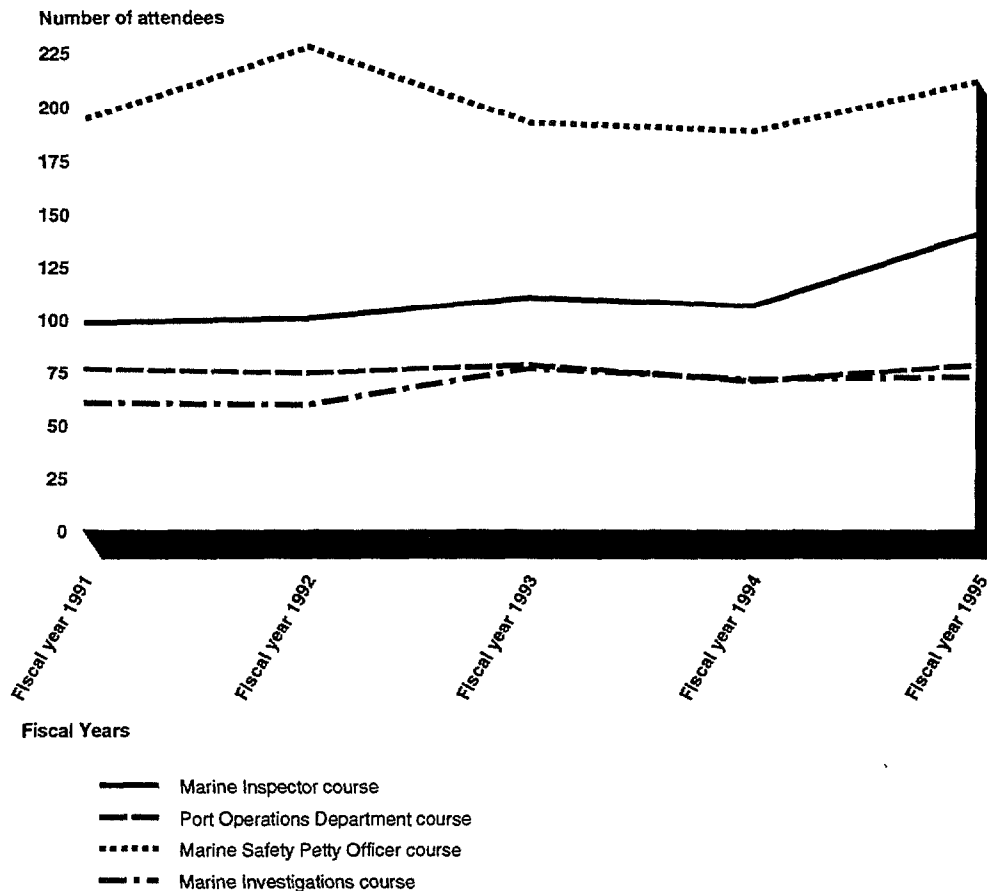
---

<sup>10</sup>At a minimum, all Ensigns are assigned to Lieutenant Junior Grade billets because the Marine Safety Program has no Ensign billets.

<sup>11</sup>All officers must attend either the Marine Inspector, Port Operations Department, or Marine Investigator course. Enlisted personnel attend the Marine Safety Petty Officer course.

For the Marine Inspector course, the number of training slots increased from 112 in fiscal year 1991 to 140 in fiscal year 1995; the attendees increased from 98 to 140 during the same period. For the Marine Investigations course, the training slots and attendees both increased from 60 in fiscal year 1991 to 72 in fiscal year 1995. Figure 1 shows the trends in the number of staff attending these four courses since fiscal year 1991.

Figure 1: Number of Attendees at the Essential Marine Safety Training Courses, Fiscal Years 1991-95



For all four courses, the number of people who wanted to attend the courses exceeded the number of available slots for fiscal years 1993-95. Three courses in particular—Marine Investigations, Marine Safety Petty Officer, and Port Operations Department—had relatively large numbers of staff who applied but were not selected to attend. However, Coast Guard officials said that staff members who are not selected for one course session are given priority at the

B-265942

next session offered. Therefore, according to officials, while training may be delayed several months until the next session, the delay is not significant and does not materially affect the ability of the marine safety personnel to carry out their responsibilities. (See enc. IV for a summary of the attendance and unfilled training requests for these four courses.)

AGENCY COMMENTS

We provided a draft of this report to officials of the Department of Transportation's Coast Guard for their review and comment. We discussed the information in the report with them, including the Coast Guard's Chief of the Programs Division/Director of Resources within the Office of the Chief of Staff. They generally agreed with the facts as presented. The officials offered technical comments to clarify and amplify the information presented in the report, and we have incorporated those comments throughout the report as appropriate.

