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Commodore's Message

David Starr

MEMBERS OF 8TH WESTERN RIVERS REGION

Greetings. Its 2015 and the New Year, along with your new Auxiliary Leadership Team, arrived full of energy, plans, hope, and dreams. As of this writing we are 3 months into this New Year and we are now underway. You may ask "underway to where"? That is a fair question. But it is really not the destination but the journey that is important. At our Fall D-Train in St Louis Commodore Lawrence gave me the opportunity to address the membership about my vision for the 8th Western Rivers Region and I will try to recap some of my comments in this column starting with my watchwords which are:

PROUD ~ PROFICIENT ~ FOCUSED

As far as explaining my "words"... In my mind these 3 words all tie together and go full circle...or in this case "full triangle"...a triangle is a very, very strong structure.

Most important is Proud (Pride). If we are *Proud of and Take Pride in*...then everything else should fall into place.

Pride is not loud or showy. Pride is quiet. Pride is your bearing. Pride yourself in being part of something larger than yourself.

Proud

We should be proud to belong to the USCG Auxiliary. We serve our nation and our community. We are the premier volunteer maritime organization in the world. We save lives! How many volunteer organizations actually save lives? As a member of the Auxiliary you are a lifesaver.

While you may not be the one to pull someone out of the water you may be the one who taught a boating safety class or demonstrated how to wear a life jacket at a boat show, or while walking the dock, or in a school classroom with Coastie.

You may have recruited the person who later trained, qualified, or was the Coxswain, Boat crew, Radio Operator, Pilot, Aircrew, Instructor, or Vessel Examiner who was ultimately responsible for saving or preventing someone from coming in harm's way.

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That is something in which all Auxiliarists, and our families, can be proud.

If we take pride in the Auxiliary then we most likely will wear the uniform correctly. After all, don't we stand a little taller and walk with a little more purpose when wearing the uniform? I think so.

I can also make the argument that we will be better recruiters. How effective of a recruiter would someone be who is not proud of Aux?

Proficient

Being proficient in our Auxiliary program(s) is our "stock in trade". Our reputation, as well as our safety and the safety of those we come into contact with, depends upon our proficiency. Our Response, Prevention, and Logistics programs all demand proficiency.

From the saving of lives, to quality instruction of our members and the public, to the correct and orderly flow of necessary paperwork and the management of our resources...proficiency should be the order of the day.

We should take Pride in our Proficiency, which is an ongoing effort.

Focused

Focus on the task at hand. Focusing, on any task, allows us to better utilize our time and will maximize the experience.

When you are an Auxiliarist...be an Auxiliarist. Focus on the mission, on training (proficiency), on recruiting, on always improving.

Focus on our 4th cornerstone...fellowship. Have fun, relax, and enjoy.

Focus on quality training. Demand it from your Flotilla, Division, District, and National elected and appointed leaders. At the same time be prepared to do your part in helping identify and remedy the area(s) that need attention.

Take the initiative to suggest or develop training exercises, either actual or tabletop. Create scenarios that can involve everyone in your Flotilla, Division, and local community.

Focus on the study of Auxiliary Manual, program materials, and guides.

Focus on Non-Auxiliary activities...family, hobbies, travel, sports, etc. This will freshen the mind and spirit while preventing tunnel vision.

Focus on how Proud you will be when a mission or exercise is successfully completed or a job is well done.

I am *proud* to be your Commodore and will *focus* on becoming *proficient* in doing my best to serve you as members of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Eighth Western Rivers Region.

Semper Paratus,

David Starr

Commodore



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Please send your comments, articles or feedback to:

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We're on the web:

<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?>

WESTERN RIVERS STAFF

Jeff Wilson, Editor

Help Wanted! Western Rivers is looking for people interested in being ADSOs. If interested, contact Jeff Wilson - jeffwilson@prodigy.net

EXCOM 2015

District Commodore - David Starr

Chief of Staff - Frank Reiss

District Captain North - Stephen Bein

District Captain South - Tracy Delaughter

District Captain East - Butch Luhrsen

District Captain West - Vernon Crow

Immediate Past District Commodore - Richard Lawrence

Director of Auxiliary, CDR Kristina M. Dell'Orco

Article sent *directly* to
jeffwilson@prodigy.net

Publication Deadlines

Midnight:

