



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

TO

**GARY W. WOOD
AVIATION MACHINIST'S MATE SECOND CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer WOOD is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight while serving in the capacity of aircrewman and hoist operator onboard HH52A helicopter CG1379 on the night of 24 December 1983. Petty Officer WOOD vectored the pilots to maneuver the helicopter into a position to hoist 4 men from their drifting 28-foot sportfisherman 20 nautical miles southeast of Marathon, Florida. The first hoist attempt was unsuccessful due to the wind conditions. Problems were then encountered with the second attempt when the vessel slid down the face of a wave, taking all the slack out of the cable and endangering the man sitting in the basket inside the cockpit of the vessel. Petty Officer WOOD's quick reactions in letting out additional cable prevented any danger to the man. After those two hoist attempts, Petty Officer WOOD advised the pilots that due to winds gusting up to 50 knots and 10 to 12 foot seas, a direct hoist from the vessel would not be a safe operation. After discussing various options with the pilots, a water hoist was chosen, and Petty Officer WOOD again vectored the helicopter into position. He further demonstrated his outstanding capabilities during the third hoist when the victim tried to jump from the basket into the helicopter. Petty Officer WOOD instantly grabbed the man's collar and pulled him aboard. Petty Officer WOOD's actions and aeronautical skills were instrumental in the rescue of four persons. His courage, judgment, and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.