

District 130

DCO Report: Q1 2025

TO: Mary Kirkwood
National Commodore

FROM: Klaas Nijhuis
District 130 Commodore

Via: Michael D. Bozarth
DNACO – PACAREA & Operations

SUBJECT: D130 DCO Report - Q1 2025

DATE: 07 APR 2025

Executive Summary

The focus in D13 for the first three months of 2025 has been on sharing the details of the new Operational Plan and beginning to execute on it. Unlike in the past where D13 plans were just N extension (and increase on the goals) of the prior Plan, a team of stakeholders and key informants stepped back and looked at where we were post-COVID, and the new reality of our human and physical assets and the opportunities for successful mission execution in our AORs (Areas of Operations). D13 spans four PACific Northwest states with quite divergent geo-social environments. In the East, water is hard for more than half the year and there is no active duty presence, in the Southwest, surface operations go year-round with vibrant active duty collaboration. In the Northwest, we are rebuilding our bonds with active duty. That started with Aux being present weekly at the BAsE Seattle Galley, growing the program to support the 87 ft cutters. Two far outlying Small Boat Stations finally got AUCs (Auxiliary Unit Coordinators) and the opportunities for connecting with those active duty members is being built up.

In the East, Public Affairs and recruiting are the centers of excellence and maintaining operational currency is done by bringing the 3 divisions together. In the South we excel at supporting Active Duty through helo ops, joint training exercises and commercial fishing exams. We also have quite a contingent supporting active duty culinary needs on cutters. In the North, AIDS to Navigation Verification and shoreside culinary assistance have the focus. Ironman events and Columbia Cup Hydroplane Races in the East, Rosefest and Buoy 10 in the South and Opening Day and SeaFair in the North are the large events supported on the water each year. In addition there are numerous regattas and other annual events that our members actively support. Three port of calls for the Barque Eagle this summer have us already planning and we see these as great recruiting as well as train the trainer opportunities.

We are actively strengthening D13 through fellowship opportunities, ranging for weekly in-person and virtual breakfast gatherings, special tours and get together planned through the year. DTRAINs are a wonderful opportunity for both inter-unit fellowship and training. The Spring DTRAIN was done in conjunction with District 17 and although we had to pivot to respond to the uncertainties in response to federal directives, we were able to provide a far more robust training program than in years past offering all but a few courses as were originally planned. These courses focused on leadership development and trainings that otherwise would be hard to deliver effectively at the flotilla or division level.

We believe strongly that member satisfaction is key to rebuilding our capacity. We have formed a team to make recommendations about and begin to utilize AI (Artificial Intelligence) to enhance the user experience of the D13 website. We are making deliberate improvements to that site to celebrate our members achievements, provide them access to the most current information about participating in training

opportunities and events and are actively working to get the word out that this is the resource they should turn to most frequently to get the latest information. We have met with the team at D7 who is working on a better user interface for searching the Auxiliary resources for the most current trainings, regulations and best practices.

We have empowered our PDCA (Past Division Commanders Association) to play a much larger role in gathering the information from our membership as to what trainings they are looking to get at DTRAINS and other events as to implement a District-wide mentoring program. At the Spring DTRAIN they hosted a course on communication where they brought in expertise from back East.

We have already had one regional training event (SART: Southern Area Regional Training) bringing together members from three divisions for a two day event that focused on everything from first aid to navigation. A Northern area event is being worked on for late March that will focus on Auxiliary Operational Specialist Course introductions as well as getting wet with a Damage Control Trailer. We are hoping to use that training to catalyze specialized recreational boating training that goes beyond the 8-hour Boater Ed card focus: special courses that dive deeper that could go out to yacht clubs and libraries in locations where there is an active recreational boater presence. We already held one such event this year on Lake Union which focused on being prepared for and responding to man overboard situations as well as Paddlecraft safety.

In all, every new thing we are adding to the already established recurring annual program of activities is focused on doing something to encourage engagement of our membership, empowering them with the necessary and current skills to respond and to electrify our membership to be a very energized and bright resource to not only our RBS and Team Coast Guard partners but to the recreational boaters within our AORs.

Support of the Auxiliary National Strategic Plan and District Operational Plan (Q1):

RBS

Establish partnerships: Public Education events at Yachts Clubs: Puget Sound Yacht Club and Kingston Cove.

Continue working with Chief Seattle Council Sea Scouts, Puget Sound, WA and expand into Western Mountains Council, Boise, Idaho

Paddlecraft training at Spring DTRAIN

Paddlecraft PE on Lake Union in March

Continue pursuing partnership with West Marine stores for Recreational Boating Safety Week

Inclusion

Provided mentoring training at Spring DTRAIN and a follow up virtual session

Integrated Sea Scouts into flotillas

Had FCs focus on reducing the number of members remaining long-term in AP status

Provided AFLC training at Spring DTRAIN with 25 attending

Welcoming new members by mention on the District webpage, inviting them to workshops and Boat Crew Academies

Created fellowship opportunities to welcome new members and invite those exploring membership

Maintained and provided access to lucky bags for new members. Working on a district-wide database of available uniforms within each unit

Presented challenge coins to new members becoming BQ in 30 days from enrollment

Conducted exit interviews with those disenrolling

Publish information on workshops, courses and mission area opportunities on the District Calendar, encouraging inter-unit access

Began building out a traveling recruiting team to model to unit membership at PA events

Integration

Several new D13 members joined Auxiliary Academy Admissions program, and current Academy Admissions trained members attended career fairs
In process of standing up UPV training in Sector Puget Sound
Sector Puget Sound is doing monthly "Commanders Synchs" exploring ways Auxiliary can support Active Duty
Numerous D13 members have volunteered with FEMA geospatial assessments

Innovation

After delivering a Spring DTRAIN session on effectively using technology, established an AI Taskforce to explore ways to integrate in and streamline our regular activities including awards-writing, scheduling, website queries, etc.
Starting recruiting for tech savvy technologists to help with Team Coast Guard missions.
Appointed a District Safety Officer and now actively focusing on safety talks at all undertakings
Discussion among EXCOM members regarding train-the-trainers opportunities starting with recruiting
Actively pursuing instituting deliberate mentoring programs at all units

Accomplishments in Recruiting and Retention (Q1):

Disenrollments

Our DSO-HR reports:
4 disenrollments, mostly in response to the issued directives
2 retirements.

