



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
HAS AWARDED THE

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

TO

COMMANDER SCOTT M. SANBORN
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
FOR

EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT FROM 24 AUGUST TO 8 SEPTEMBER 2017

GIVEN THIS 29th DAY OF July 2019



Karl L. Schultz

Karl L. Schultz
Admiral U. S. Coast Guard
Commandant

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

TO

COMMANDER SCOTT M. SANBORN

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Commander SANBORN is cited for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight from 24 August to 8 September 2017 in response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey. Quickly recognizing the dire need for air rescues, he bravely launched single-piloted into instrument meteorological conditions with 200-300 foot ceilings, less than one mile visibility and 50 kt winds. Flying a degraded MH65 aircraft, he deftly navigated 14 miles between numerous severe thunderstorm bands to rescue three aircrew surrounded by floodwaters on an elevated helipad before hovering in a flooded parking lot for another stranded rescue swimmer. Due to the waist-deep water, he precisely positioned the aircraft at the water's surface to prevent the loss of the aircraft while unloading aircrew. In the following days, Commander SANBORN flew 14 hours of rescue operations in ceilings as low as 100 feet with one quarter mile of visibility, navigating between towers and over high-voltage power lines to rescue citizens in distress. During a perilous night rescue with a critical fuel state and deteriorating weather, he expeditiously combined the rescue of 11 people who had been without food or water for several days and needed immediate medical care, in just three basket hoists. During the hoists, Commander SANBORN used 100% of the aircraft's available power to prevent crashing into trees dangerously below while hovering at the maximum weight allowed, despite minimal visual references and turbulent 30-knot wind gusts. The loss of aircraft stabilization system due to severe water intrusion and violent motion of the aircraft during the hoists made maintaining a stable hover as he hoisted the survivors to safety an aeronautical feat. Commander SANBORN's actions, aeronautical skill and heroism were instrumental in the rescue of 24 people. His courage, judgment, and devotion to duty in the face of hazardous flying conditions are most heartily commended and are in keeping of the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.

