

U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Fourteenth Coast Guard District

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November 26, 2024

Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council  
ATTN: Mr. William Sword and Ms. Kitty Simonds  
1164 Bishop Street Suite 1400  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chairman Sword and Executive Director Simonds:

I appreciate the opportunity to introduce myself to the Council earlier this year and share my vision of United States Coast Guard District 14. I congratulate the Council again on the occasion of your 200<sup>th</sup> meeting. Thank you also for your letter dated October 7, 2024, requesting the permanent stationing of a U.S. Coast Guard cutter in American Samoa, as well as your request for U.S. Coast Guard assistance in making Master Certification Courses more accessible to the American Samoa Longline fleet.

Cutter homeporting decisions are not made at the Coast Guard District Commander level. However, I have inquired and confirmed that the Coast Guard does not intend to pursue American Samoa as a cutter homeport location due to the substantial cost and logistics challenges noted in previous Council correspondence. I continue to ensure that the appropriate Area and Headquarters staff offices are aware of the Council's continued interest for consideration in future homeporting discussions.

Beyond permanent homeporting, I assure the Council that American Samoa is an operational priority for District 14. This includes Coast Guard statutory missions in support of American Samoa and as a strategic location for support to deployed cutters and aircraft operating internationally. To that end, I charged s my operational planning team to explore opportunities for additional cutter patrols operating out of American Samoa in 2025. My representative to the Council will keep you updated as the planning progresses.

Regarding the Council's request for assistance with making Master Certification Courses more assessable to the American Samoa longline fleet, the current regulations stipulate that professional mariner licenses are not required for commercial fishing vessels less than 200 gross tons which includes the majority of the American Samoa longline fleet. I applaud the Council's interest in improving the American Samoa commercial fishing fleet professionalism and safety. Unfortunately, this type of training is not available through the U.S. Coast Guard but is available from private training facilities throughout the U.S mainland. I understand that Guam Division of Aquatic & Wildlife Resources recently contracted for private professional mariner licensing training for its staff members using grant resources. Perhaps this is an option for American Samoa in partnership with the local cannery.

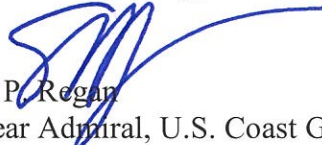


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In addition, my staff indicates that the American Samoa Government previously brought in private trainers to organize a captain's course for local mariners in American Samoa. Afterwards, the Coast Guard flew in staff from the Honolulu Regional Exam Center to offer direct merchant mariner application support. Should you bring third-party instructors out again, I may be able to coordinate a similar visit to support the licensing process.

I appreciate your leadership within the Council and your steadfast support of the U.S. Coast Guard and territorial governments. My point of contact is Mr. Marc Stegman, who can be reached at [marc.d.stegman@uscg.mil](mailto:marc.d.stegman@uscg.mil).

Sincerely,



S. P. Regan  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard  
Commander, Fourteenth Coast Guard District

