



# THE WATCHSTANDER

Newsletter of the Belize Coast Guard

Volume 5 Issue 4

30 December 2023



## Developing New Capability

*Belize Coast Guard seeks largest defence investment in its history*

**18**  
Years of Service to  
Belize



# Closing out 2023



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# State of the Coast Guard Address

*Rear Admiral Elton Bennett*



It's an honour to present my fourth State of the Coast Guard address. This is the platform that I use to provide a report on our accomplishments over the past year. The States of the Coast Guard address coincides with our 18<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, a significant milestone in our organization. As the Commandant of the Coast Guard I remain accountable to my leaders at the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security, I remain accountable to our stakeholders and partners that have made valuable contributions to the success of this organization, I remain accountable to the Belizean public, and very importantly I remain accountable to those under my command, that I will continue to steer this ship in the right direction. With all hands on deck we have accomplished so much over the past year. At this point last year we were wrapping up our post hurricane Lisa disaster relief operations in Belize City, Crooked Tree, and River valley area.

Our contribution to civil society takes different forms but perhaps the most important mission that we conduct is saving lives at sea. Over the past year we have conducted 20 SAR missions, saving 104 lives.

As a maritime nation Belize has a lot to offer for maritime recreation and economic development. But the sea could be a very hazardous workplace and mariners often fall into distress. For 18 years The Coast

Guard has prided itself to have never lost a life after receiving a distress call. But that changed on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 when we received a distress call not from a civil mariner, but from our very own CG 06 who after a three week deployment at Bacalar Chico on Northern Ambergris Caye suffered a marine casualty and whilst every effort that could be mustered to save life we lost Seaman Kaiman Garcia in that accident. He died in our hands and became the first member of the Coast Guard to have died on operational duty.

The Coast Guard is defined by its missions and people, and we strive for a progressive development of our office and sailors, finding ways and means for continued education whilst in service. The Coast Guard Board, chaired by the Minister of National Defence and Border Security, the Honourable Florencio Marin Jr has been very supportive of our education drive and today I can proudly report that over the past year, three of our office have earned Masters degree from the University of the West Indies, University of Guyana and Isabel 1 University; and two more are well into their post graduate studies at the University of International Cooperation and the World Maritime University in Sweden. Our scholarship program is also well underway with two of our lieutenants enrolled at the University of Belize and two others on study leave granted by the Coast Guard Board. Likewise at Gallen University two of our enlisted personnel are enrolled full time whilst two are benefiting from sports scholarship; and several are taking advantage of part time study arrangements facilitated under their respective commands. The future of our Coast Guard is promising indeed.

But investing in our people goes beyond the individual sailor. Our desire is to capture the families of our office and sailors for a more integrated approach to organizational advancement. I'm therefore proud to report that this year at our senior officers conference we established an interim executive to commence the creation of a Families Association. Senator Isabel Moody has been nominated as the interim President and is already well involved with programs such as Swim Pro, a youth program that we ran during the



# 18 Years of Service to Nation



RECRUIT INTAKE #11



# State of the Coast Guard Address

summer break that was designed to reach Coast Guard family members, and other youths in Belize City and the Belmopan area.

There are numerous other morale and welfare initiatives that we have implemented under the direction of the MNDBS such as improving the living conditions and installing internet services at our forward operating bases so that our officers and sailors can remain in contact with their families during those long three week deployments. And speaking of those long three weeks deployments, our decentralize strategy very well supports a reduction from three to two weeks in areas where we can afford to reduce our logistics lines such as in the south where the sector headquarters at Big Creek is strategically located and we can reduce our deployment from three to two weeks. We cannot overemphasize the importance of getting this work – life balance right as we concentrate on the mental health of our people. This year, we benefited from Mental

our upcoming deployment to Haiti. I know at the stage there are quite a few uncertainties regarding the definition and scope of the mission, and also a few unknowns about the threat level in Haiti. But one thing is for certain, the need for us to put our best foot forward in our initial deployment. Hence, I have issued a warning order to our special operations group, committing twenty men to the mission. They represent the best of the Coast Guard and I can assure you that these men will embrace that mission and execute at the highest professional level as expected of the Belize Coast Guard.

But returning to operations on the home front, our fleet has been remarkable this year. We have reduced the violence associated with coastal piracy to zero. Zero deaths this year from coastal piracy, zero reports of firearm related violence or even threat of firearm violence at sea. On the contrary, our operations have been well targeted, concentrating on rearmaments and media

***We have reduced violence associated with coastal piracy to zero. Zero deaths this year from coastal piracy, zero reports of firearm related violence or even threat of firearm violence at sea***

Health programs that were facilitated by our Mexican, British, and American counterparts.

Great emphasis has also been placed on training over the past year. We deployed training detachments to Guyana where members of the fleet conducted small boat training; whilst in Colombia our special operations group trained alongside the best special forces in the Americas. Also in May of this year we deployed our largest training detachment overseas with a platoon to the Joint Readiness Training Centre in the United States. Thanks to the Louisiana National Guard for making that happen. I want to believe that that training exposure puts us in a very good start position for an operational deployment to Haiti.

So let me turn the page to operational readiness and operational accomplishments starting with the former,

in order to prevent violence at sea.

Our force posture of being forward deployed is designed to achieve deterrence. This is an effective strategy to combat drug trafficking at sea and it has been working well. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports that drug trafficking by sea accounts for 90% of the drug trade worldwide. Here in Belize your Coast Guard is hard at work maintaining continuous at sea presence to deter drug trafficking through Belizean sea spaces.