April 1

July 1

October 1

December 31

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William Davis, LMR

Gary Smith, UMR

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Chief of Logistics –

Dan Maresh

Communication

Services – John

Crout

Finance - Dorene

Wendland

Human Resources -

Alan Main

Information

Services – Cathryn

Allison

Materials – Marylou

Minnis

Publications - Jeff

Wilson

Planning - Dan

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– Carl Koonsman

Marine Safety -

Barry Berg

Member Training –

John Guyer

Navigation Services

– Mike Yerion

Public Affairs - Bob

Donaldson

Public Education –

Jeff Evans

Program Visitor/

Vessel Examiner –

Ed Lieblein

State Liaison -

Pauline Longnecker

Chief of Response –

Bob Smekta

Aviation - Jose Riera

Communications –

John Donar

Flight Safety – Carl

Potter

Operations – Jack

Gumb

TCT—Diana Arisman

Legal - Nick Critelli

Secretary - Janet

Kelley

Contact information can be found at:

<https://auxofficer.cgaux.org/auxoff/index.php>

Director of Auxiliary

Kristina Dell'Orco

Greetings Western Rivers Region Auxiliary!



I had a busy summer attending NACON in Orlando, Fla. at the end of August and then our own district training event (DTRAIN) in St. Louis, Mo. in early September. I also attended Eighth District Eastern Region's DTRAIN in Columbus, Ohio at the end of September. As you all know by now, I have assumed the Director of Auxiliary duties for Eastern Region while maintaining my duties as your Director of Eighth Western Rivers Region. As of today, I still have two fully staffed offices, one in St. Louis to support you and one in Louisville to support the Eastern Region members. However, over the next year, I fully anticipate our office in St. Louis will take on the administrative responsibilities of both regions. Thank you so much for everyone's support and patience as we work through this change. From an Auxiliary member perspective, you should see no changes to the current leadership structure, but you may experience delays in the future regarding the processing of administrative work.

I truly enjoyed my time at DTRAIN and would like to thank Barbara Rhoades and the members of Division 3 that spent numerous hours planning and executing the event. Thank you!

Funding and budget constraints still remain an issue but I greatly appreciate everyone's perseverance and dedication to the organization. Your efforts are priceless and have lasting benefits. We had a busy year and your contributions resulted in several lives saved and promoted the importance of recreational boating safety amongst the public.

I want to thank all of you for your commitment and patience. Please continue to stay positive and adhere to the Core Values of our service - Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty in your daily interactions. Keep up the good work and Semper Paratus.

Captains' Reports

Tracy Delaughter, District Captain South

The Winter That Never Was, or was it? Or “It could be worse... You could be in Boston.”

The winter of 2014-2015 was an on again – off again affair. Some days it was “Get the boat out we are going on patrol” followed immediately the next day with six plus inches of snow. Like the directions on the shampoo bottle say, “Rinse and repeat”. Our organization has gone through a lot in the past few months as well from the on again, off again funding battle in Congress to fund the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, to increasing the national dues by double what they were before. Much like what people say about the weather in Oklahoma, “jest wait a secon’ an it’ll change.” We seem to be in a state of constant flux in the Auxiliary.

We have many missions that we need to take on in the winter months in our respective AORs.

There is Member Training much like what Division 15 is doing with a big operations program the end of April working with members of Division 15 and inviting all others that want to participate to do so by contacting Pat Lewis, DCDR so she can get you with the correct people. Division 16 has operations training on Lake Texoma the week before where the members of Division 16 that will have a big cook out at Gina Thornton, DCDR 16, and Jerry’s Lake house after the day’s activities. Bring an appetite for work, fun and fellowship to this event. Contact Gina Thornton to get the details and costs. And then there is Brock Stephens and the manically busy team in Division 5 frantically getting ready for the Spring D-Train in Branson, MO that I am sure you have already sent your STTR and made your reservations to attend. The cut off for the hotels is the 30th of March so if you have not done that yet you better get busy and “git ‘er done” as the “cable guy” would say.

Then there is the annual dreaded wailing and gnashing of teeth known as “REYR” days. The time that you discovered that you did not do enough, or did not complete, or simply had a “brain vapor” and now you are left to beg and plead to whoever will listen on how to remove yourself from this purgatory called REYR. Boils down to this, you got there on your own but you will need help on getting out. Been there, done that, went back for the refresher, Dang it! I am working on getting myself out of the intermediate level of hades because I missed getting the VE workshop completed. You can’t just sleep at a “Holiday Inn Express” and make it right. Those that are without the “mark” please seek out to help your fellow members come back to the living by offering them the resources needed to once again put them in the good graces of the AUXDATA demi-gods aka IS officers and DIRAUX. When the members are whole in their certifications and qualifications it is a WHOLE lot easier to save lives by prevention.

