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"Sabby the Lingo?" Maritime Language - VII

by VINCENT T. PICA, II
Division Captain, Division 18 (ISR) - United States
Coast Guard Auxiliary

As noted prior, each discipline has a language and that language conveys competency to the listener. This column is part of a series of maritime vocabulary words. So you can sound like the salty ol' mariner you are... We'll run enough of these to get the major concepts and phraseology from Alpha to Zulu in front of you!



C - Charlie

International Meaning: "Yes" or "affirmative". Change of Course

- **Cat's Skin** - Light, warm wind on surface of sea.
- **Cat's Paws** - A ruffle on the water indicating a breath of wind during a calm.
- **Chafe** - Abrasion, wear or damage to a line caused by rubbing against another object.
- **Chafing Gear** - Canvas, cloth, leather, tubing, rubber or other material placed around a line or cable to protect it from wear and abrasion
- **Channel Fever** - Seaman's name for the excitement on board as the ship approaches her destination, giving the crew some liberty ashore.
- **Chandler** - A person who deals in the selling of provisions, dried stores, supplies, equipment, etc.
- **Chandlery** - A marine hardware store.
- **Chearly** - An old expression meaning heartily or quickly.
- **Check** - To ease away slowly, as in a line, sheet, or falls of a tackle.
- **Checking** - Slacking a rope smartly, carefully and in small amounts
- **Cheese Down** - To coil down the tail of a line on deck to present a neat appearance.
- **Chine** - The angle of intersection between the topsides and the bottom of a boat. In a hard-chined boat this angle is pronounced.
- **Clear** - (1) Free, not entangled (2) To finalize all formalities in a Customs House.
- **Clear for Running** - A sheet or halyard coiled so that it will run out quickly without becoming tangled.
- **Clear the Decks** - Remove unnecessary things from the decks usually in preparation for oncoming bad weather.
- **Cleat** - A fitting of wood or metal, secured to the deck, mast, or spar, with two horns around which ropes are made fast. The classic cleat to which lines are belayed is approximately anvil-shaped; verb - to belay.
- **Clock Calm** - Absolutely calm weather with a perfectly smooth sea.
- **Close Aboard** - Close alongside; very near; in close proximity to.
- **Cockpit Sole** - Floor of the cockpit.
- **Cockswain** - The steersman of a boat, in direct charge of the crew if any. Pronounced "Cock-sun."
- **Coil** - To lay a line down in circular turns, known as fakes, or to arrange in loops so it can be stowed. Line is sold by the coil, which contain 200 fathoms.

More in the weeks ahead...!

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux2008@aol.com or go direct to Lisa Etter, who is in charge of new members matters, at FSO-PS@emcg.us and we will help you "get in this thing..."

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