***Belize's sea spaces are safe and secure for mariners, fisherfolks, and vessels in transit.***

A crucial and evermore increasingly important part of our mission is the protection of our marine resources. This is in support of a 100 million dollar industry and



# State of the Coast Guard Address

the coast guard is charged with enforcement in support of the Fisheries Department of the Blue Economy Ministry. Over the past year our operations yielded over \$111k in fines and recovered over 3,000 feet of gill nets from our southern waters. The protection of our marine resources is paramount to our maritime governance and the Coast Guard is eager to do more. The development of our Unmanned Air System is well underway with the first two air vehicles expected in January followed by another pair of UAV in 2024. These are primarily marine conservation assets but will be tasked to perform every other coast guard mission. The perimeter 8 drones are capable of up to 5 hours flying time, with a range of 100km flying at an altitude of 13,000 feet. This will significantly increase the coverage of our area of operation providing air surveillance and target acquisition for our forward deployed surface units whilst simultaneously relaying data feed that supports a common operating picture for our command centre. Air capability will no longer be the missing dimension from our operations.

I'm also proud to report that the Coast Guard is well underway with the largest defence investment in a single capability in independent Belize. \$16M allocated to the acquisition of two patrol boats categorized as

national assets that will demonstrate governments resolve in maritime governance, providing for maritime safety for those at sea, expanding operational reach into our EEZ and beyond, protecting our marine resources, and perhaps most important, the centre of gravity in our primary mission, the naval defence of Belize.

Over the past 12 months we have made significant strides in incorporating technology into our operations. The coast guard is now able to track vessels entering our jurisdictional waters via satellite, an important tool in supporting our common operating picture. Furthermore, we are now conducting live tracking of our very own assets via direct satellite link improving command and control of our forward deployed units. A critical capability of our fleet management system is a distress feature that alerts our operations centre that a situation exists requiring immediate action. This is a crucial part of our force protection strategy. The safety of our very own sailors is essential.

There are different dimensions to our operations and a good portion of what we do is interagency. This is best exemplified at the Joint intelligence and operations centre currently under the directorship of Lieutenant



The Coast Guard is well underway in achieving the vision laid out by the Ministry of National Defence and Border Security, ***to poise a robust and equipped defence forces of Belize to respond to all threats, thus making valuable contribution to national and regional security.***



## State of the Coast Guard Address

Commander Freddi Ku. Your work at the JIOC over the past two years has been exemplary. The reduction of drug trafficking by air is a result of hard, and smart work by you and your interagency team at the JIOC. But whilst to the public drug planes may seem a threat of the past, our security services are yet engaged in aggressive deployments to deter drug planes from landing in Belize. It goes beyond operational readiness and response. Initiatives such as legislating the JIOC, and developing SOPs and vetting capability are very essential long term programs to strengthen the institution. Thanks to you the Coast Guard and BDF have for the first time qualified polygraphers within our institutions. This is an essential component to our long term success ensuring the integrity of our most sensitive operational arm. Lieutenant Commander Freddi Ku, congratulations on receiving a one year extension as director of JIOC.

The success of the Coast Guard does not come only from within. We rely heavily on external support from

our partners and allies in defence and security. Last month we met with our Mexican navy counterparts to seek to strengthen security cooperation and improve intelligence sharing with a focus to address the increased threat of the cartels along our northern border region. And at the Multinational Security conference in November we were reassured by the United States Security Cooperation office in Belize that the Belize Coast Guard will continue to receive security assistance as we find ways to confront common threats such as drug trafficking, weapon smuggling and illegal migration. I'm also happy to report that the Belize Coast Guard will be deploying one of our senior officers to join the team at the Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West Florida. This two year deployment is a demonstration that the MNDBS is committed to regional security. The United States has remained a stalwart partner for the Belize Coast Guard. Over the past year thirty-five coast guard personnel received some sort of training in the United States or were



## 8th Annual Multinational Security Conference





# State of the Coast Guard Address

sponsored for regional training exercises. Thank you for your continued support. The British Army support unit Belize BATSUB made significant contributions to capacity building through training. Recruit intake 11 conducted the entrance training at BATSUB facility in Price Barracks and the live ring was conducted at the manatee live ring range. In addition, BATSUB provided qualification training for members of the Coast Guard in range management, sniper course, patrolling, tracking, operational planning, and promotional courses. We are grateful. These are vital training for our organizational success.

We maintain these crucial diplomatic lines of effort in support of our political aims. The Belize Coast Guard remains as a military instrument in support of our foreign policies. In October of this year I visited Puerto Barrios Guatemala on a mission assigned to myself by the National Security Council to establish communications with the Guatemalan Navy. I'm proud to report that that mission was a success. **In interacting with the Guatemalan Navy we**

**will cooperate where we can, but we will confront where we must.** We have discovered mutually beneficial areas of cooperation such as the Corona Reef, where both the Government of Belize and the Government of Guatemala has legislated some form of marine protection. The Sarstoon however, will continue to be a very sensitive area for adjacent forces. We remain committed along with the BDF to maintain an assertive force posture at the Sarstoon in exercising sovereignty over our portion of the Sarstoon.

We surely accomplished a lot over the past year. With a \$13.8M dollar budget we have created and maintained a safe sea space for Belizeans and foreign nationals transiting our waters. We have demonstrated governance over our marine resources and we have maintained the sovereignty of our maritime borders. Our force posture and state of readiness presents a Coast Guard that remains **Utrinque Paratus**, ready for anything.



