

## PREPARED SPEECH ABOUT THE COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

NOTE: Every speech given by a member of the District Auxiliary Speakers Bureau should be prepared based on the audience, subject matter requested and time allotted. This is a generalized speech about the Auxiliary and should be modified and augmented by the speaker as applicable. If appropriate, using visual aids such as Auxiliary and Coast Guard images or a video about the Auxiliary to highlight the speech is usually beneficial. The Coast Guard Auxiliary National Public Affairs Department site has a number of visual aids for downloading. The speaker should ensure that all necessary equipment (computer, projector, screen, connectors, visual aids, etc.) is present and functioning.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary was formed based on an act of Congress in 1939. When America entered World War II, approximately 50,000 Auxiliary members joined the war effort guarding waterfronts, performing coastal picket patrols including watching for enemy submarines and rescuing survivors from torpedoed and other boats.

After the war, Auxiliarists resumed their recreational boating safety duties performing free Vessel Safety Checks, educating the public by providing classes on boating safety to recreational boaters of all ages and engaging in patrols on our nation's lakes, rivers and coastal areas to include performing search and rescue missions for the Coast Guard. Over the years, Auxiliary members have educated hundreds of thousand boaters, inspected tens of thousand boats to ensure they met Coast Guard and local safety requirements, and saved countless lives. While members may receive training allowing them to operate certain Coast Guard vessels, most of their official boating activities involve the use of members' private boats which, while serving under Coast Guard orders, are considered government vessels.

Today, the over 30,000 men and woman of the Auxiliary who volunteer millions of unpaid hours in these endeavors, form the civilian arm of the United States Coast Guard. They are trained to standards set by the Commandant of the Coast Guard and assist in the performance of any Coast Guard function, duty, mission or operation authorized by law other than direct military and law enforcement. Following the events of 911, the Coast Guard has new duties guarding our nations waterways, harbors, and shores from terrorists and the work performed by the Auxiliary to include standing communication watches, assisting during

mobilization exercises, performing harbor and pollution patrols and conducting fishing boat and other vessel exams, allows active duty Coast Guard personnel the ability to perform all of their missions.

The Auxiliary has members in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam. Membership is open to men and woman from, 17 years or older, U.S. citizens of all state and territories, civilians or active duty or former members of any of the uniformed services. Auxiliary units are called flotillas and are found in numerous cities.