Note: we are working on recovering from 109 disenrollments that occurred in 2024 (7 deaths, 25 retirements, 37 member-requested disenrollments, and 40 non-payment of dues)

New Members

Our DSO-HR reports:
13 new members who have gotten their member numbers
and an additional 13 applications in process

Our membership currently stands at 763, up by 3% over the beginning of this year.

% in AP Status

8% AP, 1% IQ

Recruiting & Retention Activities

At our March EXCOM meeting, leadership was presented with the details of and subsequently adopted the Net 3 Program as developed in D11. Our DCOS has been put in charge of executing this plan and we are actively beginning to identify a traveling recruiting team who can model to our members best practices regarding recruiting at public affairs events. We will be doing a train the trainer on recruiting at the Barque Eagle Ports of Call.

Most of our leads come through AAMS and we have several HR officers who are very diligent on acting on those referrals. We have one SO-HR who is actively recruiting from retiring military at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM).

The Commodore has done exit interviews with members who ask to be disenrolled. In addition, the Commodore makes calls to those members who are being recognized for exceptional training or mission response. Challenge coins are sent to every member who gets to BQ 30 days from enrollment. So far, five have been recognized this year. There are 19 members who met that goal last year who have similarly been contacted, but are still awaiting the prior COMO's coin.

We are highlighting on the District Welcome page in front of the firewall, the new members and those who have accomplished training. Each month we recognize an Auxiliarist of the Month. Each one receives a call from the Commodore.

Our DSO-MT recognizes every member who accomplishes a training objective with an e-mail congratulations. Similarly DIRAUX sends out congratulatory e-mails and certificates to new members and those who have completed training.

We held a special virtual awards ceremony on 29 March for individual members, and units who provided significant contributions. This was in lieu of an awards banquet at DTRAIN.

Program Performance:

Key District Program Stats

Members supported numerous boat shows at the beginning of the year putting in nearly 1,200 hours in the first quarter. Vessel Exams are also already well underway with 179 Paddlecraft completed in addition to the 220 others. 886 Program visits have been completed to date. In terms of active duty support: 106 Chaplain hours, 775 Radio Watchstanding hours, 194 hours off operational support and 414 hours of culinary assistance reported. Our public education courses have seen 113 adult and 4 youth graduates.

We carried out our Spring DTRAIN virtually and in-person at Base Seattle mid-February with 6 parallel training tracks and in conjunction with D17. As part of DTRAIN we held round table meetings with HR, MT and IS officers

The Southern are held it's regional training in mid-March. This two-day event was attended by members of 3 divisions.

Many of our units carried out required annual workshops either in person or virtually, inviting participation from other units.

One area where we failed to meet on the Plan's objectives in the first quarter was having a Leadership exploration call, although we had a leadership development component at DTRAIN. The leadership calls are for members exploring the possibility of stepping into an elected position.

Problems/Obstacles/Challenges (known or potential) and suggested solutions:

Our aging membership continues to be a challenge, but we are working on transferring the knowledge and experience of those members to our new members who are energized and excited to carry on in our mission areas.

We are using town hall meetings to have our members share ideas for identifying and overcoming the in challenges in each of our AORs

Action items:

2025 District Priorities

1. Engage
 1. Fellowship activities, special events as well as regularly scheduled get together
 2. Town halls
 3. E-mail blasts about events, creating awareness for our members
 4. Celebrate successes
 5. District, Division and Flotilla newsletters

2. Empower

1. DTRAINS
2. Area Trainings
3. Local Workshops
4. Leadership development
5. Appointed Officer Roundtables
6. Working groups to take on initiatives such as AI, mentoring, recruiting/retention

3. Electrify

1. Operational activities
2. Public Affairs
3. Public Education offerings
4. Emergency Response Tabletop Exercises
5. Joint partnership events

Q2 Deliverables

1. Boats Afloat Show, Seattle 25 - 26 April
2. UPV training, Seattle 28 -30 April
3. Remaining town halls for Div 2, 3/4 combined, 6 and 7
4. Opening Day operational activities
5. GNARL-E (Greater Northern Area Regional Learning Extravaganza) 31 May
6. Eastern Area TCO training Date TBD - turn repeater back on
7. DLOA/ADLO meetings with membership (answering your legal questions)
8. Boater Ed classes
9. Recruiting events, traveling recruiting team constituted
10. Leadership Planning retreat visit with Sector active duty
11. AI recommendation
12. Mentoring Program outlined and piloted

Assistance needed from the Coast Guard, NEXCOM, or National Staff:

None noted

Future plans and milestones:

- Net 3 - 3 additional members per flotilla each year for next 5 years
- Strategic Planning Retreat/4 Day team-building exercise by mid-June
- Bring education team to Eastern area divisions Q2

Respectfully submitted,

Klaas Nijhuis
D130 Commodore