



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE COAST GUARD COMMENDATION MEDAL**

TO

**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER MICHAEL M. VICKERS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant Commander VICKERS is cited for outstanding achievement while serving as Pilot in Command of CGNR 6544. Shortly after midnight, on 8 September 2019, the M/V GOLDEN RAY rapidly capsized in St. Simons Sound casting her 24 crewmen into seemingly unsurvivable conditions. The 656-foot cargo ship, carrying 4,200 vehicles, listed dangerously to port, caught fire, and was at risk of imminent rollover. Arriving at the darkened scene, Lieutenant Commander VICKERS surveyed the stricken ship, locating two survivors trapped in the bridge and in immediate peril of falling over 70 feet into railings below. Directing CGNR 6544 into a 150-foot hover, he prepared his aircrew to deploy the rescue swimmer. Once the rescue swimmer was aboard the vessel, Lieutenant Commander VICKERS began synchronizing the overall rescue effort. Coordinating communication between two helicopters, two Coast Guard small boats, and responding civilian vessels, he maintained a strict head count of survivors and sent aerial imagery to focus rescue efforts. As CGNR 6544 reached critical fuel levels, he calmly continued to distribute vital information while monitoring aircraft parameters. When the rescue swimmer returned to CGNR 6544 with the vessel's Master, Lieutenant Commander VICKERS interviewed the survivor to discern the location of four crewmen trapped deep below decks, triggering an advanced rescue effort. His dedication, judgment, and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

The Operational Distinguishing Device is authorized.