

**United States Coast Guard
SEA PARTNERS CAMPAIGN**



Training Guide

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SEA PARTNERS CAMPAIGN TRAINING GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SEA PARTNERS PROGRAM

Introduction

Overview The Sea Partners Campaign is the Coast Guard's environmental education and outreach program. Sea Partners is a proactive, innovative aspect of the Coast Guard's compliance mission under the Marine Safety and Environmental Protection program. Sea Partners is an effort to provide waterways users such as boaters, fishermen, marina operators, the marine industry, as well as the wider public with information on protecting the marine environment. The Sea Partners Campaign applies to all aquatic environments: marine, riverine, and inland.

Lesson Objectives **IDENTIFY** the history of the Sea Partners Program.

IDENTIFY the Coast Guard's Authority as it relates to the Sea Partners Program.

EXPLAIN the focus of the Sea Partners Program efforts.

IDENTIFY the goals of the Sea Partners Program.

DESCRIBE the Sea Partners Operations/Structure and the role of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

History Sea Partners, a marine environmental protection outreach and education program, was established in 1994 and remains the only environmental public education program in the Coast Guard. In 1997, the Coast Guard expanded the program to include the Coast Guard Auxiliary, enabling Auxiliarists to earn a Marine Environmental Educator qualification preparing them to conduct Sea Partners events. Sea Partners is also the only Coast Guard initiative to meet the Coast Guard's legacy obligations for public education under the:

- Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act,
- Atlantic Protected Living Marine Resource Initiative,
- Coral Reef Task Force,
- Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee, and
- Whitewater to Bluewater Initiative.

The Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act of 1987 (MPPRCA) directed the Secretary of Transportation (under which the Coast Guard was then operating), along with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to commence and conduct an outreach program for educating the public (including recreational boaters, fishermen and other users of the marine environment) regarding:

- the harmful effects of plastic pollution,
- the need to reduce such pollution,
- the need to recycle plastic materials,
- the need to reduce the quantity of plastic debris in the marine environment, and
- the requirements under MPPRCA and the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (APPS) with respect to ships and ports, and the authority of citizens to report violations of both Acts. The U.S. Coast Guard is the agency responsible for enforcing environmental pollution prevention regulations on navigable waterways and coastal areas under these acts as well as the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) of 1990.

Over the last several decades the Sea Partners Program has targeted a wide range of audiences, including state, local and federal officials, merchant mariners, offshore industry personnel, ferry operators, recreational boaters, sport and commercial fishermen, seafood processors, local business owners, marina operators, students, scouts and teachers. Sea Partners teams have conducted a variety of activities amounting to thousands of contact hours with the public including presentations in schools and to civic groups, and service messages publicized via print, online, radio and television outlets. Initially, Sea Partners operations were funded primarily by DoD Innovative Readiness Training (IRT). However, based upon a review of the IRT authorizing legislation, the DoD Office of General Counsel determined in May 2007 that the Coast Guard was ineligible to receive funding under the IRT program (despite the Coast Guard receiving it since 1994). Subsequently, in June 2007 all IRT funds were ordered returned to the DoD, effectively leaving Sea Partners without an operating budget.

Authority

The primary legislative authority for the Sea Partners Campaign comes from the Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act of 1987 (MPPRCA) as described above.

Under this legislation, outreach activities include:

- workshops with interest groups,
- public service announcements,
- distribution of leaflets and posters, and
- any other appropriate means.

Goals & Message

The goals of the Sea Partners Campaign are to:

- Increase compliance with marine environmental protection laws and regulations through education.
- Raise community awareness of marine pollution issues and motivate public conservation of the marine environment.
- Help prevent discharge of marine pollutants.
- Increase reporting of spill incidents which do occur.

The basic educational messages discussed during Sea Partners presentations include:

- Effects of oil, hazardous chemicals, waste and debris on the marine environment.
- How marine environmental protection regulations apply to various marine users.
- Ways that groups and individuals can take action to protect the marine environment.

Philosophy

Upon passage of this legislation, an educational philosophy for the Protection of National Resources program was developed. The three methods of PNR compliance are:

ENFORCE the regulations by traditional means for those users who are aware of them and can comply but do not do so.

REWARD those users who are aware of the regulations and comply in an exemplary fashion. From this concept, the Benkert Award for excellence in marine environmental protection was developed.

EDUCATE those users who do not comply with the regulations because they are unaware of them or do not understand them. This is where the Sea Partners fits in.

Operations / Structure

Sea Partners activities have traditionally been coordinated through the Structure Sectors, although some smaller units have included Sea Partners materials in activities such as boardings.

To run an outreach campaign properly, the staff at each participating unit should do an assessment of persistent pollution problems in its area of responsibility (AOR) and an analysis of where education could be effective in abating those problems.

Offices are encouraged to have a team of trained outreach specialists who are capable of making presentations to a variety of audiences. These team members are recommended to receive formal or on-the-job training in:

- Marine pollution problems and solutions
- Marine environmental protection laws and regulations
- The Coast Guard's role in marine environmental protection
- Outreach strategies
- Preparation of presentations
- Tailoring presentations to various audiences
- Use of audio-visual and printed material
- Public affairs
- Recruiting
- Pollution incident and suspicious activity reporting procedures

Sea Partners is one of many tools unit commanders have at their disposal to effect compliance with MEP regulations.

Sea Partners works best with populations where the main factor preventing compliance is simple ignorance of the law, e.g., recreational boaters, marina employees, uninspected vessels, the general public, and children.

Auxiliary Support

Since the Coast Guard Auxiliary has a long-established connection with the recreational boating community, it was a

logical next step to include Auxiliarists in the Sea Partners Campaign. Auxiliarists can support the goals of Sea Partners by:

- including environmental materials in boat show booths and other public affairs events.
- including environmental protection information in boating safety classes, vessel safety checks and marine dealer visits.
- assisting unit Sea Partners programs through public presentations at schools, yacht clubs, business groups, etc.

MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAM

Introduction

- Overview** As a Sea Partner, it is important to know the Coast Guard's role in the protection of natural resources. The Marine Environmental Protection (MEP) Program develops and enforces regulations to avert the introduction of invasive species into the maritime environment, stop unauthorized ocean dumping, and prevent oil and chemical spills. This program is complemented by the Marine Safety program's pollution prevention activities.
- Lesson Objectives** **IDENTIFY** the USCG's role in Marine Environmental Protection (MEP).
UNDERSTAND the three main functions of the MEP Program.
DETERMINE how the Sea Partners Campaign complements objectives of the MEP Program.
- Background** The Coast Guard employs two broad strategies to accomplish the goal of protecting natural resources: prevention and mitigation. Coast Guard activities *prevent* harm to the environment through action such as regulation and policy development, boardings and inspections of vessels and facilities to ensure compliance, as well as education, navigational positioning, and communications. When incidents do occur, the strategy shifts to one of *mitigating* the effects by minimizing impacts on the human and natural environments. Mitigation activities include development of contingency planning and exercise standards / regulations, information and coordination support, and incident response including federal oversight and coordination, specialized response capabilities of the National Strike Force, and operational support platforms.
- The Coast Guard has extensive regulatory and enforcement authority to prevent unlawful ocean dumping and oil and hazardous substance pollution. The Coast Guard ensures preparedness for pollution response on the national, regional and local levels through the National Contingency Plan, area contingency plans, and vessel and facility response plans. Since the enactment of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA) in 1972, the U.S. has maintained a national oil and hazardous substance response system. The FWPCA was

significantly amended in 1977, and most recently by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. The Coast Guard is the agency designated to respond to oil and hazardous substance spills or the threat thereof in the U.S. coastal zone.

Prevention

The goal of the Prevention program is to reduce the amount of oil, chemicals, plastics and garbage entering the water from maritime sources. This goal is accomplished through enforcement of statutory and regulatory requirements regarding:

- **Shipboard Waste:** Enforcement of national and international laws regulating the discharge of shipboard-generated wastes to reduce marine debris, along with preventing the introduction of nonindigenous species into U.S. waters.
- **Vessels & Facilities:** Regulation of tankers and other commercial vessels operating in U.S. waters, as well as shoreside and offshore handling facilities, ensuring compliance with international and national standards of pollution prevention and safety.

Preparedness

The goal of the Preparedness program is to mitigate the effects of spilled oil and hazardous substances through planning. The Coast Guard engages in a broad spectrum of preparedness activities:

- **Environmental Coordination:** Coordinating responsibilities and pollution response capabilities of government, private industry, and other organizations.
- **Protection of Sensitive Areas:** Targeting environmentally sensitive areas for special protection.
- **Response Resources:** Identifying necessary pollution response equipment and resource shortfalls.
- **Training & Exercises:** Monitoring training and exercise schedules and requirements for government and marine industry personnel.

To reinforce the national policy mandating that polluters pay for response costs, the Coast Guard has requirements for government and marine industry personnel:

- Vessel & Facility Response Plans require owners and operators to prepare and maintain pollution response plans, ensuring immediate availability of specialized equipment and qualified personnel to clean-up and mitigate the effects of a pollution incident.

- Certificates of Financial Responsibility require owners and operators to certify their financial ability to pay for the impacts of oil and hazardous materials discharged or released into the marine environment.
- The Preparedness Response Exercise Program (PREP) requires owners and operators conduct and participate in response exercises to test and improve their preparedness.

Response

When environmental harm threatens U.S. waters, the Coast Guard coordinates response efforts using resources of all levels of government and private industry. The Coast Guard requires that industry take primary responsibility for maintaining or contracting pollution response equipment for cleanup operations. To assist, the Coast Guard uses the following resources:

- The National Contingency Plan (NCP) establishes responsibility and general guidance for oil and hazardous substance response. Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) are further guided by locally developed Area Contingency Plans (ACP).
- The National Response Team (NRT) implements the National Contingency Plan as well as providing regional support. For large-scale responses, the National Response Team or the Regional Response Teams could be called upon to assist Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs). These teams are made up of members of the federal government and state and local agencies.
- The National Response Center (NRC), located at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, DC, provides a centralized reporting site for oil and hazardous substance spills: (800-424-8802).
- An On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) is a predesignated federal official, either Coast Guard (coastal) or EPA (inland), authorized to coordinate a spill cleanup using federal funds when necessary. In most cases the OSC is the cognizant Captain of the Port. The OSC is responsible for ensuring an immediate and effective response to an oil discharge. If the responsible party is not taking effective action, the OSC can access federal funds and hire commercial resources to remove the oil. OSCs usually establish a cooperative relationship with all agencies involved in the development of Area Contingency Plans. An Area Committee is made up of members of the

Regional Response Team agencies, in addition to state and local governments, response organizations, environmental groups, universities and other entities. Although many other agencies are involved in planning processes and response, federal laws state that the Coast Guard has ultimate authority during a response.

- The Marine Safety Laboratory, located at the USCG Research & Development Center in New London, CT, supports On-Scene Coordinators through oil analysis, identification of spillers and related services for legal disposition.
 - The National Strike Force consists of the National Strike Force Coordination Center in Elizabeth City, NC, and three Strike Teams (Pacific: Novato, CA, Gulf: Mobile, AL, Atlantic: Fort Dix, NJ) capable of deploying quickly to the scene of a spill to augment the On-Scene Coordinator's staff and equipment.
 - Pre-Positioned Equipment is oil spill response equipment strategically located at sites throughout the U.S.
 - Federal Funds:
 - Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund: Administered by the Coast Guard National Pollution Funds Center to ensure prompt and appropriate funding to effect aggressive response operations. The fund is authorized by section 9509 of the IRS code of 1986 and is available for oil spills into U.S. water and adjoining shorelines.
 - Superfund: EPA-administered fund authorized by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Available for response operations pertaining to chemical releases into the environment.
- NOTE: In all instances which require use of federal funds, every attempt is made to recover federal response costs from the polluter.
- The Intervention on the High Seas Act authorizes the Coast Guard to take intervention action on the high seas when a vessel accident results in grave and imminent danger to the coastline or related interests of the U.S. from oil or hazardous substance pollution.

OUTREACH MATERIALS

Introduction

- Overview** Sea Partners has employed a variety of printed public outreach materials since its inception. Some of these are obtained from nonprofit environmental organizations such as the Ocean Conservancy and the North American Marine Environmental Protection Association, while others are acquired from public/government agencies or developed and printed in-house.
- Lesson Objectives** **DETERMINE** the source for Sea Partner supplies.
IDENTIFY what resources are available on behalf of the Sea Partners Program and America's Waterway Watch (AWW).
IDENTIFY how to order supplies from Headquarters and the Auxiliary National Supply Center.
- ANSC** Currently, most materials are stocked at the Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC) in Granite City, Illinois. Unit Sea Partners coordinators and Auxiliary Materials Officers can order by faxing or scanning material order forms to the ANSC (see current order forms later in lesson). Please allow at least three weeks' time for ground shipping.
Contact information for the ANSC:
USCG AUXILIARY NATIONAL SUPPLY CENTER
1301 W 1ST STREET SUITE E
GRANITE CITY, IL 62040-1802
FAX#: (618) 876-1845
- Resources** Keeping a sufficient supply of materials in stock has been an ongoing challenge for the Sea Partners Campaign due to funding constraints. Sea Partners teams should be conservative in distributing materials so that supplies last a long time. Display booths at sizeable events such as boat shows consume significant quantities of materials, hence most team members will agree that it is more effective to draw a passer-by into a conversation about a marine environmental issues than to hand out thousands of pamphlets to people who

may never look at them. In selecting materials, first consider the audience you are trying to reach.

