

# U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY SOCIAL MEDIA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



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16790 / AUX-SOP-012(A)  
12 Jun 2023

## MEMORANDUM

Reply to CG-BSX-11  
Attn of: Mr. S. Minutolo  
(202) 372-1267

From: /T. P. Glendye, CAPT/  
Chief, Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety

To: Distribution

Subj: AUXILIARY SOCIAL MEDIA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Ref: (a) Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series)  
(b) Coast Guard External Affairs Manual, COMDTINST M5700.13 (series)  
(c) U.S. Coast Guard Social Media Handbook (series)  
(d) Coast Guard Auxiliary Public Affairs Manual of May 2014  
(e) Coast Guard Correspondence Manual, COMDTINST M5216.4 (series)

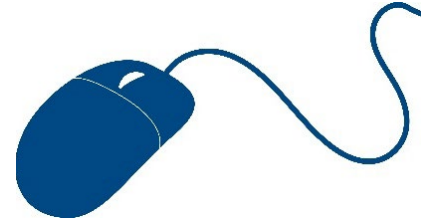
1. PURPOSE. Pursuant to authorities and policies in references (a)-(e), to establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Auxiliary units to conduct business and carry out authorized Auxiliary activities on social media platforms.
2. ACTION. Elected and appointed leaders and program managers at all levels of the Auxiliary organization shall ensure all Auxiliary units adhere to this SOP.
3. AUTHORIZED RELEASE. Internet release is authorized.
4. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
5. BACKGROUND. Social media is a powerful tool that can be utilized to promote Auxiliary achievements, increase recruiting and retention efforts, and bring higher awareness to the organization amongst new and diverse segments of the population. To ensure that the Auxiliary utilizes social media in a correct and proper manner, this SOP has been created to standardize Auxiliary engagements online and to set the standards by which Auxiliary social media accounts are created, used, and deleted.
6. DISCLAIMER. This SOP is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is itself a rule. It is intended to provide guidance for Auxiliary personnel and is not intended to, nor does it, impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
7. MAJOR CHANGES. This SOP creates procedures for the use of key social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, You Tube) at Auxiliary national, district, area, division, and flotilla levels.

8. SCOPE AND AUTHORITIES. It is recommended the reader become familiar with the directives and publications noted throughout this SOP.
9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. This SOP will not result in any substantial change to existing environmental conditions or violation of any applicable federal, state, or local laws relating to the protection of the environment.
10. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this SOP. An electronic version will be posted on the Coast Guard Auxiliary web site: <https://www.cgaux.org>. All web sites in this SOP are the most current available. If the cited web link does not work, then access should be attempted by copying and pasting or typing the web site address into the user's internet browser.
11. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. Records created as a result of this SOP, regardless of format or media, must be managed in accordance with records retention guidance in references (a) and (e).
12. FORMS. Any forms referenced in this SOP are available on the Coast Guard Auxiliary web site: <https://www.cgaux.org>.
13. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Auxiliary units and individuals may formally recommend changes in writing through their chain of leadership and management including the appropriate Auxiliary national program manager(s) (email acceptable). Comments and suggestions from users of this SOP are welcomed. All such correspondence may be emailed to Commandant (CG-BSX-1) at: [CGAUX@uscg.mil](mailto:CGAUX@uscg.mil).

#

Dist: DIRAUX (dpa), NEXCOM, ANACO-CC, ANACO-FC, DIR-A

**U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY  
SOCIAL MEDIA STANDARD  
OPERATING PROCEDURES**



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## Auxiliary Social Media

### Standard Operating Procedures

#### 1. Introduction to Social Media.

##### a. What is Social Media?

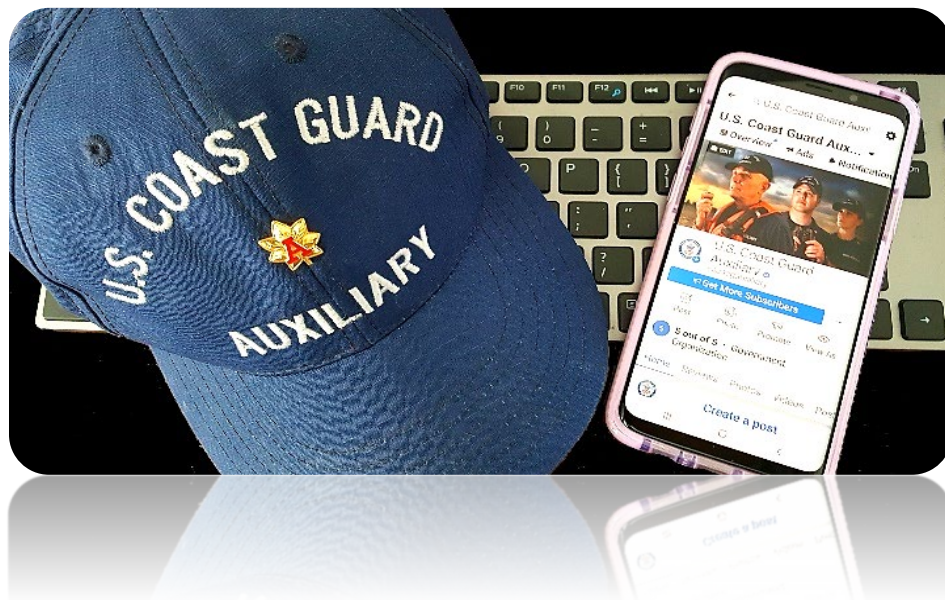
- (1) The Department of Homeland Security defines social media as the sphere of websites, applications, and web-based tools that connect users to engage in dialogue, share information and media, collaborate, and interact. Social media take many different forms, including but not limited to web-based communities and hosted services, social networking sites, video and photo sharing sites, blogs, virtual worlds, social bookmarking, and other emerging technologies.
- (2) Social media provides an avenue to bridge time and distance to facilitate communications among people with various backgrounds and geographic locations. It has become an integral part of our everyday life and is an invaluable communication tool in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- (3) Over 80 percent of Americans use social media, with the majority on a daily basis. In 2023, it was reported there were over 4.9 billion active users globally. This was an exponential and phenomenal increase from 2005 when modern-day social media usage was only about seven percent of the population (Pew Research Center).

##### b. Social Media and the Coast Guard Auxiliary

- (1) Social media, which falls under Coast Guard public affairs program management, greatly enhances our ability to tell the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary stories via text, imagery, graphics, and video. It is used as an avenue to connect with the boating public and disseminate valuable content in several mission areas. Although Auxiliary units are not required to have a social media presence, unlike most websites, social media is dynamic and immediate. It allows two-way, synchronous communication, and feedback with our stakeholders in an unprecedented fashion.
- (2) With the benefit of adding social media to the public affairs toolkit, we also have the responsibility to understand the guidelines and ramifications. Official guidelines and policies have not wholly kept up with ever-changing technologies. Guidance must evolve as social media use increases among Auxiliary units.
- (3) In 2021, the Coast Guard released the updated [reference \(c\)](#) to which the Auxiliary currently adheres. The Auxiliary also follows the policies and procedures in Section 5.R. of [reference \(a\)](#) as well as those of [references \(b\)](#) and [\(d\)](#).