-----

We conducted our review from July 1995 through April 1996 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. A detailed discussion of our scope and methodology is in enclosure V.

We are sending copies of this letter to the Secretary of Transportation and the Commandant of the Coast Guard. We will also make copies available to others on request. Please call me at (202) 512-3650 if you have any questions about this report. Major contributors to this report include Steven Gazda, Barbara Johnson, Allen Lomax, Allan Rogers, and Randall Williamson.



Gerald L. Dillingham  
Associate Director, Transportation and  
Telecommunications Issues



INFORMATION ON ADDITIONAL BILLETS THE CONGRESS  
FUNDED FOR THE MARINE SAFETY PROGRAM, FISCAL YEARS 1991-94

Table I.1: Summary of Additional Billets, Fiscal Years 1991-94

<b>Fiscal year</b>	<b>Number funded by the Congress</b>	<b>Number assigned to General Detail</b>	<b>Number assigned to the Marine Safety Program</b>
1991	446	30	416
1992	229	38	191
1993	54	9	45
1994	146	20	126
<b>Total</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>778<sup>a</sup></b>

<sup>a</sup>Of these billets, 27 were allocated to nonprogram offices such as personnel and legal and 45 billets were eliminated because of budget cuts.

Table I.2: Distribution of Additional Billets, by Activity, Fiscal Year 1991

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number funded by the Congress</b>	<b>Number assigned to General Detail</b>	<b>Number assigned to the Marine Safety Program</b>
Oil Pollution Act of 1990	309	23	286
MARPOL <sup>a</sup>	85 <sup>b</sup>	0	85
Safety and Occupational Health	34	5	29
Fishing Vessel Safety	18	2	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>416</b>

<sup>a</sup>The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution From Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978, is commonly known as MARPOL.

<sup>b</sup>The Congress funded 50 new billets for MARPOL. According to the Coast Guard, it created, without specific congressional direction, another 35 new billets for MARPOL as a result of additional funding provided to the program .

Table I.3: Distribution of Additional Billets, by Activity, Fiscal Year 1992

Activity	Number funded by the Congress	Number assigned to General Detail	Number assigned to the Marine Safety Program
Recreational Boating Safety	11	4	7
Drug and Alcohol Enforcement	24	5	19
Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety	50	5	45
G-MEP Initiative: Vessel/Facility Response Planners	51	10	41
Marine Inspection Resources	42	5	37
G-MEP Initiatives: Casualty-Pollution Investigators	19	3	16
Supplemental Marine Inspection Resources	32	6	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>191</b>

Table I.4: Distribution of Additional Billets, by Activity, Fiscal Year 1993

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number funded by the Congress</b>	<b>Number assigned to General Detail</b>	<b>Number assigned to the Marine Safety Program</b>
Marine Inspection Program	32	5	27
Marine Safety Training and Assistance Teams	11	2	9
Non-Indigenous Species	10	2	8
Pre-Position Response Equipment	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>45</b>

Table I.5: Distribution of Additional Billets, by Activity, Fiscal Year 1994

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number funded by the Congress</b>	<b>Number assigned to General Detail</b>	<b>Number assigned to the Marine Safety Program</b>
Passenger Vessel Safety Program	11	1	10
Spill Response Exercise Support	25	3	22
Pollution Response Equipment Maintenance	1	0	1
Marine Inspector Resources	33	5	28
Container Inspection Program	76	11	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>126</b>

STAFFING INFORMATION ON THE MARINE SAFETY PROGRAM  
BY ORGANIZATIONAL AND GRADE LEVEL,  
JANUARY AND OCTOBER 1995

Table II.1: Staffing Information for January 1995

Grade level by location	Number of authorized personnel	Number of actual personnel	Staffing rate <sup>a</sup>
<b>Headquarters offices</b>			
Officers	258	266	1.03
Warrant officers	24	26	1.08
Enlisted	191	227	1.19
Civilians	259	226	0.87
Subtotal	732	745	1.02
<b>District offices</b>			
Officers	93	99	1.06
Warrant officers	2	2	1.00
Enlisted	35	36	1.03
Civilians	44	34	0.77
Subtotal	174	171	0.98
<b>Field offices</b>			
Officers	729	733	1.01
Warrant officers	293	296	1.01
Enlisted	1,220	1,246	1.02
Civilians	333	307	0.92
Subtotal	2,575	2,582	1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,481</b>	<b>3,498</b>	<b>1.00</b>

<sup>a</sup>Staffing rate is number of authorized personnel divided by the number of actual personnel.