*Admiral Bennett visits Guatemalan Navy Base in Santa Thomas*



# Patrol Boat Acquisition

## Government of Belize Commences Largest Defence Capability Investment in History

The Government of Belize with a vision of increasing efficiency in the management of the resources and activities in national waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone, with a view of enhancing the potential contribution of the maritime sector to the economic development of the nation, is actively pursuing the acquisition two patrol boats.

Belize derives significant economic benefits from its maritime related industries and activities, in particular from the fishing, tourism, and maritime transportation industries. Furthermore, the recent investments in marine conservation such as the Blue Bonds has resulted in the rebranding of Belize as a Maritime Nation, reshaping national policies, and causing Belizeans to rethink how we interact with our sea spaces.

**The Belize Coast Guard Patrol Boat Project is a sixteen million dollar allocation** of the Belize Integral Security Program with funding provided by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration.

The Belize Coast Guard is pursuing 'Blue Water Capability' for the conduct of maritime operations. The core of the Blue Water Capability is the acquisition of two patrol boats. There are other external supporting initiative to complement the Blue Water Capability however this tender is for the supply of the two patrol boats with training for the crew and required spare parts to support initial maintenance.



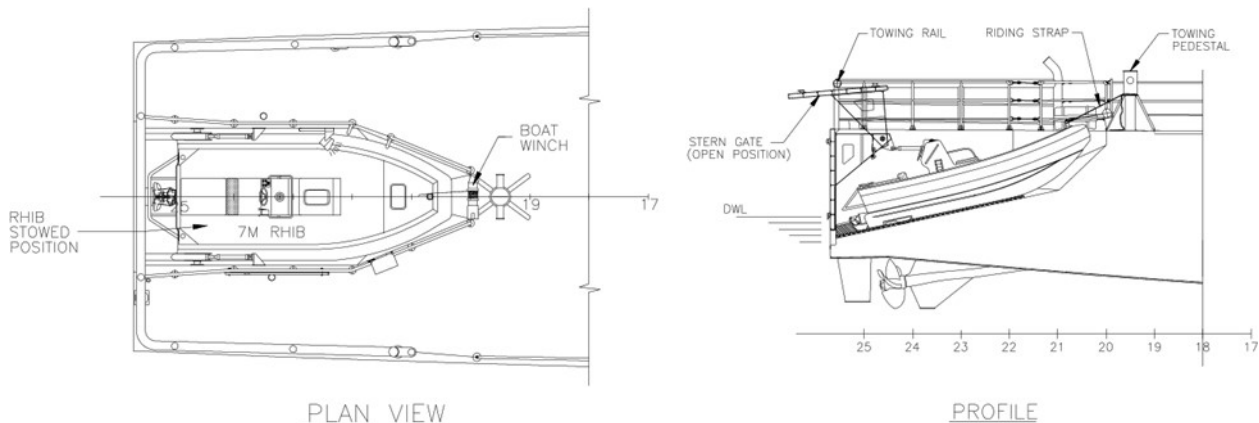


# Patrol Boat Acquisition

## PREREQUISITES OF THE PATROL CRAFT

### Multi Mission

The patrol craft must be a multi mission platform capable of performing a wide range of missions including law enforcement operations, maritime safety and marine resource protection. Research teams will also embark on the vessel for the conduct of marine scientific research including data collection both on the surface and subsurface. Buoy tendering of aids to navigation and meteorological buoy servicing and data collection are also mission to be conducted from the main platform.



### Ocean Going

The patrol craft must be designed to operate in open seas and able to withstand severe weather and sea conditions experienced in the region. The primary specifications must take into consideration exclusive economic zone patrols, operating outside of the reef system, and robust enough to maintain crew effectiveness in open seas thereby minimizing fatigue caused by insubstantial structure.

### Endurance

The patrol craft must be able to sustain operations at sea for up to ten days. Its carrying capacity should sustain food and water for that duration. Its fuel capacity must allow patrolling up to a minimum of 500nm before refuelling.