- (4) These Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) complement the aforementioned references. It also serves as a primary reference and foundation, refining the criteria and process for utilizing social media in the Auxiliary. It is a fluid document, to be updated as technology and practices progress.
- (5) This document describes provisions for the use of social media by Auxiliary units and individuals using personal accounts for Auxiliary business. Guidance for personal account use is expressly noted and all other general guidance found in this document is intended to solely apply to Auxiliary unit accounts. Refer to Section 5.R. of [reference \(a\)](#) for additional guidelines on use of social media in official and personal capacities.
- (6) It is the responsibility of each member to understand the difference between official, unofficial, and personal use of social media while engaging online.
  - (a) Official. The communication is your job.
  - (b) Unofficial. The communication relates to your job regardless of when or where you write it.
  - (c) Personal. The communication is about personal issues and not related to your job. When in doubt about social media guidelines and policy, check with your unit Public Affairs (PA) staff officer and experienced leadership.



Deborah Heldt Cordone, AUXPA1

2. Social Media Security.

**"All personnel have a responsibility to ensure that sensitive information is not posted."**

Section 6.E.4. of [reference \(b\)](#)

- a. Whether on official or unofficial social media pages, security awareness involving social media platforms and posts takes top priority to help protect the safety of Team Coast Guard members and operations. The use of social media exposes us to increasing digital risks and challenges. Criminal and foreign adversaries have been known to scour platforms and accounts for the purpose of gathering information, making us more vulnerable.
- b. Even though Coast Guard Public Affairs policy states, "Maximum disclosure with minimum delay," take the time necessary to ensure information is suitable for social media release. Ensure the post content is accurate and does not violate policy or privacy.
- c. If posting images of or from active-duty units or facilities, the Officer-In-Charge (OINC) or Commanding Officer (CO), via their chain of command, must approve the use of such images or information in any and all media. They are the information release authority.
- d. You are expected to properly secure your accounts and carefully follow Operations Security (OPSEC), Security, Accuracy, Policy, and Propriety (SAPP), Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), and Privacy Act of 1974 restrictions.
- e. Never release information on social media that violates OPSEC or national security. Do not post operations information on an official page or your personal timeline when actively engaged in those operations. That would be an example of an OPSEC violation and could jeopardize the safety of members and operations.
- f. Be vigilant protecting yourself, fellow members, and family. Adversaries collect intelligence via social media. Do not tag yourself or other members on an official Coast Guard or Auxiliary social media post/page, and do not share social media posts from personal timelines to an official page. Both situations lead to an individual's private timeline, potentially revealing personally identifiable information (PII). It can also directly identify the military affiliation of a member to anyone on the internet. If there is open (public) information on the member's personal timeline, names and photos of family members and resident locations can be exposed.
- g. The disclosure of personal information on official social media is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. The Privacy Act, with certain exceptions, prohibits the disclosure, distribution, dissemination, or copying of any information containing home addresses, home telephone numbers, spouses' names, Social Security numbers, and other personal information.
- h. Follow SAPP restrictions when posting. It is helpful to determine if certain information can be released via social media.



- (1) **Security.** Information designated with a security classification cannot be posted. Information designated as For Official Use Only (FOUO) or Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) shall not be included in a social media release unless specifically designated as *internet release authorized*.
- (2) **Accuracy.** Check for accuracy prior to release. Publish facts not supposition or commentary. Inaccurate information is difficult to correct once it has been posted on social media.
- (3) **Policy.** Know the public affairs policies associated with release of information before posting, and understand any additional guidelines within your district.
- (4) **Propriety.** All information will meet acceptable standards of propriety or appropriateness, including uniform standards. All posts will conform to the Coast Guard's Ethos and Core Values.

i. Securing Accounts.

- (1) Securing personal and Auxiliary accounts with the below methods can help mitigate the risk of compromise of Auxiliary social media accounts. In the case of Facebook, a person utilizes a personal account to create an Auxiliary page. So, if the personal Facebook account is compromised, the official Auxiliary account can also be compromised.
- (2) Secure personal and Auxiliary accounts by utilizing complex and unusual passwords. Choose a strong password, which typically includes numbers, symbols, and upper and lowercase letters. Avoid family names, pet names, birth or anniversary dates, common words, or other easy-to-hack passwords. Change your password on a routine basis and do not use the same or similar passwords for different accounts. Do not share your password with anyone and keep your passwords in a secure location. If any page administrators change, change the password.
- (3) Use a unique unit email for your Auxiliary social media account, so if your Auxiliary account is compromised, personal information will not be exposed. For official Auxiliary accounts, such as Twitter or Instagram, a unit email is required. This will simplify sharing login information amongst multiple administrators. This will not work for Auxiliary Facebook pages, which require a personal account to access a Facebook page as an administrator.
- (4) Many platforms have two-factor authentication (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google) for logging in or recovering an account. Make your accounts secure by adjusting security settings for each platform, and utilize two-factor authentication.



- (5) Do not post Auxiliary Facility (AUXFAC) vessel names or registration numbers since in some states this may lead to a member name and address. Avoid AUXFAC names/numbers in images. Our posts should not be the catalyst to finding PII.
- (6) Do not link bank accounts or other sensitive information to official social media accounts. Do not boost posts with paid ads or any type of paid engagement. Do not monetize Auxiliary social media accounts.
- (7) Monitor your Auxiliary social media daily, checking for unusual activity that indicates a hack. If you have been compromised, change your password immediately and verify engagement of the two-factor authentication process. You can also request alerts about unrecognized logins.
- (8) Due to identity theft and other online threats, be cognizant of privacy settings on your personal accounts too, and make your personal pages more secure via privacy setting adjustments. On Facebook, Twitter and Instagram personal accounts, we recommend to set your audience to "friends only" instead of public.
- (9) On your personal pages, do not add people or followers you do not know to your friend list. It is not unusual to receive friend requests from people you do not know, which may include hackers.
- (10) If you use your personal page for business purposes, consider making a separate business page instead, or assigning each post to a target audience. On Facebook, you can create custom lists of people and set your individual posts accordingly. Do not use your personal timeline to officially conduct Auxiliary business or disputes.
- (11) It is fine to share official Auxiliary posts to your personal timeline or account. In this case, it is recommended to keep the shared post to a "friends only" setting. If you do not maintain that privacy setting, anyone can see a list of shared names on the original post and can click on names, going directly to personal timelines, and to the timelines of anyone who has liked or commented on your public post.
- (12) Fake personal or business accounts (cloning). Search your social media on a routine basis for accounts impersonating you or your page. These cloned accounts are usually created for the purpose of criminal activity. Report these pages or timelines to the respective platform.
- (13) Use caution opening messages or comments sent to Auxiliary or personal pages that contain video or links. If you have opened a message, do not click on the video or link since these are sometimes used to spread malware and viruses.
- (14) Unmonitored or abandoned Auxiliary social media accounts can be the target of hackers, who can potentially and fraudulently post messages under the Auxiliary name. Do not abandon pages! Keep them active. If a page is no longer managed, relinquish the account to the unit commander and District Staff Officer for Public

Affairs (DSO-PA). Do not unpublish or deactivate the page. Let leadership address unpublishing the page. More on protocol for removing a page in the next section.