Table II.2: Staffing Information for October 1995

Grade level by Location	Number of authorized personnel	Number of actual personnel	Staffing rate <sup>a</sup>
<b>Headquarters offices</b>			
Officers	255	250	0.98
Warrant officers	23	22	0.96
Enlisted	187	232	1.24
Civilians	348	229	0.66
Subtotal	813	733	0.90
<b>District offices</b>			
Officers	94	94	1.00
Warrant officers	2	2	1.00
Enlisted	35	32	0.91
Civilians	44	36	0.82
Subtotal	175	164	0.94
<b>Field offices</b>			
Officers	728	757	1.04
Warrant officers	294	308	1.05
Enlisted	1,224	1,275	1.04
Civilians	215	216	1.00
Subtotal	2,461	2,556	1.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,449</b>	<b>3,453</b>	<b>1.00</b>

<sup>a</sup>Staffing rate is the number of authorized personnel divided by the number of actual personnel.

Table II. 3: Summary of Staffing Rates for Marine Safety Billets at Field Offices

Coast Guard Field Office	Staffing rates <sup>a</sup>	
	January 1995	October 1995
<b>Marine Inspection Offices</b>		
New York, NY	1.07	1.02
Europe	0.0 <sup>b</sup>	0.94
Asia	0.0 <sup>c</sup>	0.89
<b>Marine Safety Offices</b>		
Boston, MA	0.91	1.00
St. Louis, MO	1.02	1.09
Memphis, TN	1.00	0.96
Paducah, KY	1.17	1.17
Pittsburgh, PA	1.06	1.19
Huntington, WV	1.16	1.16
Louisville, KY	1.15	1.08
Philadelphia, PA	0.98	1.03
Mobile, AL	0.99	1.04
Miami, FL	0.95	1.06
Hampton Roads, VA	1.09	1.05
Baltimore, MD	1.01	1.00
Wilmington, NC	1.05	1.23
Tampa, FL	1.07	1.16
Jacksonville, FL	0.97	1.08
Savannah, GA	1.21	1.12
Charleston, SC	1.08	1.08
San Juan, PR	1.10	1.02
Corpus Christi, TX	0.98	0.98
Port Arthur, TX	0.97	0.99
Houston, TX	0.95	1.00
Sault Ste. Marie, MI	1.00	1.09

Chicago, IL	1.03	1.00
Milwaukee, WI	1.13	1.13
Detroit, MI	0.94	1.06
Toledo, OH	0.97	1.03
Cleveland, OH	0.74	1.12
Buffalo, NY	1.09	1.00
San Diego, CA	1.04	1.08
San Francisco, CA	0.99	0.99
Long Beach, CA	0.97	1.00
Galveston, TX	1.06	1.06
Portland, OR	1.01	1.07
Puget Sound, WA	1.06	1.08
Honolulu, HI	1.14	1.06
Anchorage, AK	0.96	1.02
Juneau, AK	1.00	1.04
Valdez, AK	1.04	1.04
Portland, ME	1.08	1.21
Providence, RI	0.93	1.05
Duluth, MN	1.05	1.05
New Orleans, LA	0.99	1.02
Morgan City, LA	1.01	1.07
Guam	1.00	1.00
St. Thomas, VI	1.00	1.00
<b>Captain of the Port Offices</b>		
New York, NY	0.96	0.86
Long Island Sound, NY	0.89	1.00
<b>Average for all offices</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>1.05</b>

<sup>a</sup>Staffing rates are expressed as the percent of staffed to authorized billets. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

<sup>b</sup>This unit was established in July 1995.

<sup>c</sup>This unit was established in December 1994.

INFORMATION ON GRADE-LEVEL MISMATCHES OF OFFICER BILLETS ASSIGNED  
TO HEADQUARTERS AND DISTRICT OFFICES, JANUARY AND OCTOBER 1995

Table III.1: Extent of Mismatches, January and October 1995

	January 1995	October 1995
<b>Headquarters offices</b>		
Number of officers assigned to higher-graded billet	37	38
Number of officers assigned to billet at their grade level	202	201
Number of officers assigned to lower-graded billet	27	11
<b>Total--headquarters offices</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>District offices</b>		
Number of officers assigned to higher-graded billet	19	17
Number of officers assigned to billet at their grade level	71	69
Number of officers assigned to lower-graded billet	9	8
<b>Total--district offices</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>94</b>



PROFILE OF FOUR MARINE SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAMS,  
FISCAL YEARS 1991-95

Table IV.1: Profile of the Marine Inspector Course, Fiscal Years 1991-95

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of courses held	4	4	4	4	5
Class size	28	24	28	28	28
Total attendees	98	100	110	106	140
Total vacancies	14	-4	2	6	0
Total number of training requests unfilled	NA	NA	14	-4	10

Note: NA means that data are not available.