A link to the ANSC catalog of materials is included below.

AUXILIARY NATIONAL SUPPLY CENTER (ANSC) CATALOG:

The ANSC catalog can be found in the Manuals section of the H Directorate website:

[AUXILIARY MANUALS \(uscgaux.info\)](http://uscgaux.info)

SEA PARTNERS CONCERNS

Introduction

Overview

Coast Guard members working on Sea Partners teams operate from each of the 37 Sectors located in port communities around the nation and in Puerto Rico and Guam. The primary objective of the Sea Partners Campaign is to educate communities at-large to develop awareness of marine pollution issues and improve compliance with marine environmental protection laws and regulations. Such a large and diverse set of regions makes it imperative that the program address the many different adversities that arise across the nation and in the world's aquatic environments.

Lesson Objectives

IDENTIFY the key topics of concern for the Sea Partners Program.

DETERMINE different ways to bring topics of concern to the appropriate audiences.

GAIN an understanding of why certain topics play a vital role in the Sea Partners program.

Marine Debris

Marine debris is trash or any other discarded man-made object that enters oceans or coastal waters. Marine debris negatively impacts marine ecosystems, wildlife, human health and safety, and the economy. The Coast Guard coordinates with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Marine Fisheries Service, the National Park Service (NPS), and the Ocean Conservancy in monitoring and measuring amounts of marine debris. This activity is authorized in the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships, (APPS) 33 U.S.C. 1905 and 1915, as well as MARPOL Annex V.

TOP 10 MARINE DEBRIS ITEMS

- Cigarettes & cigarette filters
- Plastic beverage bottles
- Plastic bags
- Caps/lids
- Food wrappers & containers

- Cups, plates, forks, knives & spoons
- Glass beverage bottles
- Straws & stirrers
- Beverage cans
- Paper bags

Our role as Sea Partners is to keep our oceans healthy and thriving. When trash is not properly recycled or disposed of, it can travel through streams and rivers to the ocean and become marine debris. In fact, according to the Ocean Conservancy, approximately 80 percent of all marine debris comes from land-based sources. To prevent marine debris, we must work together to stop trash from entering and accumulating in our watershed. This is accomplished through personal practice, education, and community action.

Individuals play an important role in preventing marine debris. Everyone can help reduce the amount of trash in our oceans by understanding and changing the behaviors that lead to marine debris:

- Reduce, reuse, recycle...minimize the amount of trash you create.
- Don't litter...dispose of all trash in proper receptacles.
- Pick-up trash...be on the lookout for litter around you.
- Tell a friend...encourage others to help keep our oceans and waterways clean.
- Volunteer... participate in a local waterway or shoreline cleanup.

Although marine debris is often seen as a local problem, it has environmental, economic, and health impacts that are felt globally. The extent of these impacts is determined by the type of marine debris and how/where it settles in the ocean (i.e., submerged, floating, or within a sensitive habitat).

The impact of marine debris is often intensified because marine debris items are man-made and thus tend to persist in the environment for years. Plastics, for example, can take hundreds of years to biodegrade in the ocean. Marine debris can release toxic compounds into the water. Medical and personal hygiene debris may transmit harmful bacteria and

pathogens. In addition, beachgoers can be injured by stepping on broken glass, cans, or other hazardous items.

Many types of marine wildlife, including seals, sea turtles, birds, fish, and whales are threatened by marine debris. Entanglement can constrict an animal's movement, leaving it unable to swim or eat, and can lead to infection, suffocation, starvation, or drowning. Marine animals also commonly mistake plastic bags, cigarette butts, small pieces of plastic, and other debris for food. Ingested debris tends to collect in an animal's stomach, causing starvation or malnutrition.

Managing marine debris has negative economic impacts. Communities are burdened with the cost of cleaning roads, catch basins, storm drains, and coastlines to stop trash from becoming marine debris. Tourism revenue can be lost due to unsightly debris on beaches and coastlines. In some cases, marine debris can even cause beach closures.

Invasive Species

Every day, as a result of vessel ballasting operations, large quantities of ballast water that were taken onboard in one coastal area are discharged into a different coastal area. Along with this water are plants, animals, bacteria, and human pathogens. These organisms range in size from microscopic to large plants and free-swimming fish, and have the potential to become aquatic nuisance species (ANS), which:

- displace native species,
- degrade native habitats,
- spread disease, and
- disrupt human social and economic activities that depend on water resources.

Any ship carrying ballast water is a potential invasion source.

In recent years, international concern about threats to human health, aquaculture, and coastal environments from aquatic nuisance species and diseases has increased. The U.S. Coast Guard is responding to these concerns through a comprehensive National Ballast Water Management (BWM) Program which:

- promotes BWM for operators of all vessels in waters of the U.S.

- provides BWM guidelines for all vessels entering U.S. waters from outside of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and
- requires the reporting of BWM data by all vessels entering U.S. waters from outside of the EEZ.

In June 2002, the Secretary of Homeland Security submitted a report to Congress assessing vessel compliance with the reporting requirement and BWM guidelines. The report concluded that a consistently low rate of vessel reporting made it impossible to accurately assess compliance with voluntary BWM guidelines. This finding, coupled with broad support for a mandatory national BWM program and the statutory requirements of the National Invasive Species Act, led the Coast Guard to issue regulations making the requirements of the voluntary program mandatory and provide for their enforcement. The necessary regulatory actions to put such a regime in place are underway.

The only real way to stop an invasive species from causing harm is to prevent it from entering the environment in the first place.

Once established, invasive species are almost impossible to eradicate. Managing their impacts and controlling their spread then become the best options.

In general:

- Don't release exotic pets or plants into the environment.
- Buy and plant only native trees and plants.
- Learn to identify invasive species in your area and report sightings to the proper authorities.
- Inspect, clean, and dry all equipment used in water-related activities after each use.
- Prevent and help clean up pollution on land and in the water. Obey all related laws and educate others about the negative impacts of invasive species.

Recreational water users play a key role in preventing the spread of ANS. Some tips to remember the next time you're out on the water include the following:

Scuba Divers and Snorkelers:

- Inspect your equipment and remove any plants, mud or animals before leaving the water.
- While at the dive site, drain water from buoyancy compensators, regulators, tank boots and any other equipment that may hold water.
- Wash your suit and all equipment in hot water (at least 104° F) and dry completely.

Recreational Anglers:

- Know and observe all live bait collection laws in your area. Never release live bait into a different body of water.
- Thoroughly wash and dry all fishing tackle, buckets, nets, waders, etc. after each use.
- Report any alien species that you see or catch to the proper authorities.

