



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

TO

**ROBERT J. HANNAFORD
AVIATION SURVIVALMAN THIRD CLASS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Petty Officer HANNAFORD is cited for outstanding achievement in aerial flight on the night of 31 December 1990 and early morning hours of 1 January 1991 while serving as rescue swimmer of Coast Guard HH-3F 1489 engaged in the search and rescue of three men of the fishing Vessel SEA BIRD which had capsized and sunk in 8-12 foot seas 45 nautical miles southeast of Cape Fear, North Carolina. Dispatched from Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City, the helicopter flew to the scene and commenced search operations using night vision goggles and forward-looking infrared sensor. Due to the reduced visibility in rain showers and an inoperative LORAN navigator the survivors were not located until nearly six hours after SEA BIRD sank. The survivors were hoisted from 70 degree breaking seas and 45 degree, 35 knot winds. Petty Officer HANNAFORD treated the three survivors for hypothermia using a thermal recovery capsule and blankets. The survivors were flown to an awaiting ambulance in Wilmington, North Carolina, and taken to a local hospital for treatment. Petty Officer HANNAFORD's care and dedication were instrumental in the rescue of three men. His dedication, judgement and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

The Operational Distinguishing Device is authorized.