### Draft

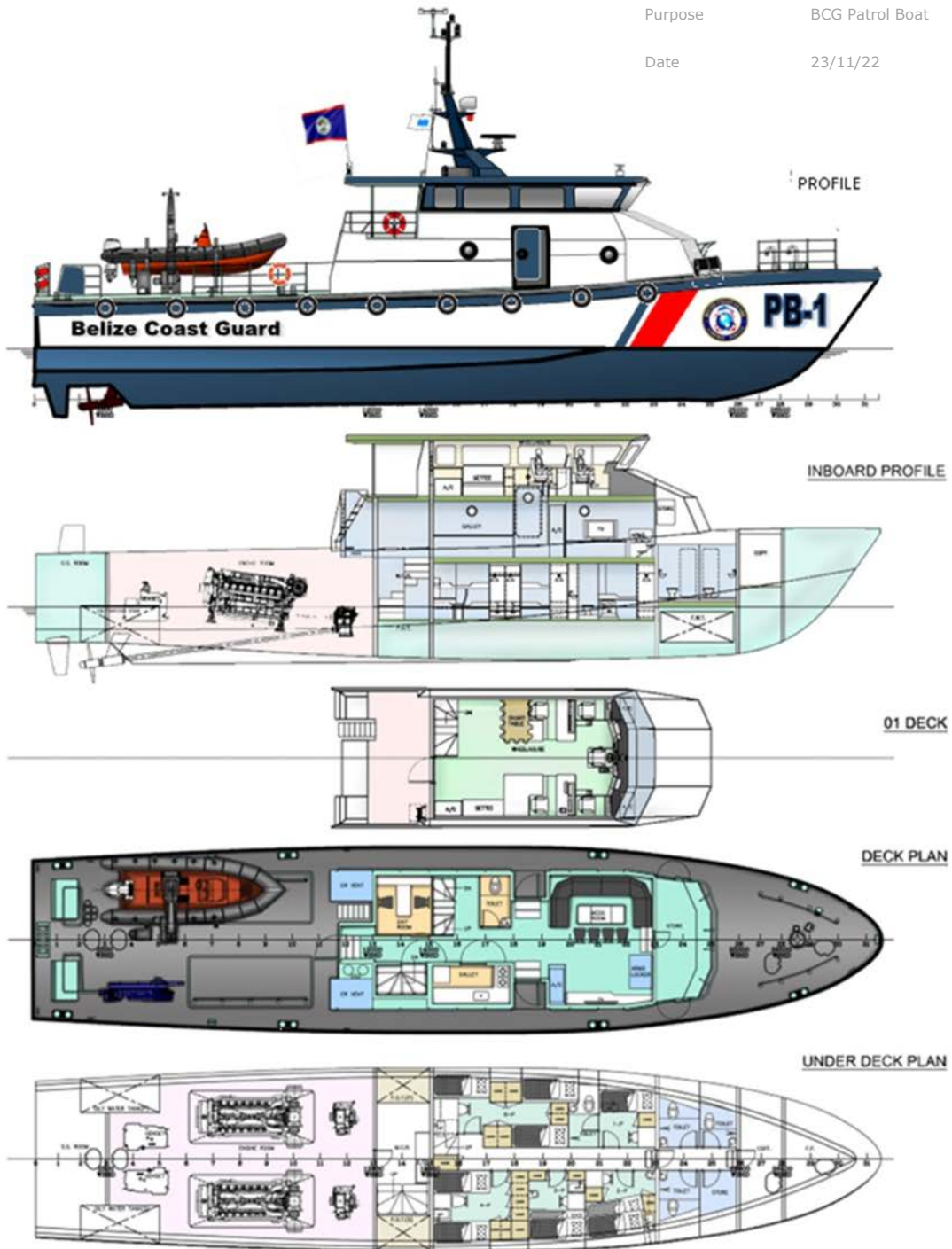
At fully laden the craft should have a draft of no more than 6 feet allowing it to enter and manoeuvre in the shallow areas. Considering the restricting waters of Belize, the patrol craft must be capable of navigating outside of normal waterways designated for larger vessels and conducting operations inside and around the reef.

### Boarding Operations

The patrol craft must be equipped with a high speed rigid inflatable boat or equivalent capable of being deployed either by davit or by stern launch. The deployment of the boarding party must be able to be conducted whilst the vessel is underway.

# Patrol Boat Acquisition

Drawn by E Bennett  
 Purpose BCG Patrol Boat  
 Date 23/11/22

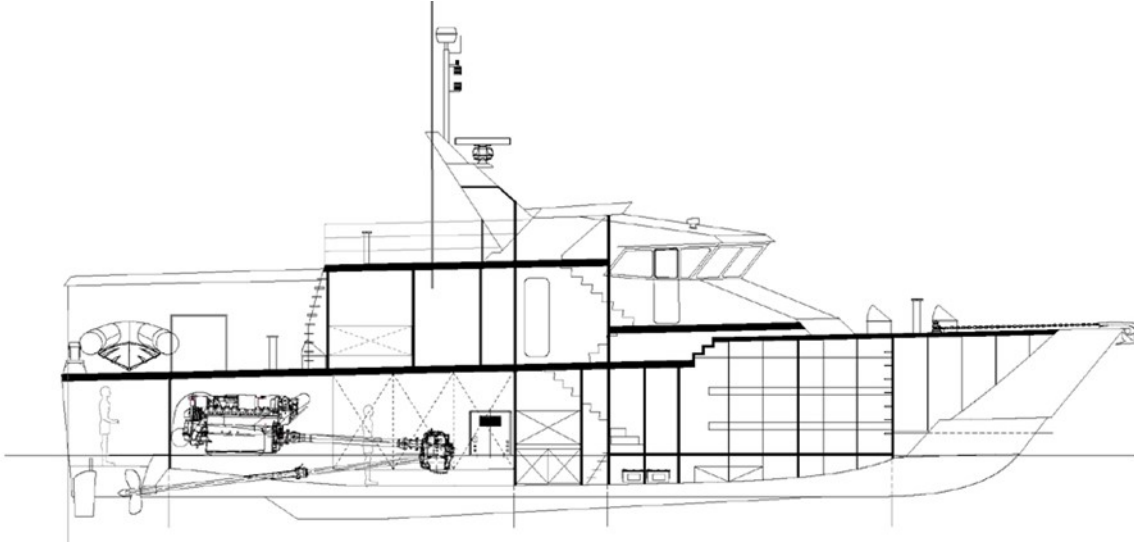




# Patrol Boat Acquisition

## Speed

The patrol boat must be capable of performing at low speeds of 15kts, efficient cruising speed of 15-20kts and reaching speeds up to 30kts.



## STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENT

### Layout

The vessel design must feature at least three decks, not including integral fuel and water tanks and engine compartment in the hull.

The main deck is to feature reasonable working space in an open deck concept however a closed bow would be considered. Whilst a stern launch is preferred, a davit launch would be considered however the configuration and outfit must occupy minimal space on the main deck.

Movement from bow to stern must be easily accessible. Below deck should be configured to include cabins for a twelve-man crew, heads, galley and briefing room. The upper deck forms the ship operating centre with the bridge that is to include at the minimum a alternative command seat, navigation station and officer of the watch station. Panoramic view throughout the bridge is essential for safe operation and effective functions of bridge operations.

### Dimensions

The length of the patrol boat must be within the range of 25 – 30 meters in order to accommodate all requirement of logistics and operational platform.

### Hull Material

The Hull should be constructed from aluminium and must meet IMO standards.

### Berthing

The vessel must be designed to be crewed by not more than 12; however open space must be available to accommodate 28 personnel for short distance transportation.

## Stability and space

The patrol craft must be able to maintain a stable platform, especially when in anchorage and used as a mother ship or command HQ at sea.

The vessel must have a large deck and internal space for carrying capacity. Also sufficient space to fit air surveillance and surface search radar, water desalination plant, electric generators, extra fuel tanks and other “live on” amenities up to a designed payload of 25tons.

## Communications and Navigation

The Patrol Boat must be equipped with the following GMDSS systems for coverage in Sea Area 2 and Sea Area 3

Emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) operating on the 406 MHz frequency

NAVTEX

High Frequency Communication system

Very High Frequency including Marine Band Radio with Digital Selective Calling features

Provisions for secure HF and VHF systems

Navigation system to include:

NAVTEXT

Gyro and magnetic compass

Modern GPS systems

Radar system

Echo sounder

Search Light

Forward Looking Infrared

Power and Propulsion

The propulsion system must be able to produce not less than 1,000 kw at cruising speed. Twin diesel system will be required. Either propellor or jet drive will be considered.

## Maintenance

Marine diesel engines must be fuel efficient and of low maintenance where spares are easily accessible in Belize.

The hull maintenance must require limited resources and supplies must be available in Belize. Coast Guard personnel must be trained to undertake the maintenance with little down time.



**Specific Procurement Notice**  
**2 Coastal Patrol Boats for The Belize Coast Guard**  
**N° CABEI-G-002-2147/2023**  
**One Stage-One Envelope**



**October 27, 2023:**

**SOURCE OF RESOURCES**

The Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), as part of the services it provides to its beneficiary partner countries, is granting financing is granting full financing for the Procurement of **2 Coast Patrol Boats** within the framework of the Belize Integral Security Program.

**EXECUTING AGENCY AND BUYER OF THE BIDDING PROCESS**

Buyer's background.

The Executing Body (EB) for the BISP is the Ministry of Finance, Economic Development, and Investment. The MED will be responsible for the execution of the Programme and all its components, reporting all progress to CABEI and ensure the execution of each component under the terms established for CABEI formulation and approval. The execution of BISP components will be carried out by the Co-Executors: Belize Police Department, Belize Defense Force, Belize Coast Guard and National Forensic Science Services.

The **Ministry of Economic Development**, is responsible for the present Procurement process for which, invites the eligible suppliers of goods and services to submit bids for this procurement in a sealed envelope.

The Supplier will be selected through international competition in accordance with the procedures of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration as established in the Procurement Policy for Procurement of Goods, Works, Services and Consultancies with CABEI resources and its Regulations, which can be found on the following web site: <https://www.bcie.org>.

**PRESENTATION OF THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS**

General Objectives of the Procurement: Acquisition of **Two (2) Coastal Patrol Boats for the Belize Coast Guard**.

The Buyer makes available to interested parties all the documentation related to this Procurement necessary for the preparation of bids.

Such information will be available free of charge:

For download on the Ministry of Economic Development's Website: [www.med.gov.bz/bisp-tenders](http://www.med.gov.bz/bisp-tenders) and the Ministry of Finance's Procurement Portal <https://blz-cppnb.caricom.org/epps/home.do>.

Additional information regarding the preparation of proposals can be communicated by emailed to: [procurementof-ficer.bisp@med.gov.bz](mailto:procurementof-ficer.bisp@med.gov.bz) and copied to [projectcoordinator.bisp@med.gov.bz](mailto:projectcoordinator.bisp@med.gov.bz)

*Any cost to obtain printed documents are Non-Refundable. The nominal charge amounts needed are to cover printing and shipping costs.*

Bids for this invitation to bid shall be received no later than **Wednesday December 13, 2023, until 10:00 a.m.** at the following physical address below.