Recreational Boaters:

- Spray your boat and trailer with high-pressure water and rinse with hot water after each use.
- Drain and flush the motor, live well, bilge and transom wells with hot water.
- Remove all visible vegetation from your boat, propeller, anchor, trailer and any other equipment that was in the water.
- Dry your boat and equipment for at least 5 days before entering another body of water.

Marine Conservation

Human modification to the environment, overexploitation, habitat loss, exotic species and other factors are greatly threatening aquatic biodiversity. Ecosystems and species important in sustaining human life and the health of the environment are disappearing at an alarming rate. In order to preserve these threatened areas and species for future generations, immediate action in the form of aquatic biodiversity conservation strategies are necessary.

Aquatic conservation strategies support sustainable development by protecting biological resources that will preserve habitats and ecosystems. In order for biodiversity conservation to be effective, management measures must be

broad-based. This can be achieved through many mechanisms including:

- **Marine Reserves:** A marine reserve is a defined space within the sea in which fishing is banned and/or other restrictions are placed in an effort to protect plants, animals, and habitats, ultimately conserving biodiversity. Marine reserves can also be used for educational purposes, recreation, and tourism, as well as potentially increasing fisheries yields by enhancing declining fish populations.
- **Bioregional Management:** Bioregional management is a total ecosystem strategy which regulates factors affecting aquatic biodiversity by balancing conservation, economic, and social needs within an area. In these bio reservation units, activities such as fishing, hunting, harvesting, and development activities are strictly limited.
- **Threatened or endangered species designations:** The World Resources Institute documents that designating a particular species as threatened or endangered has historically been the primary method of protecting freshwater biodiversity. Threatened species include organisms likely to become endangered if not properly protected. Endangered species are plants and animals that need protection in order to survive, as they are in immediate danger of becoming extinct. Once species are “listed,” they become subject to national recovery programs and will be placed under international protection. Severe monetary penalties may be incurred if threatened and endangered species regulations are broken, and can even result in jail sentences.
- **Local watershed groups:** Rivers and streams, regardless of their condition, often go unprotected since they commonly pass through more than one political jurisdiction, making it difficult to enforce conservation and management of resources. However, in recent years, the protection of lakes and small portions of watersheds organized by local groups has helped this situation.

There are several different things that can be done to enhance marine conservation including:

- **Research:** Various organizations and conferences that research biodiversity and associated conservation strategies help to identify areas of future research and

analyze current trends in aquatic biodiversity, and may conduct specialized studies.

- **Increase Public Awareness:** Increasing public awareness is one of the most important ways to conserve aquatic biodiversity. This can be accomplished through educational programs, incentive programs, and volunteer monitoring programs.
- **Restoration/Mitigation Efforts:** Aquatic areas that have been damaged or suffered habitat loss / degradation can be restored. Even species populations that have suffered a decline can be targeted for restoration.
- **Local community actions:** State and federal governments and many local governments and public agencies are already at work. So, too, are numerous citizen volunteers. Any individual can take steps to make healthy water a part of everyday life. Learn how you can make a difference...
Take Action!

Oil & Chemicals

On April 20, 2010, an explosion occurred at the *Deepwater Horizon* drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico, resulting in eleven fatalities. The incident disabled the facility and led to a full evacuation before the platform sank into the Gulf two days later. A significant release of oil at the sea floor was soon discovered. According to the National Incident Command's Flow Rate Technical Group estimate of August 2, 2010, the well released approximately 206 million gallons of oil (4.9 million barrels) before it was contained on July 15, 2010. The spill occurred in coastal waters, and the Coast Guard therefore played a key role in response activities.

Protecting the marine environment from accidental oil and chemical spills is a key mission of the Coast Guard. Along with representatives of fifteen other federal departments and agencies, the Coast Guard and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) comprise the National Response Team 5 and 13 Regional Response Teams. EPA serves as the chair, and the Coast Guard is the vice-chair of these teams. The National Contingency Plan (NCP) provides the organizational structure and procedures for preparing for, and responding to, discharges of oil and hazardous substances on both water and land.

Coast Guard responsibilities can be divided into two categories: spill response and spill prevention/preparedness. As the primary response authority in coastal zone waters, the

Coast Guard has the ultimate authority to ensure that a spill is effectively removed and that actions are taken to prevent further discharge from the source. During such response operations, a Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) would coordinate the efforts of federal, state, and private parties. Preventing and preparing for spills is also a Coast Guard responsibility, and the Coast Guard's jurisdiction covers vessels, onshore, and transportation-related facilities, as well as deepwater ports. The Coast Guard's prevention/preparedness duties are based on international agreements and federal standards and regulations.

The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) and the international treaty MARPOL 73/78 require owners and operators of vessels that carry oil and designated hazardous substances to submit "Vessel Response Plans" and/or "Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plans" to the Coast Guard. These vessel-specific plans address matters such as spill mitigation procedures, training requirements for the crew, and spill mitigation equipment required to be carried onboard. The Coast Guard must approve the plans for a ship to operate legally in U.S. waters. Under these authorities, vessel operators also must submit to regular inspections, and the Coast Guard's inspection program is a key component of their oil spill prevention effort. The Coast Guard represents the United States at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which, through treaties, sets international environmental and safety standards for vessels. Important treaties cover the following topics:

- Accidental and operational oil and chemical pollution,
- the right of a coastal state to take measures on the high seas to prevent, mitigate, or eliminate danger to its coastline from pollution by oil,
- a global, cooperative framework for combating major incidents or threats of marine pollution from oil and hazardous and noxious substances, and
- pollution from the dumping of wastes and other materials.

All petroleum products in the water can be toxic to aquatic organisms. They lower the oxygen levels in the water and generally degrade water quality. Both fuel and oil contain toxic hydrocarbons and heavy metals that can be deadly to aquatic life in very small quantities. Petroleum in the water also reduces the ability of light to penetrate the water. Light is

essential for the survival of aquatic plants and photosynthetic plankton.

Unlike fish, which can sometimes avoid an oil slick by swimming under it, mammals and sea turtles must surface to breathe. Thus they are coated and recoated many times before moving out of the contaminated area. This direct physical contact with oil can cause blindness and can clog breathing passages. And while some marine mammals may be able to sense oil spills, there is little evidence that they avoid them. Many remain in their home ranges, even when those areas are contaminated.

Oil pollution at marinas is usually the result of accidents and/or carelessness. Emphasis should be placed on developing criteria and procedures for preventing and, when necessary, cleaning up oil spills. Any operation involving the handling of oil or fuel should be accomplished in such a way that the possibility of accidental release is minimized.

One way is to incorporate best management practices (BMPs) into daily marina operations and boating activities. BMPs ensure environmentally responsible behavior. The following are some BMPs that boater and marinas can implement to reduce oil and fuel pollution.

