



Fish and Game's PATROL VESSELS



The California Department of Fish and Game has state-of-the-art vessels that patrol our ocean waters, 220,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean out to 200 miles off the coast, and 1100 miles of coastline, including every city port. These are not biological research boats, they are law enforcement tools. Game Wardens run these boats and run across anything and everything. Game Wardens operating multi-million dollar vessels come with great responsibility. These boats belong to the people of the state of California. Here are some features of the boats Wardens use to protect fisheries and the public:



The five specialized vessels specially built for DFG are 58 feet long, high speed, foil supported catamarans. They carry an 18 foot zodiac Hurricane skiff with an A-frame launch system which allows deployment with fewer staff in most weather conditions. They have a cruise speed of 25 knots, from their twin Caterpillar engines and they also have two generators for auxiliary power. They carry 1200 gallons of fuel and have a range of over 500 miles. They carry 330 gallons of water and have 7 bunks. One of the vessels even has a water maker which is useful if out for multiple days or running numerous dive operations. They are equipped with state-of-the-art Furuno electronics at both upper and lower stations. Their electronics are integrated and allow for linking with computer run navigation and tracking systems. Their communication equipment includes the most advanced Digital Select Calling (DCS) scramble able VHF radios with GPS input Individual Marine Maritime Safety Identification System (IMMSIS) which allows each vessel to send out an exact location at the push of button. The skiffs are also equipped with this feature. Some of the vessels have aircraft radios as well which allow them to speak to USCG or DFG planes. The vessels also have DFG low band radios and a SSB (Single Side Band) which allows communication for 1000's of miles. Each vessel is equipped with night vision and in addition to the weapons the officers have, carries a police shotgun and M1-A assault rifle. Each of the five vessels are designed to allow mobile pods to be placed on deck in front of the skiff (research labs or whatever if necessary) and if necessary the skiff and chocks can be removed and the entire deck can be used to transport equipment or personnel.

Each vessel has standard safety equipment to carry up to 16 people, but some vessels are prepared to carry 25. All of the skippers are USCG licensed and certified 100 ton masters and some of the crews are trained at that level. Each vessel is assigned a Patrol Lieutenant supervising boarding officers to safely run the boat. Most of the boats have specially trained divers assigned to them. Each



diver must attend and complete a difficult diving "academy" sponsored by NAUI divers, usually at a research facility on Catalina Island. Much of this training most peace officers do not have. The Game Warden does not receive any additional pay for working on patrol boats.

The patrol boats are part of the States assets for Marine Patrol capabilities as well as part of the ongoing Homeland Defense assets to the State of California. Right after 9-11 we had three of the vessels working directly with the USCG in LA/LB and San Francisco as part of the Homeland Security efforts. We worked 24 hours a day for several months providing necessary functions as needed. (vessel escorts, target protection, patrol functions and visibility, etc.) Unless something has changed, we are still the largest State owned marine port and offshore asset for State Homeland Security.



The State of California, with these vessels, has the best state-of-the-art equipment and best trained peace officers to protect the ocean from Oregon to Mexico. The loss of Game Warden positions has now rendered our patrol boats ineffective. Already they are in dock more than they are out on patrol; a tragic loss of opportunity for Homeland Security, public safety, and not fair to that which has no voice – our natural resources and fisheries.