- (15) Make sure all devices, desktop and mobile, are up-to-date with security software protection. Our computers and smart phones are indispensable tools, and we need to mitigate risk.
- (16) Be aware of GEOtagging on social media. Geotagging is the process of adding geographical identification metadata to various media such as a photograph or video, websites, SMS messages, QR Codes. It may reveal a location that should not be revealed, creating an OPSEC concern.

### 3. Managing Social Media.

- a. Official Auxiliary social media pages potentially have a worldwide audience and are exposed to public scrutiny more than ever. We need to present content and responses in a professional manner, reflecting our core values and command messages. Thus, those involved in using this very public medium need to be trained in the discipline of Auxiliary public affairs coupled with social media knowledge and experience.
- b. Social media management is often more complex than many realize. Unit commanders must take into account resources and training when considering a social media presence. **Only create a social media page if you have trained Auxiliary staff to manage and monitor it on a consistent basis.**
- c. Unit leaders must include social media management during periods of unit leadership transition. Consider:
  - (1) Staffing.
  - (2) Staff turnover.
  - (3) Familiarizing new staff/leaders with existing pages.
  - (4) Assessing consistent administration and monitoring of pages.
  - (5) Optimizing effectiveness of your social media presence.
  - (6) Adding administrators and providing logins to new staff/leaders while removing previous staff. Change passwords.
- d. If an Auxiliary unit at any organizational level within a district/region creates a social media account of any sort, then the District Commodores shall appoint an Assistant District Staff Officer for Public Affairs - Social Media (ADSO-PA-SM) to help manage and monitor such social media accounts. An ADSO-PA-SM must be well-versed on Coast Guard and Auxiliary social media policy and guidelines, and not be the DSO-PA.



e. Who Can Be a Social Media Administrator for the Auxiliary?

- (1) Any Auxiliary member assigned as a social media administrator on an official Coast Guard Auxiliary social media account must:
  - (a) Be an enrolled Auxiliarist in Basically Qualified membership status with a Favorable Operational Support (OS) background check.
  - (b) Successfully complete the eLearning course AUX-20 Introduction to Auxiliary Public Affairs.
  - (c) Read [references \(c\), \(d\)](#), and this SOP, and relevant sections of [reference \(a\)](#) and [\(b\)](#) pertaining to social media.
  - (d) Complete one hour of social media training by authorized district or national class. The DSO-PA or ADSO-PA-SM can offer that training.
  - (ef) Have good foundational knowledge of social media, plus experience.
  - (g) All posts must be pre-approved by the administrator's unit commander.

f. What Social Media Platforms Do We Use?

- (1) There are several social media sites available. For official purposes, we are currently authorized to use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, plus a national-level blog. However, Auxiliary units are *not* required to have a social media presence.
- (2) Facebook is the most commonly used platform by the Coast Guard and Auxiliary. It is statistically the most popular social media site available, with almost three billion active monthly users.
- (3) Only one official page per platform, per unit (flotilla, division, district), is authorized. For example, a district may have one official Twitter page, but not two. A district may simultaneously have Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages.
- (4) Twitter pages are authorized at district-level or above. Instagram is now authorized at flotilla level and above.
- (5) One official YouTube channel is allowed at national and district levels, to be managed by appointed staff. One national-level LinkedIn account is also authorized and is to be managed by appointed national staff. One Flickr account is allowed at national level and is to be managed by appointed national staff.
- (6) District-level Twitter accounts should be made available by the DSO-PA to serve division and flotilla units upon request. However, the DSO-PA and/or ADSO-PA-

SM will manage these accounts. An account does not need to be created if there is no interest. National social media pages are available for content submissions with high resolution photos and properly formatted captions or stories. Photo or graphic credit (specific name) should be provided for any submission.

- (7) Be aware not all platforms automatically create closed captions for videos as required by Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Auxiliary videos need to adhere to accessibility guidelines and standards as promulgated by the U.S. Access Board. If questions arise, they should be directed to the Coast Guard Directives and Publications Division (CG-612) at [section.508@uscg.mil](mailto:section.508@uscg.mil).
- (8) Auxiliary unit posts must be pre-approved by the unit commander. Auxiliary videos must be submitted for pre-approval via the district chain of leadership and management (COLM), and district public affairs program chain prior to being released to the public. Check with your district COLM to ascertain if District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) pre-approval is also required.

g. Social Media Staff Assignments.

- (1) Allow staff members to administer Auxiliary social media only when they are properly trained.
- (2) There must be at least two administrators, with full permissions, on every Auxiliary social media account. One must be a manager, and one must be from current elected unit leadership from the respective flotilla, division, or district.
- (3) Page Manager. Will manage, monitor and post to the page. May include page design and will carefully adhere to Auxiliary and Coast Guard policy. Page managers can assign additional administrators or moderators with leadership approval. All assigned administrators must meet training criteria.
- (4) Leadership Administrator. At least one administrator will be from a unit leadership position, for example Flotilla Commander/Vice Flotilla Commander (FC/VFC), Division Commander/Division Vice Commander (DCDR/VCDR), District Commodore/District Chief of Staff/District Directorate Chief (DCO/DCOS/DDC), etc. The leadership member will be considered a 'silent' administrator. The silent administrator does not post content or have responsibility for monitoring the page. The silent administrator is primarily assigned for the purpose of leadership transition and staff turnover. Leadership admins must make sure the district DSO-PA or ADSO-PA-SM is assigned as a full admin to the page or has login information.

h. National Level Staff Assignments.

- (1) The [U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Facebook](#) page is recognized as the main official Auxiliary Facebook page. There are many other official Auxiliary pages by flotillas, divisions, districts, and directorates.

- (2) On national-level Facebook pages, there will be at least two staff administrators, with full permissions, assigned to each page. At least one administrator will be a page manager. At least one administrator, division chief or higher from each respective directorate, will be a silent administrator.
- (3) The [U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Twitter](#) feed is recognized as the main official Auxiliary Twitter page. Page handle: @USCGAux.
- (4) The [U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Instagram](#) page is recognized as the main official Auxiliary Instagram page. User handle: @uscgaux.
- (5) For national-level Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, there will be at least one administrator assigned to manage the page and account. Pages will be created using a directorate email. For Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube accounts, the director and deputies of each directorate will be provided with login information for each account, including the relative login email, connected phone number (if any), user name and password.
- (6) If the current account information is not up-to-date nor meets the above criteria, account email, phone number and password can be changed in settings by the page administrator. Always provide updated login information to leadership.

i. District, Division and Flotilla Levels.