Bids must be sent to the address below. Bids will not be permitted in electronic form and no late bids will be accepted. Bids shall be opened publicly, in the presence of the representatives designated by the Bidder, at the address listed below on **Wednesday December 13, 2023, at 10:30 a.m.**

**All Bids must be accompanied by one "Bid Maintenance Declaration".**

The address mentioned above is:

*Project Coordinator  
Belize Integral Security Programme  
#1904 Constitution Drive, 2nd Floor, Unit 3  
Belmopan City, Cayo District  
Belize, Central America*

*Ref: Belize Integral Security Programme (N° CABEI-G-002-2147/2023)  
Telephone: 501-826-6102*

# Search and Rescue—Training as allies, Operating as Neighbours: *Belize Coast Guard & Mexican Navy*

Ensign Susely Valdez



The Belize Coast Guard's recent rescue operation and collaboration with the Mexican Navy exemplify the dedication and

professionalism of the coastal guardians in ensuring the safety and security of individuals within their jurisdiction. On October 20th, 2023, a routine patrol, conducted by PO3 Adderley A., PO3 Manzanero C., SN Santos J, and SN Choc R., at Bacalar Chico turned into a life-saving mission when the Coast Guard was approached by a distressed man, Jose Hernandez Morales, seeking help for his family stranded at sea. The patrol crew, guided by Morales, immediately set out to the reported location, and successfully rescued two

individuals, Jose Guadalupe Marín Cetiá and Chrisán Lizama Martínez, who had been adrift at sea for two nights and three days. The rescued individuals, of Mexican nationality, were provided with necessary care and later handed over to the Mexican Navy at Zaragoza, Mexico.

Following the rescue and documentation process, the Bacalar Chico Patrol was instructed by the Operations Center to proceed to Zaragoza, Mexico, to meet with

the Mexican authorities and escort them to the Bacalar Chico FOB to conduct a proper handover of the rescued individuals. The patrol met with PO2 Rafael Cahuich, PO2 Meneses Martínez, and Marine Rescue diver Angel Arteaga, all aboard the safe boat BR-61. By 1600 hrs., the SEMAR (Mexican Navy) arrived at the Bacalar Chico Patrol Base, and the three rescued individuals were safely handed over.

**This rescue operation came just days after the Belize Coast Guard had participated in a Search and Rescue (SAR) training at the Sub Teniente Lopez, Mexican naval base from October 17th to 19th, 2023.** The training covered various aspects of SAR operations, including the different stages of the SAR process, basic first aid, swimming techniques, and the use of different types of equipment. The training also facilitated communication and coordination with the Mexican Navy during the handover process.



Mexican and Belizean rescuers perform the rescue together



# What is Recruit Training really like

*Recruit Richard Canti*



Joining the Belize Coast Guard required great sacrifice because you had to leave your family and loved ones for 13 weeks. That was the first lesson taught because, for most of the job, we would be far from home, for many it was a great challenge. I was mentally prepared

and also physically prepared for training, at least I taught. The Officer in Command and his training staff made sure they tested us physically but most important Physiologically throughout the 13 weeks of training.

The first night I fell asleep, it was like a blink of an eye and the PTI was already waking us up to get ready for PT. The PTI made sure to drain us physically and mentally for every PT, I always made sure to motivate my shipmates whenever I saw them at their breaking point. I loved it whenever we used to go running because of the songs we used to sing when we were

running. It motivated me whenever I felt like I couldn't go anymore. I made sure not to show any kind of weakness in order not to become a target, however, for one person everyone used to suffer. I remember at first I would barely pass the BFT, APFT, and swimming; however that was not something alarming for me because I knew I would get better at it with practice. As time went by I would wake up before the PTI came in to wake us up without effort.

Tuesdays and Thursdays were swimming and it was something I was looking forward to the day to come. Physical training was our bread for the past 13 weeks, it consisted of miles of running and swimming.

I always was motivated; however, some days that was not the case. I faced several challenges that brought

me to my breaking point. I remember we were given tasks to do and few were the people that came to complete the tasks, while others ran away from the task.

Nevertheless, that made me take the lead and implement my leadership skills to share the tasking to get the job done promptly. At some point of training, everyone

was given a buddy and the senior ones were in charge of the new recruits learning what we had already been taught and to move with them at all times. While moving we always had to move with a sense of urgency, that was the struggle I had with my buddy. I remember the instructors coming inside the bathroom and counting down from 10 to get out of there. I was always there waiting for my buddy; therefore, my buddy learned how to manage himself

after several extra PT that we used to do. During recruit training, I made good friends that I consider brothers, and we motivated each other whenever we



# What is Recruit Training really like

were at our breaking point.

In recruit training to survive I had to be self-motivated and my friends motivated me whenever I was on my breaking point. During the second week of training a new intake joined us and I remember he faced many challenges. I taught him how to iron his

TRU, what to do and what not to do, and told him not to become a target. He became my brother throughout training, I learned from him as well he learned from me. We passed through difficulties together and motivated each other. The first time we were given the opportunity to go on a weekend to our families, my brother and I did not pass the

requirements. We stayed at the barracks; however, that did not make us sad, in fact that

motivated us to do better the next time. I remembered everyone was going to go home and me and my intake were smiling and one instructor came to us and said, "You guys are ready to go home," I told him that we did not pass the

requirements to go home. He replied, "So why are you guys smiling, I thought you were going home". While the weekend passed by my intake was becoming sad, and that was the first time he called home. I told him the less you know about home is better for you just think of them and push on. We were always united.

Recruit training taught me a very important lesson. Teamwork is key to completing any task quickly. I learned this lesson when it was time for inspection, which we always failed.

After me and me of failing, we started assigning tasks by groups to prepare for inspection, some went to clean the bathroom while others inside the barracks and outside the barracks. This led to satisfaction for the instructors as they saw that we were improving day by day. However, it was a challenge because there were different ethnicities and backgrounds. Throughout training, we had to learn how to work with each other, communicate, and understand each other. It took an eternity; however, it was not impossible.

To conclude, recruit training tested me both physically and mentally, which brought me to my breaking point. Different challenges I faced, I wouldn't have gotten through without the support of my shipmates; they taught me how to work as a team to get the job done quickly and also to trust others.