(cont. from page 6)

Speaking of prevention, an amazing thing happened on the way to the Tulsa Boat Show this winter in that not one, not two, not even three different groups came to the exhibit to request Vessel Safety Check days for their, event, marina, town, and organization. I was flabbergasted because in 14 years of doing the boat show no one had requested so much as one organized event. Therefore.... See previous paragraph and note about VE workshop and how that now affects the missions going forward. Yes it is a right good idea to look at the AUXDATA information *before* the end of the year and get your ducks in a row before the diaper dude comes out to kick the bearded guy off the stage. One never knows when an opportunity to save a life will drop in your lap through prevention.

With the multitude of changes going on these days in our organization it is sometimes hard to get the correct information to the deck level, flotilla member. Remember to include all flotilla members and people showing an interest in joining in the message traffic going and coming. I realize that sometimes it can seem like the Los Angeles freeway at 0700, so many cars (messages) but if you plan your trip (communications) carefully it will seem like a drive in the country on a sunny Sunday afternoon. It is important to read the “Burma Shave” information to know what is going on in the ever changing Auxiliary environment. Read the ALCOASTS, messages from the Commodore and DCAPT’s as they bring the messages of import from the leaders of the organization. When we fail to communicate effectively we wind up like Abbott and Costello in “Who’s on first?” –Costello to Abbott the baseball team manager,” Who’s the First baseman?” Abbott, “That’s right.”, Costello, “ Well... Who is it?” Abbott-“Who is on first.”, Costello, “THAT’S WHAT I AM TRYING TO FINDOUT! WHO’S ON FIRST!!” Abbott-“You’re correct. Who’s on first.” Costello-“WHY I OUGHTA....” Etc... Communications the mother of all<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=airT-m9LcoY> – Who’s on first – Abbott and Costello

As we head into the pounding waves of mission challenges for 2015 remember the following, Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty and what it means. Honor yourself and your team by always looking out for the best in each other and holding each other accountable. Respect the Coast Guard, the Auxiliary and the missions we have been tasked with doing by recognizing the challenges and the responsibilities of being a member and how we treat each other. Let’s not treat each other with the “Golden Rule” but the “Platinum rule” instead. Let us treat them how *they* wish to be treated. Devotion to Duty is more than a phrase; it has meaning deeper than most people care to think about. We are considered a “volunteer” force for the Coast Guard and we are. We augment the Active Duty in certain areas and work to make their lives a bit easier as volunteers but remember this: ALL members of the active duty no matter the service Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force as well as the Coast Guard are all VOLUNTEERS as well. Devote yourself to being the absolute best Coxswain, or Vessel Examiner, or Pilot, or Marine Safety or just member you can be. Wear your uniform correctly and with pride. Check the manual, check the mirror before you go out in the public view. We represent the best of the best in marine safety and do it with much devotion to the missions of our organization.

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Be Semper Paratus always towards all fellow Auxiliarists, Active Duty, Reserve, and Civilian and treat them like platinum.

Very Respectfully,

Tracy DeLaughter DCAPT-S

Stephen Bein - District Captain North

I was elected to the position of District Captain North at the Fall D-Train which was conducted in St Louis this past September. As a member of the USCG Auxiliary, I have served in many capacities, from Vice Flotilla Commander all the way up to Division 9 Commander, and several other flotilla and division staff officer positions. As time marched on, I became certified as crew and coxswain.

I grew up in Silvis, Illinois, and worked in my father's salvage yard, where I became proficient in the use of hand tools and an acetylene gas axe. It took a lot of practice to master the use of the acetylene torch, especially in avoiding the flash of sparks and falling slag onto my PF Flyers.

In Boy Scouts, my scoutmaster, Bill Berthoud, taught me to use a knife and axe. After hours of whittling and fire-building, I became proficient. As a testament to my proficiency, I earned the Wood Carving Merit Badge, and I still have all 10 digits.

In the United States Marine Corps, I became proficient in a Marine's best friend, his rifle. I sent many rounds down-range while under the watchful eye of my range coach following his instructions on sight alignment, sight picture, and trigger squeeze.

As an Illinois State Police officer, I attended state and federal schools to learn all the laws and regulations pertaining to the transportation of hazardous materials, commercial vehicle enforcement, and the use of the tools that I would need for enforcement. To become proficient, I underwent many hours of training and studying.