Best management practices include:

- Proper boat maintenance.
- Storage and spill prevention equipment.
- Recycling.
- Spill control, in the event of a release.

Sewage

Sewage is defined as human body wastes and the wastes from toilets or receptacles intended to receive or retain body wastes. It is also known as black water. In contrast, gray water is galley, bath, and shower water. Untreated sewage in a body of water can come from various sources including faulty residential, municipal, or marina septic treatment systems, or direct discharges from shoreside facilities and boats.

Vessel sewage is a problem when it is discharged into the water without proper treatment. Discharge can include, but is not limited to, spillage, leakage, or dumping. This form of pollution degrades water quality by introducing microbial pathogens into the environment and by increasing biological oxygen demand (BOD), an important water quality measure that refers to the amount of oxygen available in the water for

organisms to use. The higher the BOD, the less oxygen there is in the water for animals to survive. The BOD increases particularly in areas with many boats and little water movement. Just like lawn fertilizers and manure, human waste contains nutrients that can stimulate algae growth and deplete the amount of oxygen in the water. Although it is also a repulsive visual pollutant, our primary concern about sewage in the water is its potential to introduce disease-causing pathogens to swimmers and shellfish.

A single overboard discharge of human waste can be detected in an area up to one square mile of shallow enclosed water. Releasing untreated sewage from a 20-gallon holding tank has the same impact as discharging several thousand gallons of treated sewage from an efficiently operated treatment plant. Although these single discharges have an impact on the environment, the cumulative effect of numerous single vessel discharges is even more harmful.

Sewage contamination can pose a human health hazard through direct exposure (swimming and other water-contact activities in contaminated waters) or through the consumption of shellfish from contaminated waters. Pathogenic contaminants such as streptococci, fecal coliform, and other bacteria may cause infectious hepatitis, diarrhea, bacillary dysentery, skin rashes, and even typhoid and cholera.

Sewage, as well as gray water, has a higher concentration of nutrients than is naturally found in the aquatic environment. Small amounts are necessary for the healthy development of a natural ecosystem, but when excessive nutrients are introduced they can disrupt the natural balance.

The public, as well as individual boaters and marinas must play a role in reducing sewage pollution. Some of the things that can be done include:

- Early recognition and reporting of broken or leaking sewage pipes.
- Proper use of Marine Sanitation Devices by boaters.
- Proper dumping of sewage.
- Obeying “No Discharge Zones.”

In the United States, if you observe any boat not complying with water pollution regulations, report it to the nearest U.S. Coast Guard Sector and the National Response Center (NRC) at 800-424-8802.

MARINE POLLUTION LAWS / REGULATIONS & CITIZEN REPORTING

Introduction

Overview Although the seas and other waterways have historically been viewed as convenient dumping grounds of human-made waste, in recent times concern about declining water quality has prompted change.

Lesson Objectives **IDENTIFY** the different laws and regulations that are applicable to the Sea Partners primary concerns.

DETERMINE different reporting methods to report incidents of identified unlawful activity.

IDENTIFY resources to gather more information on pertinent laws, regulations, and organizations.

MARPOL In 1973, the **International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships at Sea** (MARPOL) was drafted and signed by a number of seafaring nations. In 1978, it was updated to include five Annexes on ocean dumping. In 1997, an annex on air pollution from ships was added. The Annexes cover the following:

- Annex I: Oil
- Annex II: Hazardous liquid carried in bulk
- Annex III: Hazardous substances carried in packaged form
- Annex IV: Sewage
- Annex V: Garbage
- Annex VI: Air Pollution

By ratifying MARPOL 73/78, a country automatically adopts Annexes I and II; the remaining annexes are optional. The United States has ratified optional Annexes III and V. For a summary of MARPOL, see:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MARPOL_73/78

MPPRCA **Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act** (1987) implements the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, Annex V (MARPOL 73/78) and restricts

the overboard discharge of plastic and other garbage. For a summary, see:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/4668?s=1&r=16>

CWA

Clean Water Act (1972) – focuses on the use, discharge, and disposal of sewage, oil, and hazardous substances including dispersants. For a summary of the CWA and a link to the full text of the Act, go to:

<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-water-act>

OPA

Oil Pollution Act (1990) – requires reporting and clean-up of all oil and hazardous substance spills. For a summary of the OPA and a link to the full text of the Act, see:

<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-oil-pollution-act>

OAPCA

Organotin Antifouling Paint Control Act (1988) – regulates the use and application of antifouling paints for some marine vessels. For a summary of the Act, see:

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/house-bill/2210>

CVA

Clean Vessel Act (1992) – designed for the construction of pump-out facilities through financial incentives to local marinas. For a summary of the CVA, see:

<https://www.fws.gov/program/clean-vessel-act>

For the details of the Act, see:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-I/subchapter-F/part-85>

FWPCA

Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act (1948) – was the first major U.S. law to address water pollution by establishing the basic framework for water pollution control, which Congress subsequently amended. Congress changed the act six times before completely rewriting it in the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments. As amended, the act became commonly known as the Clean Water Act.

For FWPCA (section 1322) information on the use of marine sanitation devices:

<https://www.epa.gov/vessels-marinas-and-ports/vessel-sewage-discharges-statutes-regulations-and-related-laws-and>

ESA

Endangered Species Act (1973) – provides a program for the conservation of threatened and endangered plants and animals and the habitats in which they are found. For a summary of the ESA and a link to the full text of the Act, see:

<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-endangered-species-act>

MMPA

Marine Mammal Protection Act – establishes a moratorium on taking and importing marine mammals, their parts, and products. The Act provides protection for polar bears, sea otters, walrus, dugongs, manatees, whales, porpoises, seals, and sea lions. For a summary of the MMPA, see:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/laws-policies/marine-mammal-protection-act>

CZMA

Coastal Zone Management Act – encourages states to preserve, protect, develop, and, where possible, restore or enhance valuable natural coastal resources such as wetlands, floodplains, estuaries, beaches, dunes, barrier islands, and coral reefs, as well as the fish and wildlife using those habitats. For a summary of the CZMA, see:

<https://coast.noaa.gov/czm/act/>

CAA

Clean Air Act – regulates air emissions from area, stationary, and mobile sources. This law authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) to protect public health and the environment. For a summary of the CAA, see:

<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-air-act>

RCRA

Resources Conservation and Recovery Act – addresses the issue of how to safely manage and dispose of the huge volumes of municipal and industrial waste generated nationwide. For more information on the RCRA, see:

<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-resource-conservation-and-recovery-act>

PWSA

Port and Waterways Safety Act – states that navigation and vessel safety and protection of the marine environment are matters of major national importance. Ensures that the handling of dangerous articles and substances on the structures in, on, or immediately adjacent to the navigable waters of the United States is conducted in accordance with established standards and requirements. For details, see:

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-33>

NMSA

National Marine Sanctuaries Act – protects special marine resources, such as coral reefs, sunken historic vessels or unique habitats, while facilitating all “compatible” public and private uses of those resources. For a summary of the NMSA, see:

[https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/legislation/#:~:text=The%20National%20Marine%20Sanctuaries%20Act%20\(NMSA\)%20authorizes%20the%20Secretary%20of,or%20esthetic%20qualities%20as%20national](https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/legislation/#:~:text=The%20National%20Marine%20Sanctuaries%20Act%20(NMSA)%20authorizes%20the%20Secretary%20of,or%20esthetic%20qualities%20as%20national)

Contact Info

To Report an Oil Spill or Hazardous Substance Release

Call the National Response Center at 800-424-8802. See Appendix A for details from their website.