- (1) The DSO-PA and ADSO-PA-SM will maintain a current list of all social media pages within their district. The Division Staff Officer for Public Affairs (SO-PA) will maintain a list of all social media pages within their division and provide that list to the DSO-PA and ADSO-PA-SM any time there is a change to it.
- (2) The DSO-PA and ADSO-PA-SM will also be added as silent administrators with full permissions to every Facebook page within their district. They will not post content. They will monitor pages on behalf of the District Commodore. This assignment does not diminish the responsibility of respective units to administer and monitor their own pages. If a unit has an unauthorized page, the DSO-PA or ADSO-PA will still be provided login info, including login credentials to access the account.
- (3) Within units, there must be more than one administrator on every Auxiliary Facebook page, including managing and leadership administrators.
- (4) The Public Affairs staff officer will be assigned as a primary or additional administrator, silent or otherwise. The FSO-PA will be added to the flotilla social media page. The SO-PA will be added to all flotilla pages within their division and the division page itself.

- (5) If an administrator no longer belongs to the unit for any reason (e.g., transfers to a different unit), they will be immediately removed from the page, even if they created it.
- (6) For unit Twitter accounts, pages will be created using a unit email. The administrator will provide login information to the DSO-PA, ADSO-PA-SM, unit PA staff officer, and unit commander. At district level, the information will be provided to the DCO and DCOS. Login information includes relative login email, connected phone number (if any), user name, and password. If current account information is not up-to-date or does not meet the above criteria, account email, phone number, and password shall be changed in settings by the page administrator. Always provide updated information.
- (7) Unit PA staff officers (FSO-PA, SO-PA, DSO-PA) will include social media activity in their monthly Easy Reports. New social media pages will be included in the report.
- (8) When unit PA staff officers (FSO-PA, SO-PA, DSO-PA) leave their assigned positions, the incoming unit PA staff officer shall be immediately added as administrator to respective social media accounts within the district, and be provided login info for district Twitter or Instagram account if they exist. In case there is no unit PA staff officer, the unit commander or vice commander will be added until a PA staff officer is assigned.
- (9) When page managers want to leave their positions, there is a process. Do not abandon, deactivate, or unpublish pages! Unit leadership must first be informed along with the DSO-PA via the public affairs program chain. The page needs to be relinquished to the DSO-PA and unit leadership. Leadership will decide if they want to keep the page active.
- (10) In this instance, unit leadership must decide if they have qualified staff to manage the page or they want to unpublish (Facebook) or deactivate (Twitter) the page. If the page is to be taken down, the DSO-PA will remove the other administrators. This gives the DSO-PA control of the page to avoid future issues.
- (11) Auxiliary social media pages constitute federal records. The pages must be archived before unpublishing or deactivating. The records must be preserved in accordance with federal records management policy, and are otherwise subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). DSO-PAs will keep an electronic file of archived pages.
- (12) If a page or account has been inactive for six months or more, the DSO-PA or ADSO-PA-SM should assist in helping the respective unit. Before the deletion of any page in such instances, the DSO-PA will be consulted.

- (13) Unmonitored or abandoned social media accounts can be the target of hackers. The unit commander has a choice of permanent versus temporary removal. If the page is simply deactivated or unpublished, the page can be reactivated or published in the future without losing posts and followers.
- (14) DSO-PAs, with cooperation from unit leaders, will reinforce social media policy, security, and procedure by providing unit or individual training in flotillas, divisions and within districts.

#### 4. Rules of Engagement.

- a. All Coast Guard personnel, including Auxiliarists, utilizing social media tools whether in an official or unofficial capacity must adhere to these guidelines when they identify themselves as a U.S. Coast Guard member or employee, or if it could be construed as such. Identification as affiliated with the Coast Guard may be as a result of past site activity, photos of themselves, or other indirect activity. Even when off-duty, and on a personal site or blog, Coast Guard military personnel are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and civilian employees are subject to administrative or legal action if they violate policy or security regulations.
- b. All Coast Guard personnel are responsible for any statements, comments, or blogs posted under their name. Personnel are not shielded from legal action for libel or other violations of the personal rights of others.
- c. Auxiliarists are subject to and abide by Coast Guard policy. Auxiliary social media policies effectively align with those for other Coast Guard personnel.
- d. Section 5.R. of [reference \(a\)](#) addresses Auxiliary social media policy. It states whether in a personal capacity or assigned to duty, Auxiliarists are expected to ensure their use of social media, "...neither inadvertently nor deliberately connects or associates, or projects an image of connection or association with, inappropriate material that is not consistent with the Coast Guard's Core Values and Ethos."
- e. There are various other rules and responsibilities that come with official or unofficial use of social media as an Auxiliarist. We must be vigilant in acting professionally online at all times. Auxiliarists must always consider how their posts will reflect upon the Coast Guard, the Auxiliary, and themselves.
- f. You can assume anything posted is public. Even if your personal Facebook timeline is set to "friends only," there is still an audience. If you affiliate as an Auxiliarist on social media in any fashion, including images, video, text, comments, or past online activity, you must act accordingly and respectfully.



g. Official Auxiliary Social Media.

- (1) Posting on an official Coast Guard Auxiliary or Coast Guard social media page (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) is akin to an abbreviated news or photo release. Subsequently, all posts must also fall within guidelines set forth in [references \(a\)](#), [\(b\)](#), and [\(d\)](#). Make sure descriptions, images, and uniforms are in line with Coast Guard and Auxiliary policy. For regulations pertaining to uniform wear, consult Chapter 10 of [reference \(a\)](#) or an Auxiliary Human Resources staff officer.
- (2) Each page manager and their respective leadership is responsible for what is posted - shared and original content!
- (3) Follow ethics of journalism when posting on social media. Traditional ethics still apply.
- (4) Verify there are no copyright infringements. In regard to imaging or other intellectual property, include credit and/or source. Do not use non-governmental images or other intellectual property without expressed written permission from the original creator. Citing a source does not equal permission. When in doubt, err on the side of caution and do not post it. Consult with unit leadership or experienced PAO for further inquiry. Just because another official page has posted an image or authored text, does not mean it is authorized to use or share.
- (5) Do not post new information or news about Coast Guard units on your Auxiliary Facebook page without first clearing it with the active duty PAO and Officer-in-Charge or Commanding Officer for that unit. It is permissible and encouraged to share from Coast Guard unit pages using the share function, since the content is already vetted.
- (6) Only share from Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, or other official government pages. Do not share from unofficial pages, private accounts, commercial pages, or non-profit entities not directly related to the Coast Guard or Auxiliary. There are exceptions when working with non-governmental agencies and other entities. Exceptions require approval from the DSO-PA and DCO, via COLM. When you have a question about sharing from an unauthorized page, first get guidance from a knowledgeable PAO or unit commander trained in public affairs.
- (7) On Auxiliary Facebook pages, it is preferable and courteous to utilize the share function from Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary social media pages, instead of copying and pasting content that another member took time to create. This is simple social media etiquette. There are exceptions, such as the inability to share across platforms. If you copy and paste content, always name the source page, tag them, and include photo credit.