By now, you have certainly noticed the "P" word mentioned several times. According to The American College Dictionary, "Proficient, an adj. 1. well advanced or expert in any art, science, or subject; skilled. -n. 2. An expert."

How does one become proficient in their profession, hobby, or subject? There are steps. Normally there is a period of formal instruction in the new skill, followed by a demonstration of the new skill/task and a period of on-the-job training, (practice) and mentoring.

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So, how does the “P” word apply to the Coast Guard Auxiliary?

Well-trained (proficient) auxiliarists are a Coast Guard Auxiliary standard. The above steps— instruction-demonstration-practice/mentoring--is followed in most, if not all, Auxiliary programs. The Auxiliary provides the backbone—the instruction/mentoring—but we must supply the practice.

So what happens when training and practice stop? For a while, all is well, and then, with time, our skills degrade to a point where we are no longer able to perform them in a timely and proficient manner. This point, unfortunately, usually plays itself out during a three-year check ride when some members of the Boat Crew Program, both coxswains and crew, do not display the proficiency required for their particular job. These individuals will need to go back to their respective flotillas, hit the books, retrain, and practice the necessary skills to become proficient once again and recertify.

So the next time you think that you do not need that extra practice, think about the “P” word.

Stephen P. Bein DCAPT-N

Marlin Luhrsen - District Captain East

Greetings from the Eastern part of the district and divisions 3, 8, and 30.

First, let me say thank you to Division Commanders Barbara Rhodes, Jeff Poundstone, and Dick Johnson for an extremely successful 2014. I also want to say thank you to COMO Lawrence and COMO Starr for all their assistance in 2014. 2014 was both fun and productive.

All three divisions are working to obtain additional members. The three divisions have roughly 25 applications in process at SECCEN. There are also more prospective members that have not taken the bait at this time.

So far in 2015, Division 3 has been busy with assistance to the active duty with the Sector Coordinator and with data entry into the MISLE system. One member also assisted the Coast Guard in an outreach project at a local children’s home. All flotillas have been doing several items of member training at their meetings. There have been public affair events at the “Let’s Go Fishing” show, the “St Charles” and “St Louis” boat shows and at Cabelas. An ABS class has also been completed.

Division 8 has had their pilot up for a couple of observational flights. Flotilla 1 has been working with the USCGC Sangamon in a couple of activities. Chris Ware has been busy with activities at the CG Academy and attendance at the All Academy Ball in Chicago and at the Governor’s Reception. There have been numerous member training activities including boat crew training, CPR training, mandatory training and First Aid training. Boating Safety Classes have been taught

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and are also planned for the future. A VE ramp day is being planned at several locations. A four hour TCT course and the Operational Workshop is planned for the division meeting in April.

In the Kansas City area ATON verification was conducted and reported on the lights at the Christopher S Bond Bridge. Several member training items have been conducted, including proper time reporting, night operations and the operations workshop. Members of division 30 have attended boat shows in the Kansas City area. Planning meetings are progressing for the Lake Race and Shootout and 2 Dam Days on the Lake of the Ozarks. Plans are also underway for the June Sailboat Regatta on Lake Jacomo. Boating safety classes and VSC stations are being planned for Smithville Lake. Dog Days Boat Show will be attended in mid-April. A four hour TCT class is being planned for March 28th.

Respectfully,
Butch Luhrsen, DCAPT-E

DSOs' Reports

Frank Reiss - Chief of Staff

Daylight savings time has started and although spring is five days away as this is being written, officially Spring Fever has set in. For the first time since the first chill of winter enveloped the heartland, the blinds have been opened and the sunshine casts its rays upon my desk. Slowly the long cold nights will yield to longer warmer days, which will eventually turn to yet longer and hot days of summer. Although most boating activities have been dormant through the winter months, many have been preparing to hit the ground running with the recreational boating safety missions the Auxiliary is tasked with.

The new year began with many new leaders, and some not so new leaders assuming the helms of their respective units. The traditional changes of watches were held, where elected and appointed officers took the officer's oath and were sworn in. NTRAIN seems like a distant memory, but a lot of exciting information was exchanged. If you haven't already, take the time to review the Commodore's Corner sent out in February. Preparations are well underway for DTRAIN in Branson Missouri April 10-11 at the Grand Plaza Hotel. Hopefully you took the time to complete the training survey; this survey will be used to finalize the training opportunities at DTRAIN.