For More Information on the National Response Team

Go to www.nrt.org and choose your region.

Oil, Fuel and Hazardous Waste Disposal Information

Call your local Department of Environmental Management if you have questions about disposal of used oil, household chemicals, or other hazardous waste.

To Report Pollution

In the United States, if you observe any boat not complying with water pollution regulations report it to the nearest USCG unit or the National Response Center (800-424-8802). For more information see:

EPA Oil Spill Program

www.epa.gov/oilspill

The Ocean Conservancy Website

www.oceanconservancy.org

U.S. Coast Guard Website

www.uscg.mil

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

For information on the Vessel Safety Check (VSC) program, boater education, and other boating safety related issues: www.cgaux.org

U.S. Power Squadron

For information on boater safety and education programs:

www.usps.org

CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Introduction

Overview

The campaign goals for the Sea Partners program are to leverage key resources such as Active Duty Coast Guard, Auxiliarists and Reservists, and engage with other agencies such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with organizations such as The Ocean Conservancy and the Clean Marina Program, and with other state and local organizations to maximize citizen awareness and understanding of marine hazards and environmental preservation. This is accomplished through different activities including presentations to youth groups or school classes, dock walks, booths at boat shows and community events, planning meetings with local organizations, and beach cleanups.

Lesson Objectives

UNDERSTAND the role of the national Sea Partners Campaign.

LEARN how to develop your individual Sea Partners program at your unit.

IDENTIFY different activities that would engage your community in the importance of marine environmental protection.

EXAMINE how to successfully present information on behalf of the Sea Partners Campaign.

Background

The Sea Partners Campaign is a public outreach program. It can be successful only if members of the public are inspired to change their behaviors with respect to marine environmental protection. The Sea Partners program must be known and recognized. It is the responsibility of every Coast Guard member to publicize the message of marine environmental protection, and thereby the Sea Partners Program.

The most effective public affairs activities are done at the local level. Reaching out to local communities, media, and commercial interests is an easy way to start a grassroots campaign in your area. There are several effective ways to share the message including:

- School Presentations; K-8, High School, College, and Adult education.
- Harbor Patrols (or HARPATS), on the job outreach, and planning meetings with local organizations.
- Boat shows and community event booths.
- Beach cleanups.

Note that education and outreach are very dynamic and constantly need to be modified in order to garner support and sustain attention. This can be accomplished by taking advantage of special events such as the National Clean Boating Campaign and International Coastal Cleanup to get the Sea Partners message into the public's eye. You can also look for opportunities to feature Sea Partners. It may be possible to arrange an interview with the local media, including a feature in a local newspaper on the environment, a spot on a local cable show about community issues, or a radio call-in show. These are just a few of the ways in which you can get the message out, but you are always free to create new and engaging ideas to support the cause. Some "outside-the-box" ideas that have been helpful include:

- Get Sammy the Sea Otter to make an appearance at your local sporting event!
- Get students at a local college/high school to make some public service announcements for Sea Partners.
- Come up with your own original idea.

Always start with something you feel comfortable with. In addition, before doing something for the first time, check with your chain of command to make sure it's OK.

Talking Points

Sea Partners presentations are available to any interested group. Those interested in presentations should contact their local Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary unit. All presentations should be completed at no charge to the public.

Sea Partners messages include:

- The effects of oil, hazardous chemicals, waste and debris on the marine environment.
- How marine environmental protection laws and regulations apply to various marine users.
- Ways groups and individuals can take action to protect the marine environment.

Sea Partners is a non-regulatory outreach campaign designed to target groups such as the following in waterway communities throughout the nation and territories:

- Commercial fishing vessel operators
- Port and terminal operators
- Commercial mariners
- Shipping companies
- Charter boat operators
- Waterfront facilities
- Waste haulers
- Local governments
- Cruise line passengers
- Recreational boaters and fishers
- Students and teachers
- Coastal populations
- Other interested groups, organizations, and associations

Presentations

Speaking as a representative of the Sea Partners is a valuable way to reach key members of the public. Since marine environmental protection covers many topics, communicating the campaign's story may take many forms. In addition to the use of the various media outlets, public speaking engagements provide uninterrupted and unfiltered communications with public groups.

General tips for all presentations:

Know your audience. Remain big picture. Be authentic. Keep it simple. Engage!

Unless you are talking to an audience that is targeting a very specific goal, it is often better to remain big picture. Your audience wants to see that you are real and not hiding behind a fact sheet or a fabricated speech. When looking for ways to drive home a point, look for what you thought, what you found, what you felt, what you did and how you now feel.

Inexperienced speakers, breaking every known rule of speech, can overcome their shortcomings by speaking from their heart.

True power from the platform lies in using simple language to express meaningful ideas. Words are mental brush strokes we use to paint pictures in the minds of others. Uncommon and difficult words tend to leave people confused and insulted.

Audience participation helps keep their attention. It can be as simple as a show of hands and as involved as your time, talent and ability contributed before and after the event. A

participation device needs to tie directly with a major point in your message, however. When this is not done, the audience easily becomes sidetracked.

Specific tips for presentations in schools and to youth groups:

Speakers should approach a young audience with one very important understanding — young people are genuine. Young audiences openly express feelings where adults often pretend. When young people don't like what's being said, they will never act like they do. They are not naturally rude: they just refuse to pretend. This instant and honest feedback is a sterling quality in young audiences, a quality that some speakers avoid like the plague. When asking group questions from youth, you can expect questions that adults would never ask!