# The Best Warriors of 2023

Lt Byron Galicia

In 2013, the Coast Guard Iron Man competition was replaced by the Coast Guard Best Warrior competition to encourage more participation at the sub-unit level. This event is geared at bringing out the best and fiercest individuals representing their unit who will compete against each other to be called the "Best Warrior" at the end of the event and maintain the title throughout the year. The event is not an individual competition but based on the team (squad level); the basic element in which the CG is expected to fight. The selection of the teams is based solely on the discretion of the unit commanders who are also responsible for assigning a team captain to oversee the team's preparation for the event. Team captains have approximately two months to study their teammates and identify strong and not-so-strong areas allowing them to



develop the best strategy possible to successfully engage and overcome each event.

The competition aims to identify the best fighting elements of the security forces by testing their physical capabilities, teamwork, leadership, and fighting spirit under rigorous conditions by competing against select teams who are equally trained, motivated, and eager to claim the title of "Best Warrior". Day one of the three-day event begins with a Run-Swim-run and obstacle course event consisting of a 1.5-mile run, 500-meter pool swim, 1-mile run and finishes with the obstacle course. In the afternoon teams compete in the CGPFT which consists of a two-minute push-up, two-minute sit-up, dips, pull-ups, and a two-mile run. Each discipline is scored at maximum effort. Day two consists of a One-mile ocean swim and a 2-mile run. Upon completing the swim, competitors



# The Best Warriors of 2023



will then run 2 miles on a prescribed route. In the afternoon teams meet once again to undertake the Coast Guard Medley. This event includes doing four laps along a 1-kilometer route. Each lap will include the movement of a burden with the final lap culminating with a rope climb. The final day consists of a Swim-trek-and-shoot event, this event consists of a 500-meter swim in full combat gear. Upon finishing the swim, teams pick up a stretcher with a burden

and carry it on a 1-mile trek finishing at the range. At the range, competitors sprint for 200 meters to collect their ammunition then sprint back onto the range where the shooting event takes place. Teams have 2 minutes to engage a target at 15 meters with a 9mm pistol. The afternoon event marks the culmination of the competition with teams engaging the Crucible. This event is the highlight of the competition and might well determine the overall winner. It includes several events that require speed, strength, flexibility, stamina, and agility not to mention teamwork and leadership on specific events such as the obstacle course, chain carry, log carry, tire flip/drag and rope climb.

This year, the Coast Guard Special Operations Group demonstrated great leadership skills and excellent teamwork allowing them to claim the title of "Best Warrior Champions 2023" Congratulations on a job well done.





# Sea Cadets Debut

## *Coast Guard 18th Anniversary Ceremony*





# Sea Cadets

## *Belize City Christmas Parade*







# COASTIES FAMILIES GO BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY TOO



**SUPPORT**

**UNITY**

**COMMITMENT**



# Sailor of the Month



**1466 SeaMan  
Findley Skeen**

## October

The Coast Guard Sailor of the month for October 2023 is none other than Seaman Findley Skeen. His commitment to the job has been outstanding, he is determined to be successful within the organization. SN Skeen F keeps improving and expanding his knowledge, he is eager to learn and improve in his technicalities. He performs to the best of his ability and not settling for a mediocre standard speaks a lot of SN Skeen F. SN Skeen F has completed his Petty Officer Class Three course and is due promotion, therefore I believe that when his time comes to perform his duties I trust that he will make the best decisions and will keep the standards of the Belize Coast Guard to highest.



**1339 Seaman  
Michael Perera**

## November

The Coast Guard Sailor of the month for November 2023 is none other than SN Michael Perera. His commitment to the job has been outstanding, he is determined to be successful within the organization, prove of this is the outstanding job done at his previous deployment at Half Moon Caye, which gave as a result a bust of 1118 market clean conchs which were out of season. SN Perera keeps improving and expanding his knowledge in the working environment, he is eager to learn and improve in his technicalities. SN Perera always performs to the best of his ability and not settling for a mediocre standard speaks a lot of him.

The Coast Guard Sailor of the Month of December 2023, 1568 SN Nashen Ysaguirre, having four (04) year of service with the Belize Coast Guard. He continues to provide great contribution to Sector North being one of the sailors readily available for any unforeseen missions. During this year he was nominated sailor of the month.

He has positively contributed and volunteered with the cadet's program since 2022, teaching them how to march and recently during the summer of 2023, he was an instructor teaching over 100 kids both from Belize City and Belmopan how to swim. Sn Ysaguirre is a true example of a sailor not settling and being comfortable with his roles and responsibilities of a seaman. He also attended the first infantry training held in Louisiana Army National Guard at Fort Johnson, Louisiana from May 24 to June 14. Once again showing his diversity, stepping outside his comfort zone. Since he has been posted within Alpha Coy, he has gained great exposure on roles on deployments, base duties, joint operations and keeping an operational readiness throughout the year. He has no record of absenteeism, late, call in or any disciplinary action within the Sector. Rather is referred to, as one of the sailors that can be called upon.