DTRAIN will host the Division Commander's Academy. COMO Lawrence has put together a super schedule for the evening of Wednesday, April 8 and Thursday, April 9. New and seasoned DCDRs and/or VCDRs will no doubt find the training helpful. In addition to training, DTRAIN is your opportunity to rekindle existing and cultivate new friendships with your shipmates. Branson is an excellent destination, so visit the district web site, review DTRAIN information posted, and register to attend. Registration deadline is March 30 and hotel reservation deadline is April 1. Hotel, meal, and Friday Fun Night costs are all listed on the registration form.

DTRAIN is of course also when the spring board meeting will take place. Be sure to join your 8WR board, staff, and fellow shipmates along with D8, SUMR, and SLMR river active duty. Much of the winter months' work will come to light as new and old business is addressed by the board on Friday, April 10. Examples of such work include the 2015 annual budget and the review/update of the Officers and District Policy Guide (OPG). Of course what would spring DTRAIN be without awards; be sure to attend the District Chief of Staff luncheon and Commodore's Banquet as your efforts are recognized.

As we take part in the Auxiliary missions leading up to, including, and beyond DTRAIN, remember COMO Starr's watch words: Proud, proficient, and focused.

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1. Take pride in the Auxiliary for there is none other like it. We serve our community and our nation. We save lives.
2. Proficiency keeps us safe and professional in the execution of your missions.
3. Focus. In short when you are an Auxiliarist...be an Auxiliarist! Try to give your full and undivided attention to the task at hand whether it is conducting a meeting, attending a public event, training, fellowship, etc.

Jack Gumb - DSO-Operations

I am sure many divisions are working on getting their boats out of storage and getting them inspected for the 2015 season. If you have not already received your notice about your boat needing to be inspected, I'm sure it will come soon. I would recommend you get your inspection done as soon as you can and get the paperwork submitted, so DIRAUX will have as much time to process as they can.

It is hoped that anyone who needs a QE in 2015, will get Appendix G into the Area QE so that it can be scheduled early in the season so you won't be pushed into doing it late in the season.

I still need some divisions 538's. I am putting this information into a spread sheet for our OTO to better keep a handle on what PPE we have in 8WR.

Do not forget to read the new PPE SOP that was sent out a few weeks ago by DIRAUX, and comply with all those requirements.

I hope you will have a good spring and summer.

Ed Lieblein – DSO-Vessel Examinations/Program Visitor

WELCOME VESSEL SAFETY EXAMINERS

As a vessel examiner conducting a vessel safety check you are expected to make sure the boat owner carries the required equipment. Ensure the vessel is in compliance with federal and state regulations for such things as life jackets and fire extinguishers. The vessel examiner should explain that the required items found on the left side of forms ANSC 7012 and 7012A save lives and loss of property. It is important that the owner understands that federal/state requirements are minimum requirements and do not guarantee the safety of your vessel or its passengers.

During the VSC examination the recommended and discussion items found on the right side on forms listed above are extremely important topics. In 2013, the Coast Guard counted 4,062 accidents that involved 560 deaths and 2,620 injuries. The major causes contributing to these statistics were: operating a vessel with alcohol use, excessive speed, improper lookout, operator inattention and inexperience. While not required, the following equipment is strongly recommended and should be discussed with the boater and the family.

VHF-FM Marine Radio with Digital Selective Calling System

VHF-FM Radios are optional for vessels under 65.6 feet; however, they are recommended. Two types are available: full-sized, fixed-mount radios offer 25 watts and have a range of 10 to 15 miles. The handheld offer 5 to 6 watts and has a range of 3 to 5 miles. The FCC does not require most operators to acquire a license. Channel 16 is the distress/safety calling channel. In some locations, recreational boaters might be directed to use channel 9. Channels 24 thru 28, plus 84, 85 and 86 are used for Public correspondence. These radios also offer weather information found on channels 1 through 10. Know the limitations of cell phones especially in open waters.

The Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) is an emergency communications system that will, when fully implemented, allow recreational boaters to send automated digital messages that include boat's identity and location to the Coast Guard. Your VHF radio must be equipped with Digital Selective Calling (DSC) capability and be interfaced with a GPS receiver. Channel 70 is the frequency reserved for digital distress calls on a VHF radio. Users of a VHF-FM radio equipped with a DSC will also need to obtain a Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number which is unique to the vessel. These numbers are available from Boat U.S., or the FCC. With one push of a button, your DSC radio sends an automated digital distress alert containing your MMSI number, position, and the nature of the distress (if entered) to other equipped vessels and rescue facilities. For more information on the DSC system the link is: www.boatus.com/mmsi. Read the online tutorial.

