

Acquisition Update: Coast Guard Activates Final Rescue 21 Coastal Tower

Feb. 12, 2015

The Coast Guard activated the final tower of the coastal phase of the Rescue 21 communications system Feb. 3, 2015, which will improve search and rescue capability near the Pamlico Sound in North Carolina.

The final site is near Alligator Canal in Swan Quarter, North Carolina, where four rivers feed into the Pamlico Sound, creating an area of high marine traffic. Rescue 21 will help the Coast Guard to quickly respond to emergencies in the busy waters.

The coastal phase of Rescue 21 upgrades search and rescue communications along the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts of the contiguous United States, as well as the Great Lakes, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. The Coast Guard installed over 250 Rescue 21 towers in the coastal phase, covering approximately 260,000 square nautical miles along the coast.

The Coast Guard will continue deployment of improved disaster recovery equipment to island sectors throughout 2015 to support the Rescue 21 coastal system.

The Rescue 21 program team has reduced costs throughout the deployment of the coastal phase by exploiting existing infrastructure where possible. Instead of constructing a new facility at Alligator Canal, the project installed the Rescue 21 equipment on a Navy tower. Using the available site saved money and avoided requirements for conducting environmental and other reviews that would have been required prior to building a new tower near the Swan Quarter National Wildlife Refuge.

The Coast Guard is deploying the Rescue 21 system in Alaska and along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers with capabilities designed to meet the geographical demands in those areas. Installations in those regions should be complete in 2017.



