



CAPE COD COMMERCIAL  
**FISHERMEN'S  
ALLIANCE**

**Small Boats. Big Ideas.**

May 5, 2021

**RADM Thomas G. Allan, Jr.**  
Commander  
First Coast Guard District  
408 Atlantic Ave  
Boston, MA. 02110

Dear Admiral Allan,

Commercial fishing is one of our country's most essential jobs, and one of the most dangerous. Local captains and crew have said countless times over the last half century that the most treacherous part of their day is getting across the perilous Chatham Bar.

The possibility that this journey to work will become even more dangerous has prompted us to write and express support for the Town of Chatham's concern regarding the Coast Guard's decision to downgrade operational capabilities of Small Boat Station Chatham.

For 30 years, the Fishermen's Alliance has been a member-based, non-profit organization that works to build lasting solutions to protect our ecosystem and the future of our fisheries. The Fishermen's Alliance represents 150 fishing businesses and more than 300 fishing families, making our organization the leading voice for commercial fishermen on Cape Cod.

Local small-boat fishermen have always depended on the Coast Guard's bravery and knowledge of a rapidly changing coast line. Our fleets and the men and women of the Coast Guard have a shared past in Chatham and fishermen have spoken to local school groups about the Coast Guard's 'Finest Hours' and how the bar remains unpredictable.

That makes worrisome the Coast Guard's decisions to downgrade Station Chatham's status from Surf Station to Heavy Weather Station and replace the surf capable 42-foot Near-shore Lifeboats with 45-foot Response Boat Medium, limited to 8-foot seas, 30 knots of wind and no surf.

**Celebrating 30 years. Navigating 30 more.**

---

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** • Andrew Baler • Richard Banks • Gregory Bilezikian • Charles Borkoski • Greg Connors • Beau Gribbin  
Eric Hesse • Gwen Holden Kelly • Barry LaBar • Tim Linnell • Kurt Martin • Brian Sherin

---

1566 Main Street, Chatham, MA 02633 (508) 945-2432 info@capecodfishermen.org [www.capecodfishermen.org](http://www.capecodfishermen.org)

Station Chatham is well positioned to provide needed response to a significant area, home to the largest commercial fishing fleet on Cape Cod and thousands of recreational boaters and transients from throughout New England.

Chatham town officials have said the shared data regarding surf conditions collected to change the station's status, and remove the surf boats, differs greatly from that of those transiting the area. Commercial fishermen who often traverse the bar also say the number of "surf days" the Coast Guard has calculated falls far short of their experiences. For years, the Coast Guard solicited information from vessels transiting the area, but that effort decreased in recent times. Conditions in local inlets (Nauset and Chatham) can change quickly so timely information is vital. Chatham has always been dependent on the fishing industry; the fleet is dependent on the Coast Guard. We hope you value our on-the-water perspective and restore the station's status and the vessels that match the unique, changeable shoreline of the peninsula.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Pappalardo  
Chief Executive Officer