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ANCHORS & EQUIPMENT

Discuss the importance of having an anchor on aboard. Many boaters will have two anchors. One anchor might be used to keep the boat from running aground in bad weather or as a result of engine failure. The second anchor should be larger and heavier for overnight anchoring. Know the advantages for the three most commonly used anchors (Danforth/Plow/Mushroom). Recommend attaching a 3-6 foot length of galvanized chain to the anchor. A chain will withstand abrasion by sand or rock on the lake bottom. Normally, a scope of 7:1 is adequate for holding a boat. If the water is 10 feet deep and your bow chuck is 4 feet above the water, you need anchor line of 98 feet. Nylon makes an excellent anchor line because of its elasticity, which eases the shock of the boat's movements on the anchor. Do not anchor from the boat stern because small boats may capsize or sink.

Mounted fire extinguishers

All hand portable extinguishers should be mounted. Consider locations where the extinguisher can be reached easily; for example, at or near the steering station, the galley or engine rooms. Discourage locations where a fire may likely start. Coast Guard approved extinguishers required for boats are hand portable, have either B-1 or B11 classification, and must be provided with a mounting bracket. Verify that the pressure indicator is in the normal charge range. High or low readings are cause for disqualification. Explain how you test the push button type extinguisher found on PWCs. Stress the importance to carry one extra fire extinguisher aboard.

DEWATERING DEVICES/FIRST AID KITS/CAPACITY CERIFICATE

Boats and canoes/kayaks should carry one manual dewatering device aboard. Installed bilge pumps should be tested. Pontoon boats should carry a dewatering to help other boaters. First aid kits should be aboard and easily located. Capacity plates are required on mono-hull vessels under 20 feet. The VE examiner should take careful consideration if the vessel has too many people and/or too much gear that can cause the boat to become unstable.

WEATHER/FLOAT PLAN/SAFE BOATING CLASSES

In 2013, weather caused 40 deaths and 181 accidents. Most drowning's occurred in inland waters, most within a few feet of safety and not wearing life jackets. You should never leave the dock without first checking the local weather forecast. Check for weather changes: flat clouds getting lower and thicker, puffy, vertically rising clouds, black threatening clouds, especially to the west/southwest and flashes on the horizon. In serve weather head the boat into the waves at a 45 degree angle. Explain the lightning safety guide which is the 30 – 30 rule. The first “30” represents 30 seconds. If the time between when you see the flash and hear the thunder is 30 seconds or less, the lightning is close enough to hit your vessel. You should seek shelter. The second “30” stands for 30 minutes. After the last flash of lighting, wait 30 minutes before leaving your shelter. More than one half of lightning deaths occur after a thunderstorm has passed. Play it safe and file a float plan with a friend, relative, or the local marina. Float plan forms are available at www.uscgboating.org.

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Training is important for boaters of all experience levels, especially for the beginning boater. In a typical year, approximately 84 percent of accidents involving fatalities occur on boats where the boat operator had no formal instruction. Know what classes the different agencies are offering and have phone numbers and dates available.

CANOE/KAYAKS/PADDLE BOARDS

In 2012, this water sport had over 21 million participants. To help ensure a safe and enjoyable paddling experience, the Coast Guard Auxiliary is promoting safety awareness and more information sources for all paddlers. Completing a Vessel Safety Check (VSC) is very challenging because the traditional locations for finding paddlers are not at boat ramps. When conducting a VSC, recommend safe locations for paddling and know the weather forecast if they ask. If available, have water trail maps and offer the orange lost and found sticker #3004A. Paddlers are usually found at parks, beaches, and small bay inlets. Contacting canoe/kayak clubs is an excellent way to promote safety training. The training and safety needs for paddlers vary from state to state because there are recreational, sea/touring, and whitewater kayakers. Life jackets and a whistle are the basic requirements; however, know the safety checklist items. When appropriate, discuss what happens in cold water, shock and hypothermia. The safety needs for the paddler is sometimes greater than for power vessels. Their craft are smaller, have lower free board and are affected by weather conditions. For more information: www.americancanoe.org/

Responsibilities to your passengers and others

You are responsible for anything your boat does or anything that happens to or on your boat – if you are present or if it is used with your express or implied consent.

Federal law requires you to provide whatever assistance you can to anyone at sea in need of help. However, it does not require you to endanger your passengers, your vessel, or yourself while doing so. If you render assistance, you are protected by the “Good Samaritan” clause of the Federal Boating Safety Act of 1971.