- (8) Do not "like" or "follow" commercial or personal pages from an official Auxiliary page, not even non-profits that are not related to the Coast Guard or Auxiliary. Only "like" official Coast Guard, Auxiliary, or other official U.S. government pages.
- (9) Do not post controversial topics on official Auxiliary social media pages. Do not engage in controversial discourse in the comment section of posts on Auxiliary or Coast Guard social media pages. Do not speculate or offer controversial commentary on official accounts. Content must contain factual information.
- (10) Photos of minor children: Do not post photos of minors (i.e., youth under 18 years of age) without signed consent by a parent or legal guardian on a U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Photo/Video/Audio Consent Form/Release form, ANSC-7020 (Appendix C). School release forms cannot be substituted. The top half of the consent/release form can be used for adults as required. Sea Scouts and Sea Scout leaders use a specific release form, ANSC-7020a. Signed photo release forms are Auxiliary policy and not relevant to what local active-duty units may do. Cover your bases and get signed releases for children/ citizens even if augmenting active duty.
- (11) Federal holidays, military branch birthdays, and other Coast Guard-directed celebrations may be recognized on social media.
- (12) Moderate and review submitted comments on each post. Comments must be moderated daily and checked frequently when a new post is made. Sometimes the nature of a post will trigger more commenting. Comment threads can quickly spiral off topic when not moderated. When removing inappropriate comments, do not delete the comment. Use the hide option instead so a record of the comment is maintained. If a comment cannot be hidden, take a screenshot, and delete. Provide the screenshot and circumstances to DSO-PA, who will save the record.
- (13) When engaging with comments on your page, do so in a professional, positive, and factual manner. It is okay not to respond to every comment. Feel free to 'like' appropriate comments. Response from the page admin often encourages more engagement.
- (14) The following Coast Guard Auxiliary comment policy will be posted on all Auxiliary social media sites. The policy can be placed in the "about" or "additional information" section of Facebook pages. For clarification, the Auxiliary will add Privacy Act of 1974 information in the final paragraph.

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## U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Comment Policy

We welcome your comments. This site is sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary to provide a forum about our work to provide maritime safety, security, and stewardship; to secure the homeland, save lives and property; and to protect the environment.

This page is for public information only and is not a distress communication channel. If you have an emergency and need Coast Guard assistance, use VHF-FM Channel 16 (156.8 MHz), dial 911, or call your nearest Coast Guard unit.

All comments are moderated. We will determine which comments to keep posted or not. We expect all contributors to be respectful and will remove comments that contain personal attacks; that refer to Coast Guard or Auxiliary personnel by name; contain offensive terms that target specific ethnic or racial groups; or contain vulgar language.

We will remove comments that are spam, off-topic, or that promote services or products.

We disclaim any liability for loss or damage resulting from any comments posted on this page. This forum may not be used for the submission of any claim, demand, informal or formal complaint, or other form of legal and/or administrative notice or process.

The U.S. Coast Guard will not collect or retain personally identifiable information unless you voluntarily provide it. We discourage you from providing sensitive Personally Identifying Information (PII) (e.g., Social Security numbers).

Any links provided to a U.S. Coast Guard presence on other third-party sites is for your reference only. The Coast Guard and Auxiliary do not endorse any non-government websites, companies, or applications.

### Confidentiality Notice / Privacy Act of 1974

The disclosure of personal information contained on this page is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. The subject Act with certain exceptions prohibits the disclosure, distribution, dissemination or copying of any material containing home addresses, home telephone numbers, spouses' names, and Social Security numbers, except for official business. Violation may result in disciplinary action by the Coast Guard and/or civilian criminal sanction.

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NOTE: On Twitter and Instagram, there is not enough room allotted for the above statement. In the 'bio' section, you can write the following:

“This is NOT an emergency communication channel. If you are in distress, use VHF Ch. 16 or dial 911. Per official policy, comments will be moderated.”

- (15) Per Coast Guard policy, official social media pages are public, and settings should be set to ensure maximum public availability of content. This does not apply to personal pages.
- (16) Auxiliary "pages" should not be confused with Facebook "groups." Auxiliary pages will only be created as a page, not as a group. Facebook groups are places for small group interaction. Groups can be set to public, private, or secret.
- (17) Units are welcome to create groups for discussion, but membership will be limited to Auxiliary and Coast Guard personnel and set to private since posting is done by named individuals. Even if it is a private group, all posts should be considered public and adhere to the posting policy.
- (18) It is worth repeating that it is the responsibility of each member to understand the difference between official, unofficial, and personal use of social media while engaging online.
  - (a) Official. The communication is your job.
  - (b) Unofficial. The communication relates to your job regardless of when or where you write it.
  - (c) Personal. The communication is about personal issues and not related to your job. When in doubt about social media guidelines and policy, check with your unit PAO and experienced leadership.

## 5. Creating a Social Media Presence.

- a. The social media sites authorized by the Auxiliary are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, with our highest presence (by far) on Facebook. The Auxiliary Photo Corps uses Flickr as a photo repository.
- b. Unlike traditional Auxiliary web sites, social media is not static. We have conversations with and get immediate feedback from our stakeholders in the form of likes, comments, retweets, and other digital engagement.
- c. Social media sites offer detailed page statistics, giving us insight to help grow and market our pages. The more visitors and followers we have, the more we can succeed in sharing our number one mission and message of Recreational Boating Safety.
- d. Video production and viewing has grown exponentially on social media and is the most popular content. Facebook offers video hosting and live video feeds. You can also share a video from YouTube to a social media page. The importance of creating video content cannot be emphasized enough since during the next few years, it will continue to grow as the primary content on social media.

- e. It is important to regularly post on your social media page. Consistent posting is crucial to gain an audience and attract interest. If you are having a difficult time creating original content, share interesting content from other Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, and government pages which may have pertinent information. The National Safe Boating Council and Safe Boating Campaign websites are excellent resources for downloadable and usable safe boating content for creating social media posts.
- f. The following instructions are general information for creating social media pages, though there is more than one method. Social media platforms change periodically, so these instructions can quickly become outdated. Alternatively, you can do an internet search for instructions. Sample search criteria might include, "How to create a Twitter page in 2023." It helps to designate the year or you may get old instructions. The most accurate method is to use the help feature on the platform of choice.
- g. Also, since platform features often change, it is best to visit the platform to decide what page features you want to utilize.
- h. The Social Media Creation Process.
  - (1) Request and obtain unit leadership and DSO-PA approval before creating a page for your unit.
  - (2) Report previously created pages through your public affairs program leadership up to the DSO-PA.
  - (3) Conduct a thorough search for old pages before creating a new one. If your unit already has a page or account in its name, make every effort to contact the administrator to take over the page before creating a new one. In some instances, you can claim the page via platform guidelines, but it is difficult to accomplish. Do not create a new page, until the old page is in your control.
  - (4) Maintain brand identity across channels. Consistent naming of social media pages will exist nationwide. Social media pages are an official representation of the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary.
  - (5) Do not use nicknames or informal names. Begin the page name with U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary followed by your unit name. Never use the name U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary alone. That name is reserved for and assigned to the main [national social media page](#). If using unit numbers, start with U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, add a location (as listed in the [Auxiliary Directory](#)), then unit number if desired. Unit numbers are not required (e.g., "U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla Vancouver WA" and "U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Thirteenth District"). Do not use a flotilla or division number alone as there is sometimes more than one unit assigned the same number in different states, plus the general public does not know the meaning of unit numbers.