- Talk to the teacher or group leader first. Figure out potential topics for discussion.
- Ask about the number of kids in the class or group. Take tips from the teacher/leader to establish rapport with the youth. Learn some of their names and use the names while speaking to the class.
- Make use of catchy and friendly phrases while giving the presentation. Try to include humor in your presentation. You can narrate interesting stories to develop kids' interests.
- Use your body language to emphasize your point in a positive manner.
- Provide encouragement to kids who perform well, especially when you ask questions.
- Make use of various teaching props like charts, blackboard, projectors and so on. These help in sustaining the group's attention.
- Encourage group activities in the class. These help create interest and communication. Make your ideas clear to the kids.
- Incorporate interactive activities such as games, crafts, or other hands-on material. Young children especially benefit from interactive activities.

- When speaking to kids, discuss the topic with them, rather than lecturing the whole time. And don't let one child dominate the discussion.
- Add humor. Tell a joke or funny anecdote about your topic to get the kids' attention.
- Relate your personal experience surrounding the topic. Explain who you are and share your unique expertise.

Ensure that your involvement in the presentation is complete and comprehensive. Both the kids and the teacher/leader should find it interesting.

On the Job

The U.S. Coast Guard is the agency responsible for enforcing environmental pollution prevention regulations on navigable waterways and coastal areas under the Clean Water Act, Federal Water Pollution Control Act and the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. Although pollution prevention is a public education topic for many non-profit environmental organizations as well as educational institutions, the Coast Guard's unique role in this area is to inform the public about the purpose of federal pollution prevention regulations, how these regulations apply to various waterways users, and what specific steps individuals should take to comply with these regulations.

Presently, hundreds of Active Duty, Reserve, and especially Auxiliary members are engaged in Sea Partners program activities. The Sea Partners message is not limited to off-duty hours; it can become a part of everyday business. Industry can be informed of the importance of environmental protection during vessel and facility exams, boaters can be educated during boardings, the community can be informed during pollution investigations, etc. The more people we talk to, the greater the likelihood that individuals will internalize the importance of marine environmental protection.

Community Events

One of the best ways to reach a large group of aquatic enthusiasts is to participate in local community events and boat shows. During events like these it is important to present the Sea Partners message in the best manner possible. Please refer back to the Outreach Material lesson plan for information about items to enhance your display.

Setting up a booth carefully takes time. Be sure you allot enough time to finish before the show begins and guests arrive. Boxes blocking aisles discourage clients from visiting booths. Even if you are not in the aisles, setting up a display

while the show is open distracts people from the message, and can present a slip, trip, or fall hazard.

People attend these events for a reason, so it is important for exhibit staff to introduce themselves and ask attendees questions promptly to find out if they can help them. Most people attending a trade show have a relevant reason to learn more about what the program has to offer, so provide a brief overview and continue the conversation from there.

It is especially important to be friendly to *everyone* during the event. By getting along with others, you can sometimes make important contacts and -- better yet -- friends for life! To ensure that you present a professional, approachable image, review the following rules of event etiquette:

Body Language

Many books have been written about body language. Here are the most important points to remember from a trade show perspective:

- Talk to *the person*, not to a piece of equipment or charts that you are presenting. Maintain eye contact with the attendee and avoid getting “caught up” in the demonstration or presentation.
- Raise your voice appropriately or you might be drowned-out by other people and/or ambient sounds.
- Present an open posture. Folded arms and crossed legs are a message that you’re not very open and will keep prospects from approaching your booth. To create intimacy and trust, let your arms hang at your sides and position your feet about six to eight inches apart.

While in the booth, try to avoid:

- **Eating, Drinking, or Smoking** - These activities ward off guests as well as the press.
- **Sitting down** - Sitting down makes it look as though you’re not interested in talking. However, if your booth has bar-stool-height chairs behind a draped table, you are at eye level as people passing the booth. Acceptance of stools is increasing since the public is sympathetic to the effects of standing on a hard floor for long periods.
- If you are sitting, stand up and greet attendees that come up to the exhibit.

- **Having idle chatter with other booth personnel** -The sight of two people in conversation can look like a meeting, and is therefore unwelcoming.
- **Disrupting other exhibitors or visitors** - Disruptions such as loud music or announcements, shining lights at other event exhibits, using laser pointers across aisles are bothersome. If you engage in disruptive behaviors, attendees will perceive you and the Coast Guard as unprofessional.

Some of the most common mistakes made by booth staffers include:

- **Weak opening lines** - The best “hooks” are open-ended questions that get—and keep-- the conversation going. Avoid yes-and-no openers such as “May I help you?” What’s next if the answer is “no?”
- **Poor body language** - Stand up straight toward the edge of the booth with your hands at your side. Look alert and ready.
- **Long-winded product presentations** - Attendees can’t afford to be tied to your exhibit for 20 minutes. Remember, they have a lot of ground to cover at a show. Keep it to 10 minutes maximum.

Beach Cleanups

Auxiliary policy prohibits Auxiliary units from sponsoring beach cleanups. With approval from the appropriate authority, however, Auxiliary units may conduct Auxiliary-only beach cleanups (no relatives, friends, family, nor members of the public may participate). Auxiliary members and units are highly encouraged to participate in beach cleanups organized by other entities.

A Beach Clean-up Guide is found on the P-Directorate website which gives additional guidance beyond what is listed on the Sea Partner website.

http://wow.uscgaux.info/Uploads_wowII/P-DEPT/Cleanup_4page_v9.pdf

“Everyday” Cleanups

You don’t need to wait until somebody organizes a big cleanup. Whenever you spend a day at the beach or in any other natural area, you can collect garbage as a personal activity. You may even involve your family and friends and

make it a game or a competition. The only things you'll need is to carry some garbage bags and a few pairs of rubber gloves. Store these in your car for use at the ready. Don't assume you'll remember to pack them the day you leave home; have them in your car permanently and refill them after each clean-up activity.

Remember:

- Collect only as much garbage as you are able to transport comfortably. There is no sense in collecting garbage, filling plastic bags, and then leaving the bags on the beach.
- Don't leave the plastic bags along the road or in another natural area. Find out the location of the nearest official waste dump and take it there.

Beach Cleanup Checklist

When participating in a beach cleanup— whether organized by the Auxiliary or another group— make sure you come prepared. A partial check list is included below. A more extensive listing and guidance is included in the [Beach Cleanup Guide](#).

- Uniform of the Day: ODU or AWU
- Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as puncture-resistant gloves
- Trash bags (have two different colors available if you are separating recyclables)
- Dress for the weather
- Wear sunscreen
- Bring refreshments (lunch, snacks) and water
- Make sure to follow all safety guidelines
- Bring a cell phone for communications and taking photos

RELATED SEA PARTNERS TOPICS

Introduction

Overview When involved with the Sea Partners Campaign, individuals are in direct contact with the community. As a result, campaign members are often asked questions about other Coast Guard programs, including America's Waterways Watch (AWW), the Marine Transportation System (MTS), and Recruiting.

