

**Department of Historic Resources  
Reconnaissance Level Survey**

**Accomack**

**DHR Id#: 001-0027-0100**

**Resource Identification**

Property Name(s): ..... Wallops Beach Coast Guard Station {Historic}  
 WFF # V-065 - WEMA Recreational Facility  
 {Current}  
 Property Date: ..... 1936  
 Address(s): ..... Island Road {Current}  
 County/Independent City: Accomack  
 Vicinity of: ..... Chincoteague  
 State, Zip: ..... Virginia 23337  
 USGS Quad Name: ..... CHINCOTEAGUE WEST  
 Surrounding area: ..... Transportation Corridor

**National Register Eligibility Status**

Property is Historic (50 years or older)

**Resource Description**

Ownership Status: ..... Public - Federal  
 Acreage: ..... 0.5

**Primary Resource Exterior Component Description:**

<u>Component</u>	<u>Comp Type/Form</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Material Treatment</u>
Chimneys	Chimneys - None		
Foundation	Foundation - Raised	Concrete	Foundation - Parged
Porch	Porch - 1-story, 3-bay	Wood	Porch - Post, Square
Roof	Roof - Gable, front	Wood	Roof - Shingle
Structural System	Structural System - Not Visible		
Windows	Windows - Double-hung	Wood	Windows - 6/6

Site Description: ..... Located in a level area on the North end of Wallops Island, to the immediate southwest of V-70 (001-0027-0101).

<b>WUZIT Count:</b>		
<u>No.</u>	<u>Wuzit Types</u>	<u>Historic?</u>
1	Coast Guard Station	Historic

<b>NR Resource Count:</b>
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***Individual Resource Information***

*WUZIT:* ..... Coast Guard Station

<i>Est. Date of Construction:</i> .... 1936 {Owner/written data}	<i>Accessed?</i> ..... Yes
<i>Primary Resource?</i> ..... Yes	<i>Number of Stories:</i> ..... 2.5
<i>Architectural Style:</i> ..... Colonial Revival	<i>Condition:</i> ..... Fair
<i>Interior Plan Type:</i> ..... Central Passage, Double Pile	<i>Threats to Resource:</i> ..... Demolition Neglect

*Description:* Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station is an example of the Colonial Revival style popular in the United States from 1880 to 1955. The building exhibits identifying features of the style including a symmetrical facade with balanced windows, a centered front door, and windows with double-hung sashes and multi-paned glazing. The east (front) elevation is symmetrical and five bays wide. The building rests on a raised concrete basement. A single three-over-three double hung wood sash window is found near the southeast and northeast corners. A set of replacement wood steps leads to a landing and the front door. This access is sheltered by a porch, supported by four sets of paired columns. The porch is surmounted by a shallow wood-shingled shed roof. At the second floor level are found five, equally spaced six-over-six double hung windows. The entire façade is covered with wood shingles, as are all other elevations. Three gable dormers, each with a single six-over-six double hung window, are placed symmetrically within the roof. The west elevation is similar to the front, but with a few variations. At the basement level, two three-over-three double hung wood sash windows are paired closely together at the southwest corner. A single three-over-three double hung window is found at the northwest corner. At the first floor level, three six-over-six double hung windows are symmetrically placed within the elevation. Two smaller, six-over-six double hung sash windows are placed between the larger centrally placed window, and the larger window at the northwest corner. At the second floor level, five windows identical to those in the front elevation may be found. A wooden water table is located in a horizontal line at the base of the windows. As with the front elevation, three gable dormers are placed symmetrically within the roof. A brick chimney pierces the roof near the northwest corner of the roof. The south gable end also exhibits four three-over-three double hung sash windows at the basement level. Three six-over-six double hung windows are symmetrically placed at the first and second floor levels. A wooden water table marks the base of the second floor windows. The roofline is marked by projecting verge boards. Near the apex of the roof is placed a four-light lunette window. The north gable end is similar in treatment to the south gable end. At the basement level, three three-over-three double hung sash windows begin at the northeast corner and move eastward. On the first floor level, two six-over-six double hung sash windows are placed in the first and second bays from the northeast corner. In the third bay, a doorway and single six-over-six double hung sash window pierce the façade. These are surmounted by a porch supported by wooden brackets. At the second floor level are three six-over-six double hung sash windows, again with a water table. Near the apex of the roof is placed a four-light lunette window.

The steps leading to the front porch have been replaced and contemporary lattice has been placed under the porch. Other changes have not been made to the building. It is in moderately poor exterior condition due to a lack of exterior paint but appears structurally sound with no apparent structural decay or collapse.

***Cemetery Information***

***Bridge Information***

***National Register Eligibility Information***

*Historic Context(s):* ..... Military/Defense

*Historic Time Period(s):*..... Q- World War I to World War II (1914-1945)

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*Significance Statement:* Located along the main access road toward the northern end of Wallops Island, this finely proportioned two-and-one-half story Colonial Revival building originally served as a Coast Guard Station at this location, known as the Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station. No longer in Coast Guard ownership, this building now functions as the Wallops Employee Morale Association (WEMA) Recreational Facility at the Wallops Flight Facility. An associated Observation Tower (001-0027-0101, WFF# V-070), also built in 1936, is located to the immediate northeast. Originally, the building and structure operated in concert, with the Observation Tower providing an elevated platform from which to observe vessels on the Atlantic Ocean to the east.

The Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower were constructed in 1936 as the second government life saving station on Wallops Island, the first being constructed in 1883 by the United States Life-Saving Service. The 1883 station was destroyed by the August 1933 Hurricane. The Coast Guard operated the Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower as an adjunct to the main station on Chincoteague Island. Three Lifeboat Stations, including Wallops Beach, Popes Island, and Assateague Beach, were managed from Chincoteague, along with the Killick Shoal Light Station. From 1936 to 1947, the Station's mission was to rescue sailors from sinking vessels and save cargo from damaged ships. Wallops Beach Station rescue boats reached open sea via a channel and boat basin dug to the rear of the island off Sloop Gut that provided access from Ballast Narrows to open ocean via the Chincoteague inlet. The building was primarily living quarters for the Lifeboat Station. A boardwalk to the building's rear, now gone, connected it to a boathouse and pier. Because the station was located inland from the shore, an observation tower was constructed during the same period.

The Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower have been evaluated as an individual resource. Issues of significance, integrity, and district boundaries were carefully considered. The Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower are eligible for listing in the National Register and the Virginia Landmarks Register as a single site under Criterion A for their association with the Coast Guard on the local and State levels and Criterion C in the area of Architecture on the local level, with the period of significance 1936-1947.

The Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower is eligible under Criterion A for the local and regional association with the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard and its predecessor, the United States Life-Saving Service, played a vital role as protector of shipping and human lives, and consequently the economic development of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Their presence and protection helped establish the area as an important part of Virginia's seafood industry and as part of the Atlantic shipping lane for commerce. The Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower is eligible under Criterion C for its architectural significance as an example of Colonial Revival-style architecture designed and constructed for the Coast Guard mission on the Eastern Shore in the 20th century. The architectural details of the building exemplify the Colonial Revival style of the early 20th century with a symmetrical front facade with balanced windows, a centered front door, and windows with double-hung sashes and multi-paned glazing. The historic resource is not associated with the life of a person significant in the past and is therefore not eligible under Criteria B. The historic resource is not likely to potentially yield information important in prehistory or history and is therefore not eligible under Criteria D.

The Wallops Beach Lifeboat Station and Observation Tower retain the necessary aspects of integrity, including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, to be eligible for the National Register.

***Bibliographic Documentation***

**Department of Historic Resources  
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**DHR Id#: 001-0027-0100**

*Reference #: 1*

*Bibliographic RecordType:* ..... Map  
*Author:* ..... Giffels and Valet  
*Citation Abbreviation:* .....  
*Notes:* ..... Giffels and Valet, Engineers and Architects, Detroit, Michigan, "General Plot Plan- Auxiliary Air Station, Chincoteague, Virginia." 1942.

*Reference #: 2*

*Bibliographic RecordType:* ..... Map  
*Author:* ..... U.S. Navy  
*Citation Abbreviation:* .....  
*Notes:* ..... "Map of Navy Auxiliary Air Station and Naval Ordinance Test Station, Chincoteague, Virginia." 1950.

*Reference #: 3*

*Bibliographic RecordType:* ..... Map  
*Author:* ..... U.S. Navy  
*Citation Abbreviation:* .....  
*Notes:* ..... "Station Development Map- Navy Auxiliary Air Station, Naval Ordinance Test Station, Chincoteague, Virginia." 1953.

*Reference #: 4*

*Bibliographic RecordType:* ..... Book  
*Author:* ..... U.S. Coast Guard  
*Citation Abbreviation:* .....  
*Notes:* ..... Register of the Officers, Vessels, and Stations of the United States Coast Guard. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC. 1918.

*Reference #: 5*

*Bibliographic RecordType:* ..... Book  
*Author:* ..... U.S. Coast Guard  
*Citation Abbreviation:* .....  
*Notes:* ..... Register of Commissioned Officers and Cadets, and Ships and Stations of the U.S. Coast Guard. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC. 1941.

**Ownership Information**

**Graphic Media Documentation**

<u>Medium</u>	<u>Depository ID #</u>	<u>Photo Depository</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Name</u>
35mm B&W	21537	DHR	2004/07/99	Frames 23-27

**Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Events**

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**DHR Id#: 001-0027-0100**

*CRM Event # 1,*

*Cultural Resource Management Event: .....* Reconnaissance Survey  
*Date: .....* 2003/08/08  
*Organization or Person: .....* URS Group  
*VDHR Project ID # Associated with Event: ..* 2003-0571  
*CRM Event Notes or Comments: .....* 7101 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 700  
Bethesda, MD 20814

*CRM Event # 2,*

*Cultural Resource Management Event: .....* Reconnaissance Survey  
*Date: .....* 2004/07/99  
*Organization or Person: .....* URS Group  
*VDHR Project ID # Associated with Event: ..* 2003-0571  
*CRM Event Notes or Comments: .....* 200 Orchard Ridge Drive, Suite 101  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878