Table IV.2: Profile of the Port Operations Department Course, Fiscal Years 1991-95

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of courses held	3	3	3	3	3
Class size	28	24	28	28	28
Total attendees	76	74	78	70	78
Total vacancies	8	-2	6	14	6
Total number of training requests unfilled	NA	NA	4	5	25

Note: NA means that data are not available.

Table IV.3: Profile of the Marine Safety Petty Officer Course, Fiscal Years 1991-95

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of courses held	7	8	7	7	8
Class size	28	28	28	28	28
Total attendees	194	227	192	188	211
Total vacancies	-2	-3	4	8	13
Total number of training requests unfilled	NA	NA	57	30	42

Note: NA means that data are not available.

Table IV.4: Profile of the Marine Investigations Course, Fiscal Years 1991-95

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Number of courses held	3	3	4	3	3
Class size	20	20	20	24	24
Total attendees	60	59	76	71	72
Total vacancies	0	1	4	1	0
Total number of training requests unfilled	NA	NA	5	37	41

Note: NA means that data are not available.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

To address the question concerning the changes in the size of the Marine Safety Program as a result of funding provided by the Congress for additional billets, we obtained information from the Coast Guard on the number of marine safety billets provided by the Congress since 1991. We attempted to verify the total number of billets for each program activity by reviewing congressional reports and acts and through discussions with Coast Guard officials. We used the number of billets authorized for the Marine Safety Program in fiscal year 1990 as a baseline and compared this number with the program's authorization as of October 1, 1995. We also obtained information from the Coast Guard on reduction of billets in the program since fiscal year 1991.

To address the questions about the billet vacancies and grade-level matches of personnel and billets, we discussed Coast Guard staffing practices with Coast Guard officials in Washington, D.C. We obtained information on the number and composition of marine safety billets, staffing rates, and grade-level mismatches directly from the Coast Guard's billet allowances and personnel management information systems. We compared the Coast Guard's military and civilian personnel management information systems with the information in the billet allowances information system.

Because the Coast Guard's military personnel information system does not contain staffing information on a yearly basis, Coast Guard personnel and program officials suggested that we choose two recent time periods in time, January and October 1995, to assess the extent of vacancies. The information on vacancies was assessed using two methods—one for billets in field offices and one for billets at headquarters and district offices. For field offices, we compared the aggregate numbers of billets by grade level to an aggregate number of staff in each grade level. For district and headquarters offices, we compared each billet to the staff assigned to a specific billet. The two methods were necessary because the Coast Guard personnel information system does not contain reliable billet identification numbers for field offices. When we found vacant district and headquarters billets, we provided the billet information to the Coast Guard so that it could verify whether or not the billet was vacant or the database was incorrect. For those instances when the Coast Guard provided us with supporting information to show that a billet was actually filled, we updated our information to show the actual status of a billet. We did not independently verify the accuracy of the Coast Guard's data, and we do not attest to its reliability. However, we worked closely with Coast Guard officials to ensure they agreed that the data correctly reflected the actual situation.

To address the question about training changes since fiscal year 1991, we discussed the training of Coast Guard inspectors with Coast Guard officials at the Coast Guard's training center at Yorktown, Virginia. The Coast Guard provided us with information on course sessions, quotas, attendees, vacancies, and unfilled training requests for

ENCLOSURE V

ENCLOSURE V

the four essential marine safety resident training courses for fiscal years 1991 through 1995.

(344494)

---

### **Ordering Information**

**The first copy of each GAO report and testimony is free. Additional copies are \$2 each. Orders should be sent to the following address, accompanied by a check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents, when necessary. Orders for 100 or more copies to be mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent.**

**Orders by mail:**

**U.S. General Accounting Office  
P.O. Box 6015  
Gaithersburg, MD 20884-6015**

**or visit:**

**Room 1100  
700 4th St. NW (corner of 4th and G Sts. NW)  
U.S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, DC**

**Orders may also be placed by calling (202) 512-6000  
or by using fax number (301) 258-4066, or TDD (301) 413-0006.**

**Each day, GAO issues a list of newly available reports and testimony. To receive facsimile copies of the daily list or any list from the past 30 days, please call (202) 512-6000 using a touchtone phone. A recorded menu will provide information on how to obtain these lists.**

**For information on how to access GAO reports on the INTERNET, send an e-mail message with "info" in the body to:**

**[info@www.gao.gov](mailto:info@www.gao.gov)**

---

**United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548-0001**

**Bulk Rate  
Postage & Fees Paid  
GAO  
Permit No. G100**

**Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use \$300**

**Address Correction Requested**

---