- (6) If you already have a page with incorrect naming, do not make a new page! Page names can be changed within the "settings" menu.
- (7) Do not create "unofficial" Auxiliary pages. Any page created under the Coast Guard Auxiliary name is considered official and public. There are no unofficial pages.
- (8) Never create an official social media page for active duty Coast Guard. That is solely under the authority of active duty units and managed by Coast Guard PAOs. Active duty Coast Guard units will create their own pages with the guidance of active duty PAOs.
- (9) Auxiliary social media pages are not owned by Auxiliary members even if they create the page and page content. Auxiliary pages and original content belong to the Auxiliary and will be relinquished when asked. Auxiliary pages will remain only in the possession of current Auxiliary members and units.
- (10) Creating a Facebook Page.
  - (a) To create or administer an official Auxiliary Facebook page, you must first have a personal profile on Facebook. A personal profile and timeline are a place on Facebook where you can share information (e.g, photos, videos) about yourself. Note that using generic or fake identities on Facebook to create an account is a violation of their Terms of Service. If you use a unit name as a private timeline name (which is common practice), you are at risk of having the personal account removed, which could put the page at risk.
  - (b) [Reference \(b\)](#) guidance is to not disguise, impersonate, or misrepresent who you are online.
  - (c) If you do not already have a personal account, you can create an account on either your computer or via the mobile Facebook application on your smartphone (e.g., android or iPhone). Be aware not all Facebook features or functions work on mobile.
  - (d) Know the difference between pages and groups. **For an official Facebook Auxiliary page, use the 'page' format not the 'group' format.** The two formats have different features and purposes. A 'page' platform is public and allows brands and organizations to introduce their services and activities with a more professional fact-based method. When someone on Facebook likes or follows a page, they can start viewing page updates in the newsfeed. A group is a community-based feature that gathers people with the same interests to discuss topics and share their opinions. Discussions are also welcome on Auxiliary pages if they fall within the guidelines of comment policy. Pages statistically yield better results in search engines since all the text is public.

- (e) To create an official Auxiliary page or help administer an already existing page, you will log into your personal Facebook account first and create or administer it from there. To admin the page during future visits, you will access the page via your personal account.
- (f) If the page already exists, the current page administrator can invite other administrators. If there are multiple administrators on a page, each one logs in under their own name to get access to the page.
- (g) Make sure both the cover and profile images are clear with high resolution and quality. Here are two examples of profile images. For a unit logo, help may be obtained via the [Auxiliary Public Affairs Directorate's Creative Services Division \(DVC-AS\)](#).



- (h) While profile photos usually remain static for brand recognition, cover photos can be changed. All photos must be professional and not outside photo guidelines. Facebook accepts .jpg, .gif, and .png image formats. Facebook currently recommends MP4 or MOV video format, but accepts various other video formats. Facebook also offers live video streaming, which is helpful for events.
- (i) It is authorized to use the unaltered Auxiliary emblem online, such as for a profile photo on an Auxiliary page. There are other uses as well. Any commercial use must be approved by Auxiliary national leadership.



U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Emblem



U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Seal

- (j) Do not use the Auxiliary seal, as shown above, on your social media. It has a different design and purpose. Use of the Auxiliary seal is only authorized for use on official Auxiliary documents requiring signature under seal, plus some other limited uses such as official Auxiliary stationary.
- (k) The Auxiliary seal is not authorized for use on Auxiliary websites, social media pages, or in any other electronic venues that may facilitate its unauthorized duplication.
- (l) In posting Facebook content, make sure descriptions, images, and uniforms are in line with Coast Guard and Auxiliary policy. Carefully follow guidelines in the Rules of Engagement section of this SOP.
- (m) On Facebook, you can edit content after it has been posted. Click on the three horizontal dots on the upper right corner of the post which reveals a drop-down menu. You can edit the text, change the date, delete the post or pin it to the top of the page timeline. Beware anyone can see the edits you made by clicking on edit history via the same drop-down menu.
- (n) People can message your Auxiliary page, which can be seen in the page inbox. It is appropriate to respond to messages in a timely and professional manner. You can also create an automated response for when you cannot answer right away. If someone messages you with a complaint about an Auxiliary member, do not investigate the matter. Thank the person for their message and tell them you will pass the information to the proper person.
- (o) Take a screenshot of the complaint, including the name of the person who messaged you. Note the day, date, and time. If a link to content was provided, take a screenshot of the content in case it disappears. Look in the [Auxiliary Directory](#) and see if the alleged offender is listed. Note their unit number and unit commander. Do not contact the Auxiliary member. Email your COLM immediately with the gathered information, followed by a phone call to make sure the email was received. Though you may be the administrator who receives the complaint from the reporting party, you do not have authority to investigate or take action.
- (p) A "call-to-action" button can be added to your page, below the cover photo. This button can guide users towards important information. The button can be linked to the sign up form on the Auxiliary website, cgaux.org, or your unit website.
- (q) Facebook allows prescheduled posting, which is convenient for key dates and events. This feature is helpful during National Safe Boating Week.



(11) Creating a Twitter Page.

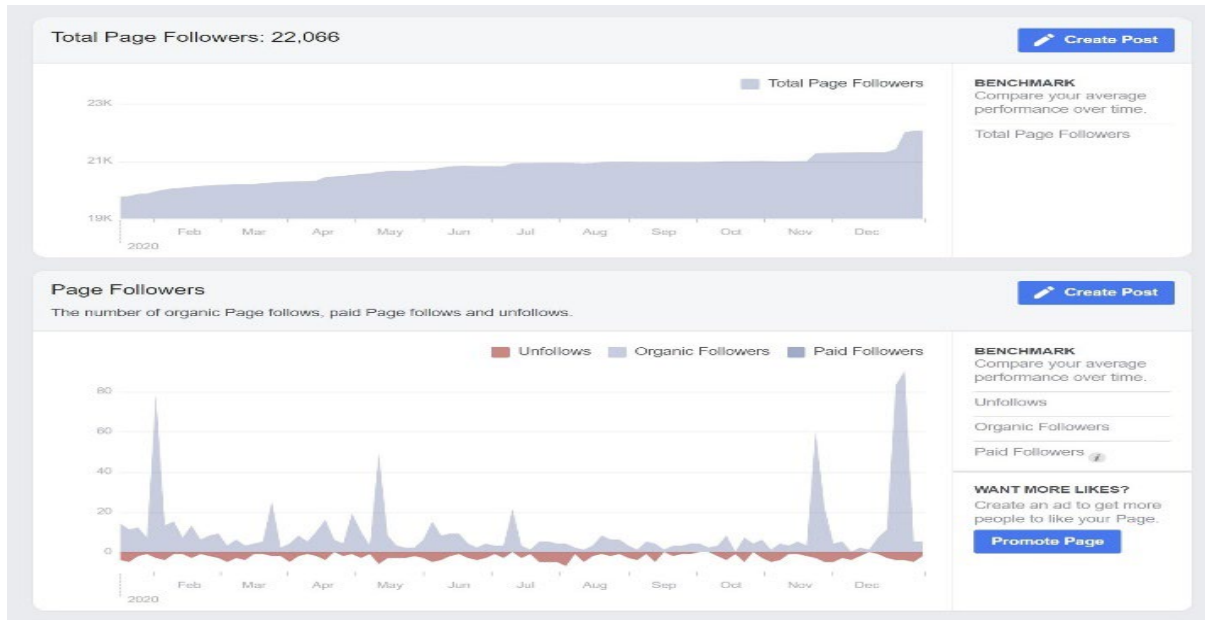
- (a) Twitter is another popular social media site. You can create a Twitter account for your unit at district level, or above. Posts, named "tweets," are limited to 280 characters and may include links and images. You can create new content or share posts. Sharing a post is called "retweeting." Similar to Facebook, you can receive likes and comments on your posts.
- (b) Unlike Facebook, where you sign in to your personal account to get to the Auxiliary page, Twitter is different. You do not create a personal account. Create a page using the Auxiliary unit's name as the account name.

