



## **CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL**

**TO**

### **LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JEROME C. COBB, II UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant Commander COBB is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight during the early morning of 1 November 1979 while serving as pilot and aircraft commander of Coast Guard HH-52A 1426 engaged in the perilous rescue of two seaman from the M/T BURMAH AGATE and twenty seamen from the M/V MIMOSA, both of which were burning out of control following a collision five miles southeast of Galveston, Texas. Dispatched from Coast Guard Air Station Houston, Lieutenant Commander COBB piloted the helicopter to the scene, arriving at BURMAH AGATE moments after an explosion lit up the sky. The entire ship was engulfed in towering flames except for a small portion of the port side where two men were located on the aircastle railing. Realizing that the tanker could explode again at any moment, Lieutenant Commander COBB quickly maneuvered the aircraft to a precise position over the men, despite towering flames, billowing smoke and turbulence created by intense heat. The two men were then hoisted to safety. Proceeding to MIMOSA, which was still underway with fires raging on the upper deck, forward hold, and superstructure, Lieutenant Commander COBB, although hampered by numerous obstructions, blowing smoke and a lack of visual reference, skillfully positioned the helicopter over an extremely narrow port bridge wing while 3 hoists were performed to rescue 10 persons. Disembarking the twelve survivors on a nearby oil platform, Lieutenant Commander COBB again returned to MIMOSA where 6 more crewmen were hoisted to safety. With only a firefighting team remaining on board MIMOSA, Lieutenant Commander COBB directed the helicopter back to BURMAH AGATE to search for survivors. When the fires aboard MIMOSA again raged out of control, Lieutenant Commander COBB discharged the six survivors on the oil platform and returned to the now erratically turning vessel. Four more persons were then hoisted to safety and flown to the oil platform. Because of a critically low fuel state, the helicopter was then forced to depart the scene. Lieutenant Commander COBB's innovative actions and expert aeronautical skills throughout this mission resulted in the rescue of twenty-two men. His courage, sound judgment and unwavering devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.