Ed Lieblein DSO-VE/PV

Pauline Longnecker, DSO-SLO

The State Liaison Program in Eighth Western Rivers has hit the ground running this year. There are several newly appointed State Liaison Officers along the returning for 2015 who have already begun working with the other District Staff Officers on projects and programs. The State Liaison Program assists building partnerships not only with the States but other water safety organizations.

Welcome to several new SLOs to the States Program: Carroll Vogel from Missouri, Greg Opdahl from Minnesota and Mike Vaught from Oklahoma. They are a great addition to our already outstanding SLOs.

- Michael Strobel from Arkansas has been busy working with the BLA on the state's statistics and how some of the numbers could be improved thru the RBS missions.
- In Colorado, SLO Koonsman is looking at working with the Colorado BLA Kris Wahlers on scheduled events for the coming year.
- Chris Ware, SLO Illinois, has really opened the door working with Education Coordinator regarding the mandatory boating law for 2016 along with additional PA events.
- In Iowa, the BLA is looking for continued support for painting life jacket zones on state ramps along with events for NSBW
- Travis Witt, SLO Kansas, is preparing for the NASBLA National Conference to be held in Wichita in September. The BLA has requested assistance from the Auxiliary for several things.
- Greg Opdahl, Minnesota SLO has been working with the BLA on communicating with the public on the new Aquatic Invasive Species trailer sticker that goes into effect 1 July 2015.
- SLO Carroll Vogel from Missouri has been working with BLA and the Water Safety Council on several children's events, along with assisting with a boating class and stenciling Life Jacket Zones on public ramps.
- Connie Walters, SLO from Nebraska attended a meeting hosted by the BLA regarding RBS missions and zebra mussels along with NSBW
- SLO Mike Vaught from Oklahoma has been focusing on additional RBS missions through Vessel Safety Checks and Public Education Classes.
- John Buffington, SLO from Wyoming, is working with the Casper Boat Club at Alcova Reservoir on conducting Vessel Safety Checks and possible boating safety classes along with Safety patrols. At the Spring D Train, Ed Huntsman, RBS Specialist for the Eighth Western Rivers, will be presenting an RBS Training. Mr. Huntsman is an expert in RBS and how partnerships can be built with the states along with developing RBS programs in the Divisions.

SLOs are already working with their areas regarding NSBW activities for 2015. So if you have questions regarding what activities your state is doing with the Auxiliary, your SLO is just an email or phone call away.

Pauline Longnecker
DSO SLO

Reporting your time: a primer to the forms used by the Auxiliary

By Jeff Evans, FSO-IS
085-11-02

Why bother reporting time for what you do in the Auxiliary? The short answer is that the active duty Coast Guard measures the Auxiliary's performance by what we report to have done; and funding flows in the direction of programs that can be shown to be successful.

The Information Services staff officer is the only one in your flotilla who must complete C-School and pass accuracy tests before being allowed to serve. You know the old saying, "garbage in, garbage out." Never as true as with the AuxData system. AuxData is a database program designed specifically for Coast Guard mission codes and the way the Coast Guard organizes its collective thinking about what we do. It is arcane and detailed, and it really does take a 3-day school, and more, to become accustomed to just entering the data correctly.

How does the data get to your friendly IS officer in an organized manner? Forms. Their purpose is to organize our thinking about mission time so that it is categorized the Coast Guard way. And without forms the IS job would be impossible. Even with forms sometimes it can be confusing.

Fortunately, we have some really well-thought-out and useful forms. I'll talk specifically about the 7029, the 7030, and maybe about other specific forms for specific kinds of missions.

The 7029 form

As a new member you will first encounter the 7029 form. This is used for personal time spent doing Coast Guard activities, when you are not part of organized mission activity. The five categories on this form are: Staff time (99A), Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) time (99B), Marine Safety (MS) time (99C), Member Training (MT) time (99D), and Other time (99E). Form 7029 should also be used for time spent in mission preparation, travel to and from the mission, and post mission paperwork/reporting.

There are several versions of the 7029 form, from a simple paper form, to PDF form, and my favorite, an online webform. I highly recommend using the online webform. It really helps you keep organized and timely, since it also archives your reports for you. And when your entries are done, it will automatically send your form by email to the correct IS officer! Here is where you find it: http://webforms.cgaux.org/forms/7029/7029_cover.php

If you are logging in to the USCGAUX system for the first time, click on "Obtain Password" to register yourself using your member ID. Then choose the link to "7029 Form Access" and "7029 – Version 1.1". There is a LOT of good how-to information in the Questions & Answers section.