(12) Creating an Instagram Account.

- (a) Instagram is a photo, video, and story sharing site owned by Facebook. You can create an Instagram account for your unit. An option is to share your high-quality photos and proper captioning with the administrator of the [National U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Instagram page](#).
- (b) To create an Instagram account for your unit, you do not need to open a personal account. Like Twitter, it can be managed as a multi-user account if there is more than one administrator. Instagram used to be a mobile-only platform, but you can now access limited features of Instagram on a desktop environment. Create a unit email for login credentials.
- (c) For more information about setting up an account, visit the [Instagram help page](#).
- (d) Districts seeking to create YouTube accounts should reach out to the [Auxiliary Public Affairs Directorate's Social Media Division \(DVC-AF\)](#) with any questions or requests for assistance.

i. Social Media Statistics.

- (1) Statistical insights and analytics can be found on most social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Page and audience data are gathered and analyzed to determine demographics, audience growth, and content success.
- (2) Measuring the performance of activity helps us reach goals and report statistical success to leadership. Data is automatically created by audience demographics, along with page likes, post likes, post comments, shares, and similar data. Below is an example of important statistics about page followers.



### (3) Sample statistics insights from Facebook

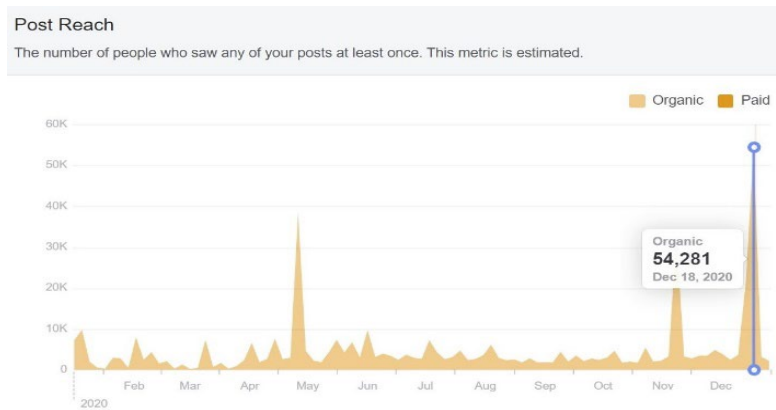
- (a) The Overview on Facebook gives you a bird's-eye-view of everything happening on the page. You can view data for certain lengths of time. Data can be exported into an Excel spreadsheet.
- (b) The Overview is broken down into sections and categories with graphs.
  1. Actions on Page: The combined total clicks for your contact information and call-to-action button.
  2. Page Views: Total views of your Facebook Page, including by people not logged into Facebook.
  3. Page Previews: The number of times people hovered their mouse over your Page information to see a preview of your Page.
  4. Page Likes: The number of new likes.
  5. Post Reach: The number of people who saw your posts in their timeline.
  6. Story Reach: The number of people who saw your Stories.
  7. Recommendations: The number of people who recommended your Page.
  8. Post Engagement: A combined total of post likes, comments, shares, and other engagements.

9. Responsiveness: An evaluation of how often and how fast you respond to messages.

10. Videos: The number of video views of three seconds or more.

11. Page followers: The number of new followers.

(c) An important number to check is the "reach" on individual posts or the page over time. **Reach** is the total number of people who see your content. Other data choices are also available on Facebook.



(4) On Twitter, data is located under "Analytics." It is not as detailed as Facebook, but helpful nonetheless. Here is a Twitter data example:







(5) Other social media platforms have similar data, some more detailed than others. Data will also include information for popular times and days to post, but this data usually changes over time.

j. Social Media Page Records. Auxiliary social media sites are considered federal records, so you must maintain a copy per the appropriate records retention policies. This is especially important before removing an existing page. Saving data from social media sites is time-consuming and some save efforts need to be done manually. Follow instructions via the help function on respective sites.

## Appendix A

### Auxiliary Social Media Platforms Summary

Platform	Target Level
 Facebook	National Area District Flotilla/Division
 Instagram	National Area District Flotilla/Division
 Twitter	National Area District
 YouTube	National District
 LinkedIn	National
 Flickr	National
 Podcast	National

## Appendix B

### Social Media Glossary

(The definitions below, compiled by the Auxiliary Public Affairs Directorate, are provided to better inform readers of basic interpretation of these commonly used words/phrases and are not official government definitions.)

**Administrator.** The person or persons who run, maintain and manage a social media page or group.

**Analytics.** Social media data insights derived from automated page data compilation. Most social networks include their own analytics tools to help pages analyze data. Analytics can be used to improve social media strategy.

**Archiving.** Keeping a record of page data including posts, messages, and comments. This data can be requested as federal records through the FOIA process.

**Audience.** Group of people on social media you can reach with your content. This includes followers or anyone who sees or interacts with your content. Growing your social media audience is one of the best ways to spread brand awareness.

**Avatar.** A computer-generated visual representation of a person for use in a digital environment.

**Average Response Time.** A social media customer service metric. It is the average time it takes a brand to reply to questions or complaints on social media.

**Block.** When you block someone on social media, you prevent them from seeing your posts on that social network. Blocked users will be unable to see you, follow you, message you or tag you.

**Blog.** Contraction of the phrase web log. A digital publication in which one or more authors regularly post content, generally on a specific topic.

**Boosted Post.** Form of social media advertising in which a brand pays to show a social post to a potential audience.

**Brand Awareness.** Social media metric that captures how likely people are to be aware of your brand. You can measure brand awareness by tracking mentions and engagement. The more people are talking about you online, the greater your brand awareness.

**Caption.** Description that accompanies a photo on social media. Captions can include text, hashtags, @ mentions, and emojis. Captions are an important part of telling your photo's story.

**Chat.** Online conversation with one or more people. Whether one-on-one or in a group, chats are usually private and text-based, although they may incorporate imaging. The most common chat platform is Facebook Messenger.

**Check-in.** Location tagging a social media post to indicate where the user is, or where the content in the post was created. Visting a geographical location or event. Help brand awareness with follower check-in on your page.

**Clickbait.** Web content with a misleading or sensationalist headline designed to get readers to click through to the full story to generate page views or obtain your digital information.

**Comment.** Form of engagement in which a user replies to your social media post with an inquiry, opinion or information. Comments can be positive or negative. A large number of comments shows that your post is engaging or controversial.

