



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

TO

**LIEUTENANT (JUNIOR GRADE) DANIEL B. CATHELL
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant Junior Grade CATHELL is cited for outstanding achievement while serving as Co-Pilot aboard Coast Guard helicopter CG-6033 the night of 7 September 2008. He courageously navigated through ferocious winds of Hurricane IKE to rescue four people on the stricken fishing vessel MIDNIGHT SUN, located only 50 miles from the eye of the storm, when they reported that they were taking on water and would not survive the night. Using outstanding navigation skills while enduring weather induced vertigo, he bravely navigated and took turns flying the aircraft through rapidly deteriorating weather conditions with unpredictable wind shear and gusts reaching 75 knots, and severe turbulence that frequently made the flight instruments impossible to read because of extreme aircraft buffeting. He was able to locate the vessel despite limited visibility in total darkness and hurricane driven rain. Demonstrating phenomenal Crew Resource Management, he provided constant safety calls throughout the flight, keeping the Aircraft Commander apprised of altitude deviations, fuel state and proximity to obstacles and rogue waves. During a successful retrieval of a survivor from the hurricane whipped waters, he quickly ascertained that CG-6033 was being pushed back over the vessel by the hurricane force winds. Aware that the survivor and rescue swimmer were still below the aircraft and could possibly be dragged through the rigging, he quickly and assertively took the controls and maneuvered safely away from the vessel. While on-scene with the vessel, he maintained continual communications with the vessel's crew, providing a reassuring and calming influence while conveying the necessary steps to ensure their survival. Lieutenant Junior Grade CATHELL's 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.