



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

TO

**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DONALD K. STROTHER
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Lieutenant Commander STROTHER is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on 12-13 March 1993 while serving as aircraft commander aboard Coast Guard HH-3F CGNR 1438. On the afternoon of 12 March 1993, Lieutenant Commander STROTHER and the crew of CGNR 1438 launched on the first of a series of extremely difficult search and rescue cases, beginning with a medical evacuation from the fishing vessel NIGHT RAMBLER. After a 410-mile flight from Clearwater, Florida to the Yucatan channel off Cuba, he executed a demanding hoist from the bow of the vessel as it was battered by 15-foot seas. The next morning, as the "Storm of the Century" raged across the Gulf of Mexico, he fought 45-knot winds and 35-foot seas to hoist four persons from a life raft after they abandoned their sinking sailboat. Hours later, Lieutenant Commander STROTHER launched again and skillfully delivered a dewatering pump to the merchant vessel MISS BEHOLDEN, saving it from sinking. Exhausted, and still searching for a missing crewman from the fishing vessel VILCO 10, he quickly diagnosed a serious in-flight emergency, executed the appropriate emergency procedures, and piloted the crippled aircraft to a safe landing. Lieutenant Commander STROTHER'S actions and aeronautical skill were instrumental in the saving of five lives, one merchant vessel, and a Coast Guard helicopter and crew. 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.