**Content.** Images, video, infographics, text and stories used to attract and retain followers on a page.

**Dashboard.** Tool that allows social media administrators to manage all their social media from one screen. A dashboard allows users to schedule, post, and view content, and to create analytics reports.

**Embed.** Integration of links, images, videos, gifs and other content into social media posts or other web media. Most social networks offer native tools to embed their content on other pages or websites.

**Emoji.** Small graphics used in digital text to represent expressions. 😊 😄 😞

**Engagement.** Any form of interaction with your brand on social media. Likes, comments, and shares are all forms of engagement.

**Fan.** Someone who likes or follows your social media page.

**Feed.** Ongoing list of new content posted by the accounts a user follows on social media. Most social media feeds are controlled by an algorithm.

**Followers.** People who have liked or followed your page on social media.

**Friend.** A person that you connect with on Facebook. Unlike a fan or follower, a friend is a two-way personal connection. Pages do not have friends. Pages have fans and followers.

**Geotag.** A geographical location added to a photo, video, message, or other social media post. Be aware of geotags and OPSEC considerations.

**GIF.** An acronym for Graphics Interchange Format, a file format that supports both static and animated images. Facebook and Twitter both support animated GIFs.

**Group.** An online community within Facebook. Groups can be public, private or secret. Members with a common interest can share information and discuss relevant topics in groups.

**Hashtag.** A word or phrase preceded by the '#' or number symbol. Used on social media to help other users easily find messages with a specific theme or content. Hashtags are searchable and serve a similar role as keywords. There are no spaces in hashtags. #SemperParatus #WearIt #SafeBoating.

**Header or Cover Photo.** An image that appears at the top of a social media profile.

**Inbox.** A social media electronic folder where you read, respond and organize messages.

**Influencer.** A social media user with a significant audience who can drive awareness about a trend, topic, or product.

**Like.** A positive form of engagement on social media indicating you like content by clicking on a button. On Facebook, the 'like' button is a thumbs-up emoji. On Twitter and Instagram, a 'like' is expressed with a heart emoji.

**Live Stream.** A real-time video shared on social media. Most social networks now offer live streaming options that include the possibility to interact with viewers, who can submit written comments and questions throughout the broadcast.

**Lurker.** Someone who watches a social media feed or belongs to a social media group but does not participate or engage.

**Meme.** A joke or comment made for sharing on social networks, usually appearing in the form of a graphic with clever text.

**Messenger.** Facebook's instant messaging app. Allows Facebook users to send direct messages to each other.

**News Feed.** Facebook term for the ongoing list of new content posted for a follower to view.

**Notification.** Message or alert indicating new social media activity on your page or personal account. Notifications can be turned on or off for various channels.

**Organic Reach.** The number of unique users who view your content without paid promotion. This can be through their own feed or from content shared by others. Auxiliary pages and content receive organic reach data since there is no paid content.

**Phishing.** The act of sending you a fraudulent message or email with questions, requests, threats or links used to lure you to reveal personal information.

**Pinned Post.** A social media post saved to the top of the page on Facebook or Twitter. Pinning a post features an important announcement, event or other highlighted content.

**Platform.** A social network or a component of a social network. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are all social media platforms.

**Post.** Any social media status update, photo, video, or other content shared on your platform.

**Reach.** Total number of people who have seen a particular social post or ad. This metric does not necessarily indicate that all of these people have actually seen your content. They could have scrolled right past it, for instance.

**Reaction.** A form of engagement on Facebook. In addition to Likes, reactions include Love, Haha, Wow, Sad, and Angry. Each of these reactions is expressed by clicking on the corresponding emoji.

**Reply.** A social media function that allows you to respond publicly to another user's comment, creating a comment thread.

**Retweet.** To share someone else's Tweet with your followers. When you click the retweet button on the Twitter website or app, you can opt to republish the tweet as is, or add a comment above the retweet.

**Scheduling.** Planning social media updates and content ahead of time using a social media management platform or other publishing tool like Creator Studio.

**Selfie.** A self-portrait photograph, usually taken with a smartphone and shared on social media.

**Share.** When social media users post content from another on their own network page, timeline or group.

**Spam.** Unsolicited, unwanted, or repetitive content that clogs inboxes and clutters social media feeds. Digital junk mail.

**Tag.** A keyword added to a social media post to categorize content. You can also tag someone in a post or photo, which creates a link to their social media profile and associates them with the content. Users have the option to remove unwanted tags from their profile. Do not tag Auxiliarists on official Auxiliary Facebook pages.

**Thread.** String of messages that make up a conversation on a social media post. Threads begin with an initial message and then continue as a series of replies or comments.

**Throwback Thursday (#TBT).** A popular hashtag used to share old photos on social media.

**Traffic.** The number of users who visit a page. In a social media context, increasing traffic is a common marketing objective.

**Trending.** A topic that is popular on social media at a given moment.

**Troll.** A social media user who makes deliberately offensive or annoying postings intending to provoke other users.



**Tweet.** A Twitter post. Tweets are limited to 280 characters and can include photos, videos, and links. They are public by default.

**Unfollow.** To unsubscribe from a social media page or person.

**URL.** Short for Uniform Resource Locator. It means the address of a website page or other resource on the Internet.

**Viral.** A particular post or video that creates an unusually large number of engagements. An extremely high number of shares is the clearest sign of going viral, as your post spreads across the internet like a virus.

**Vlogging.** A combination of the words video and blogging. To create and post video blog content.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY U.S. COAST GUARD ANSC-7020 (01-13)	<b>U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO/AUDIO CONSENT FORM / RELEASE</b>	
<p>I, (print name) _____, hereby grant permission to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to take and publish images and/or sound recordings of me in news releases and/or educational and promotional materials in any medium of expression without limitation and without compensation to me of any kind. I further agree that my name and identity may be revealed in descriptive text or commentary in connection with the image(s) and/or recordings. _____ <b>(initial here only if permission to identify the subject is granted)</b>. I agree that all such images and sound recordings shall remain the property of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary with exclusive right to their publication and that the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary may assign the rights granted herein to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc.</p> <p>_____ (Date)</p> <p>_____ (Signature of adult subject)</p> <p>_____ (Address)</p> <p>_____ (City, State, Zip)</p>		
<p><b>PARENTAL RELEASE FOR MINOR CHILDREN (Under 18)</b></p> <p>I, (print name) _____, represent that I am the parent of (child's name) _____ with the legal right to grant permission to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to take and publish images and/or sound recordings of my child in news releases and/or educational and promotional materials in any medium of expression without limitation without compensation to me or to my child. I further specifically agree that my child's name and identity may be revealed in descriptive text or commentary in connection with the image(s) and/or recordings. _____ <b>(Parent initials here only if permission to identify the child is granted.)</b> I agree that all such images and sound recordings shall remain the property of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary with exclusive right to their publication and that the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary may assign the rights granted herein to the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc.</p> <p>_____ (Date)</p> <p>_____ (Signature of Parent)</p> <p>_____ (Address)</p> <p>_____ (City, State, Zip)</p>		