Now, looking at the form itself ... as a new member you probably are not a flotilla or division staff member yet, but if you were, you would use 99A as the mission code for time you spent on your staff work. This includes time in preparation for, and travel to and from your duties, and paperwork time.

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99B is something you may use. It is for recreational boating safety work, right? For instance, if you are learning to do boater safety checks, you would log all your preparation and travel time and paperwork time as 99B. The actual time on location working with boaters and doing safety checks would be logged on the 7030 form.

99C is the same, but this category is for Marine Safety. So, all of your prep time and travel time before and after actually collecting zebra mussels would go here. The time you were on location catching critters would appear on a 7030 form.

Ditto for 99D, only this time we are talking about Member Training activities.

And 99E, the catch-all “All Other” category. Whatever you did that doesn’t fit in some other mission category can go here. This includes time spent surfing the Coast Guard web pages, reading brochures and manuals, or other general self-learning activities.

Notice too that you may report personal mileage and expenses incurred doing Coast Guard related activities. You can organize your time by subject categories, by day, or any way you like on the 7029 webform.

Every little bit of time counts, so don’t feel that your contribution is not significant enough to report. It is the accumulated totals that really add up.

The 7030 form

When you are on a mission, that is, doing duty for the Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary, you record that time on form 7030. My preferred way to use this form is the 7030s, a PDF form that I keep on my computer. This is a “smart form” meaning it changes configuration depending what information you input. You’ll see in Section 1 of the form, you must choose the type of resource you are using (Air, Boat, Radio, Unit/Individual). Most of your missions will be Unit/Individual, at least in the beginning of your CGAux career.

Section 2 is the critical piece. Enter the start time of your mission. Then enter your mission code. Click on the box with the downward arrow and a list of mission descriptions opens. You need to be able to decipher, or get assistance, to enter the correct mission code.

For instance, if you have just completed 4 hours of staffing a booth at the local boating show, that is a Public Affairs (PA) mission. When you click on the “MISSION” box and open the descriptor “Public Affairs Missions” you see a list of 10A through 10L codes. What to choose? In this case the only description that fits the mission is “10K Other PA projects.” Now you enter your end of mission time in the box under “FINISH.”

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The form will allow you to enter several codes and start times for up to 5 different mission codes. If you were working on different tasks in consecutive order, or if you take a break and then return to the same task, you can account for your time using the “change” boxes.

Section 3, Activity Log Details, allows you to enter a location where your work was done. But critically important is the OPCON box. If you are on a mission that the active duty Coast Guard counts, you must enter the code for the coast Guard Station you are assisting. This box will only work if you entered such a mission code. For the Twin Cities area the code is always 08-37390 for Sector Upper Mississippi River.

You’ll see that in Section 3 the form will open up different areas depending upon what mission code you choose. When you are part of the mission, the terminology and choices will make sense to you.

Section 4, Crew Assignments, is where you enter yourself and any others who participated in the mission. This is pretty straightforward. One thing to remember, when you are in a Member Training (MT) session, the teacher is the lead and everyone else is trainee.

On form 7030s you will see a box for your FSO-IS’s email address (jeff.evans@cgauxnet.us) and your email address. Fill those in. Section 6 (no section 5) is for your own remarks about the missions, if you choose to use it. Date submitted, submitting member name are necessary; report number is useful if you are sending more than one 7030 per day.

Now the magic. When you click SUBMIT the form generates an email and sends a copy to your inbox and my inbox, and presents you with a report to print if you like. This is by far the easiest way for me to receive your report. I urge everyone to use form 7030s. My inbox is set up to recognize any incoming email generated from the online 7029 or the 7030s forms. Those reports automatically go into a special folder, separate from any other emails I get.

If you need a copy of the 7030s form get it from our Basecamp website, or from the National Forms Warehouse at <http://forms.cgaux.org/>

It is important to develop the habit of submitting your time and missions accurately and soon after completion. It is surprising how much of your time can be counted toward the USCG Auxiliary. Funding follows from the hours you enter. And you will be recognized for the time you invest in the Auxiliary. It is particularly important for those of us in Auxiliary specialty programs that require minimum service to maintain eligibility. For instance, vessel examiners need to report 5 vessel checks per year to maintain their qualification. Operations Boat Crew need to report a minimum of 12 hours annually on the water to remain qualified. The only way to do that is to submit your time on the proper form to the Information Services officer.