



*The US Coast Guard's Sikorsky HH-60J Jayhawk started replacing the HH-3F Pelican in the medium-range recovery (MRR) role in 1991. The helicopter has a cruise speed of 135 kts (250 km/h) and an operational radius of 260 nm (482 km).*

southwest of Seattle. It is the northern-most station in Group Astoria, having been established in 1974, although there has been a rescue facility in the area since the mid-1800s. The station averages more than 200 SAR events each year.

Coast Guard Station Cape Disappointment is located at the mouth of the Columbia River and is the largest Coast Guard SAR station on the northwestern coast, operating in what are arguably the most treacherous waters along the mainland Pacific coast. The station responds to close to one SAR call per day, on average. Not only the largest, Cape Disappointment is the oldest SAR station within the 13th Coast Guard District, co-located with the oldest lighthouse on this stretch of coast. Cape Disappointment Light marks the north side of the Columbia River Bar. Less than two miles to the northwest

is North Head lighthouse, which provides a beacon for those making a northern approach to the Columbia River Bar. With a complement of 38 people, the third and southern-most station in Group Astoria is Station Tillamook Bay, located in northern Oregon in the town of Garibaldi. It also averages 200 SAR calls annually.

Each of these stations is thus located in the immediate vicinity of the region's most treacherous waters, and with Air Station Astoria centrally situated within the sector's area of responsibility, the Coast Guard is well positioned to respond within minutes to most distress calls and to render assistance day or night in almost any kind of weather. The Astoria Group/Air Station occupies some 22 acres and its buildings provide 10,000 sq ft (929 sq m) of space that houses more than 100 active-duty personnel. Sixty-five are assigned to the station as air crew-

men, pilots, mechanics and rescue swimmers, while the remainder is assigned to the Group.

Guarding the coast involves a multitude of missions. In addition to saving individuals under threat from the elements, the Coast Guard is charged with protecting property, shipping, marine resources, economic interests and the nation itself. To facilitate this, Group Astoria provides supply, administration, medical, naval and civil engineering, communications and other support functions to all of the units stationed in Northwest Oregon and Southwest Washington.

On average, each of the three Jayhawks flies 700 hours per year. In addition, some 100 hours are logged between the three helicopters in support of the Advanced Swimmer School. The majority of the air station's workload, however, consists of training aircrews in procedures and