**1568 SEAMAN  
NASHEN YSAGUIRRE**

## December





Unit of the Year  
Sector South



Commandants Award  
Lcdr R Good



Sailor of the Year  
PO1 D Montero



Coxswain of the Year  
PO2 J Castro



Engineer of the Year  
SNJ Grey



H Emmanuel Award  
D Vasquez



Seaman of the Year  
SN N Ysaguirre



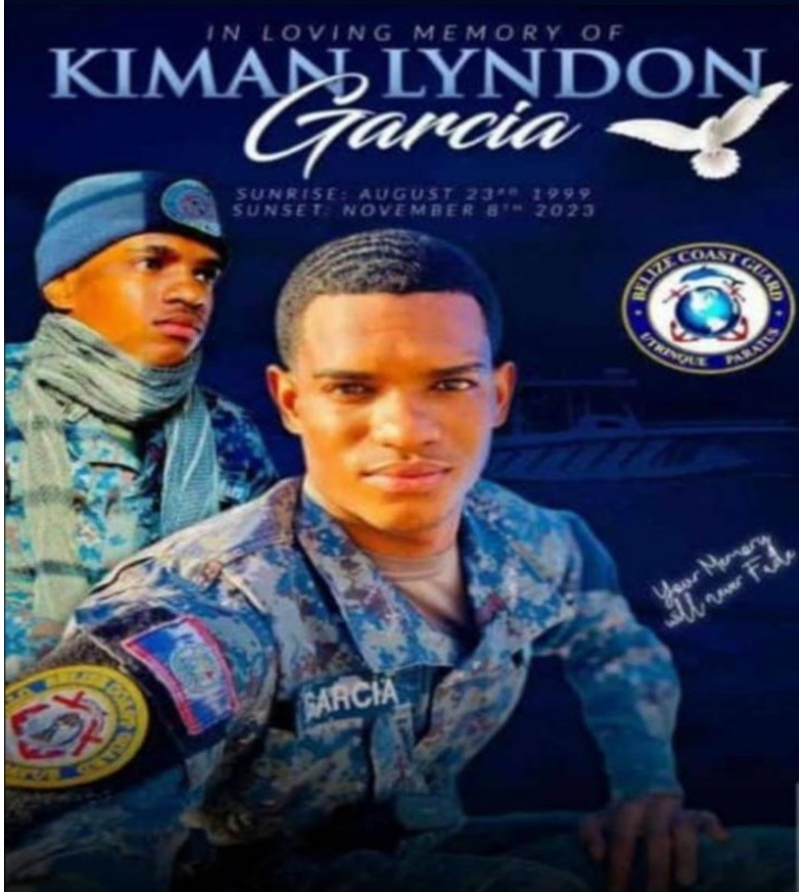
Plt Cdr of the Year  
PO2 G Chan

# “ An Ode for a Fallen Sailor”

*Captain Gregory Soberanis*

*In memory of*

**Kiman Garcia**



Flag at half mast, all heads bowed low,  
Hearts are all heavy, our steps become  
slow.

A brother, a friend is being laid to rest,  
He was loved and respected, one of  
Coast Guards' best.

We salute and honour your heart to  
serve,

Your commitment to duty; the respect  
you deserve.

A sailor at heart who was born for the  
sea,

A maritime warrior of the highest pedigree.

You stood watch over the nation, that families may sleep,

A true Guardsman who patrolled our waters deep.

You lived each day by our ethos and creed,

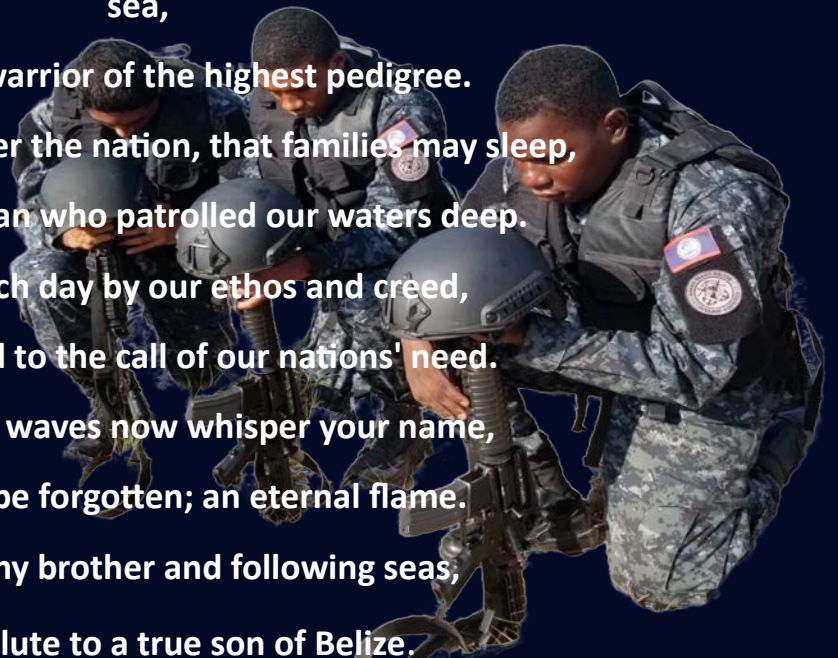
And responded to the call of our nations' need.

The winds and waves now whisper your name,

You'll never be forgotten; an eternal flame.

Fair winds my brother and following seas;

A final salute to a true son of Belize.







# VISION

To create an apex institution highly professional, motivated, trained and resourced, capable of enforcing maritime laws and projecting sea power to the limits of our sea spaces and support maritime operations locally and regionally.



To protect Belize Maritime Spaces from threats, both foreign and domestic, by providing maritime security, safety and protection of our people, industries and natural resources through military, law enforcement and humanitarian operations.