Lesson Objectives **IDENTIFY** the role of the America's Waterway Watch (AWW) program.
IDENTIFY the function of the Marine Transportation System (MTS).
LEARN how the Sea Partners program can benefit the Coast Guard's recruiting efforts.

AWW America's Waterway Watch is a public outreach program encouraging participants to report suspicious activity to the Coast Guard and/or other law enforcement agencies. Unlike some Neighborhood Watch programs, for example, you are not formally joining an organization — there are no meetings, membership cards or membership requirements — and you do not become an agent of the Coast Guard or any other law enforcement agency.

AWW is a Coast Guard-sponsored, nationwide public outreach program that encourages citizens who live, work, or play on or near the water to report suspicious activity to responsible authorities.

AWW also encompasses local all-hazards maritime domain awareness operations that:

- Protect the maritime economy and environment.
- Defend our maritime borders.
- Assist persons in distress.

Citizens are encouraged to report suspicious activity to 877-24WATCH. For imminent danger or other emergencies, citizens should call 911 or Marine Channel 16.

Stakeholders include:

Recreational boaters, marina operators, maritime businesses, commercial maritime operators, ports, law enforcement, and

local Coast Guard units (Active, Reserve, Auxiliary, and civilian).

Commandant (CG-5441) provides program management and direction through COMDTINST 16618.8A which prescribes basic reporting and data collection parameters. Furthermore, it allows units the flexibility to develop their own customized implementation plan to educate, train, and coordinate with waterway stakeholders and local Auxiliary.

MTS

The Maritime Administration, the U.S. Coast Guard, and ten other Federal agencies, in partnership with non-Federal stakeholders, inaugurated a program to improve the marine portion of the national transportation system. The Marine Transportation System (MTS) initiative is a program to ensure a safe and environmentally sound world-class marine transportation system that improves the global competitiveness and national security of the United States.

The MTS consists of waterways, ports, and intermodal landside connections that allow the various modes of transportation to move people and goods to, from, and on the water. The MTS includes the following:

- 25,000 miles of navigable channels
- 239 locks at 193 locations
- Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway
- Over 3,700 marine terminals
- Numerous recreational marinas
- Over 174,000 miles of rail connecting all 48 contiguous States, as well as Canada and Mexico
- Over 45,000 miles of interstate highway, supported by over 115,000 miles of other roadways
- Over 1,400 designated intermodal connections

Important Facts:

- Waterborne cargo and associated activities contribute more than \$500 billion annually to the U.S. GDP, sustaining more than 10 million jobs.
- MTS activities contribute over \$200 billion in annual port sector federal/state/local taxes.
- Over 2.3 billion tons of foreign and domestic commerce were handled in a single year, reflecting a value of nearly \$1.76 trillion dollars.
- 99% of the volume of overseas trade (42% by value) enters or leaves the U.S. by ship.

The future challenges to our MTS are many. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the total tonnage of marine freight is estimated to increase by 38 percent-between 2015 and 2045. Ferry passenger transport is experiencing rapid growth in response to land-transport congestion. Commercial fishing and military use of the MTS is also expected to grow over the next several years.

The increasing demands on our MTS also must be safely handled and balanced with environmental values, in order to ensure that freight and people move efficiently to, from, and on our waterfronts.

Coordination, leadership, and cooperation are essential to addressing the challenges faced by the MTS. Information on the nation's mobility, safety, economic health, natural environment, and security information must be shared among federal, regional, and local agencies, as well as private sector owners and operators. This kind of coordinated approach can more effectively meet the needs of the MTS than can piecemeal efforts by individual groups.

Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC): A primary example of a coordinated approach with the private sector is MTSNAC, a chartered non-federal body whose purpose is to advise the Secretary of Transportation on MTS issues. Its membership is comprised of leaders from 30 commercial transportation firms, trade associations, state and local public entities, labor organizations, academia, and environmental groups. The purpose of the MTSNAC is to advise the Secretary of Transportation on issues, policies, plans, and funding solutions needed to ensure that the MTS is capable of responding to the projected trade increases. Today, the

Department's flagship initiative, MTS, is working to ensure that America's marine transportation system achieves the national focus required to support the level of traffic expected in the 21st century. Further, the Department seeks to accomplish this goal in a safe, environmentally sound and coordinated manner for the full range of MTS users and stakeholders.

Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS): The CMTS is the latest Federal effort to coordinate the myriad partners involved in the MTS. Chaired by the Secretary of Transportation, the CMTS is tasked with ensuring the development and implementation of national MTS policies consistent with national needs, and to report to the President its views and recommendations for improving the MTS.

The CMTS is addressing a number of important issues that affect the safety, security, air / water quality, and the efficient movement of freight and people at our nation's coasts and waterways and associated port facilities. The Maritime Administration is an important player in the CMTS and is leading an effort to provide key MTS information sources that will assist senior public and private decision-makers as they make critical MTS investments and resource allocations.

Recruiting

Because Sea Partners continually deal with the public, they are a natural resource for discovering potential recruiting prospects. The program is an ideal recruiting tool because it demonstrates the Coast Guard's role as "pollution fighters" and protectors of the environment.

If you encounter a prospect who appears either to meet or be close to meeting the basic qualifications, it is important to put that person in contact with a recruiter through the Coast Guard recruiting website: <https://www.gocoastguard.com/>

Basic qualifications to join the Coast Guard include:

- Officer – being a United States citizen or naturalized.
- Enlisted – being a United States citizen or a resident alien.
- Being between the ages of 17–27. If you are 17, you will need parental consent.
- Having a high school diploma or GED.
- Having no more than two dependents.
- Taking and passing the Armed Service Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test.

- Passing a medical exam given at a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS).
- Being the type of person who wants to work to serve the public on or around the water.

For more information, visit Coast Guard recruiting at <http://www.gocoastguard.com>.

Coast Guard Auxiliary

The requirement to join the Coast Guard Auxiliary is being at least 17 years of age and a U.S. citizen, or 14 years of age and a Sea Scout. Persons interested in Auxiliary membership can use the “Flotilla Finder” on the Auxiliary web page: <https://cgaux.org/units.php> for referral to a point-of-contact at a local flotilla.

AUXILIARY PREVENTION OUTREACH SPECIALIST QUALIFICATION

Auxiliarists desiring further training and knowledge of Sea Partner activities are encouraged to complete the Auxiliary Prevention Outreach Specialist qualification, (AUX-MEES), formerly known as the Auxiliary Marine Environmental Education Specialist.

Completion of the AUX-MEES qualification accrues credit towards earning the Marine Safety Training ribbon.

The AUX-MEES workbook, along with other Marine Safety workbooks, can be found at:

[Marine Safety \(uscgaux.info\)](http://uscgaux.info)

Log in to the Member Zone at bottom of the page. Then use the Marine Safety tab located on the left side of page, and click on the MS PQS workbooks link.