

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary



Auxiliary Life Jacket Wear Observation (AUXLWO) Program

Standard Operating Procedures



16790 / AUX-SOP-001(A)
July 16, 2018

MEMORANDUM

Reply to J. Ludwig
Attn. of: (202) 372-1061

From: S. L. Johnson //S//
COMDT (CG-BSX)

To: Distribution

Subj: AUXILIARY LIFE JACKET WEAR OBSERVATION (AUXLWO) PROGRAM
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)

Ref: (a) National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program 2017-2021 Strategic Plan (series)
(b) Life Jacket Wear Rate Observation Study Report (series)
(c) Coast Guard Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1 (series)

1. PURPOSE. To establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Auxiliary Life Jacket Wear Observation (AUXLWO) program at Auxiliary national and regional levels.

2. ACTION. Elected and appointed leaders and program managers at all levels of the Auxiliary organization must ensure Auxiliarists who participate in the AUXLWO program adhere to this SOP. Auxiliary AUXLWO national program managers must maintain close liaison with the Coast Guard Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-2) for the purpose of general programmatic advice and guidance including matters of performance standards and expectations.

3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.

4. BACKGROUND.

(a) The U.S. Coast Guard is designated by law as the coordinator of the National Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program, and that task has been delegated to the Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-2) of the Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety (CG-BSX). The mission of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program is to ensure the public has a safe, secure, and enjoyable recreational boating experience by implementing programs designed to minimize the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage while cooperating with environmental and national security efforts.

(b) To assist with the accomplishment of its mission, CG-BSX-2 has facilitated the creation of a strategic plan ("plan"). In the plan, increasing life jacket wear has been identified as an essential factor in reducing recreational boating fatalities. A key component is Initiative 3: Improve upon and expand recreational boating data collection and research. This component is crucial to developing boating safety programs based on data. To acquire life jacket wear data, CG-BSX-2 has awarded a

national non-profit organization grant to fund a Life Jacket Wear Observation Study (“study”) since 1999. The cumulative years of data allow for a higher level of analysis (i.e., controlling for the impact of influencing factors like age, weather, and boat type) in order to unmask potential trends and indicators of increased or decreased life jacket wear among different groups of recreational boaters.

(c) Each year the National Life Jacket Wear Observation Study Coordinator sends observation teams to various locations in participating states in July and August (eight locations in California) to conduct observations and collect data on actual life jacket wear. Each team consists of two observers who work from an onshore location designated by the coordinator. One person observes recreational vessels through high-powered image-stabilized binoculars and communicates their observations to a teammate who records the data on a standard form. Teams are encouraged to switch off these roles. The observations are conducted at each location for four straight hours. This data from all the observation sites is then aggregated into a national estimate of life jacket wear across gender, age groups, and vessel types, and an annual report is produced to present the data.

5. DISCLAIMER. This SOP is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it 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.

6. MAJOR CHANGES. None.

7. DISTRIBUTION. Copies of this SOP will be electronically distributed as described below. Because the copies contain the AUXLWO Program Observer Personal Qualification Standards (PQS) in enclosure (1), neither electronic forwarding nor copying is authorized. An electronic version that does not include the PQS shall be posted on the Coast Guard Auxiliary web site at <http://www.cgaux.org/>. All web sites in the SOP are the most current available. If the cited web link does not work, then the web site address should be copied and pasted, or typed, into the user’s internet browser for access.

8. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Units and individuals may recommend changes via the cognizant Auxiliary chain of leadership and management. Relevant portions of this SOP shall be incorporated into the next change to reference (c).

#

Encl: (1) Auxiliary Life Jacket Wear Observation (AUXLWO) Program SOP

Dist: NEXCOM, ANACO-RB, DIRAUX, DCO

Auxiliary Life Jacket Wear Observation (AUXLWO) Program

Standard Operating Procedures

Table of Contents

1. General Guidelines	2
2. Training and Qualification Guidelines	2
3. AUXLWO Program Roles and Responsibilities	3
Appendix A: AUXLWO Program Observer Personal Qualification Standards (PQS)	
Appendix B: AUXLWO Program Observer PQS Routing Process	



1. General Guidelines.

- a. Members are authorized to pursue and achieve designation as an Auxiliary Life Jacket Wear Observation (AUXLWO) program observer in order to support the Coast Guard's annual life jacket wear observation study.
- b. AUXLWO activity must be limited to this SOP's scope of employment until appropriate Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary programmatic review deems otherwise.
- c. AUXLWO program observer designation and assignment to duty may only be achieved pursuant to successful completion of the AUXLWO program observer Personal Qualification Standards (PQS) established by the Chief, Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety (CG-BSX) and described in Appendix A.
- d. Successful qualification and subsequent participation in the AUXLWO program shall be creditable towards meeting the requirements for earning the Auxiliary RBS insignia (1 point per hour).
- e. AUXDATA mission activity code 41 (Other Agency [Federal] Support) must be used on the Mission Activity Report form (ANSC-7030) to claim AUXLWO activity until otherwise specified. The following note must also accompany AUXLWO activity hours claimed on the ANSC-7030 form: "Enter Operation Code – LJOBS."
- f. The Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-2) shall serve as the AUXLWO Program Manager.
- g. The nature of the information gathered by this program requires a markedly low physical profile by AUXLWO program observers. Accordingly, AUXLWO program observers and trainees are authorized to perform their program roles in plain civilian attire. Auxiliary uniform items are not to be worn in the course of AUXLWO field activities.

2. Training and Qualification Guidelines.

- a. In order to qualify and participate in the AUXLWO program, Auxiliarists must be at least in Approval Pending (AP) Personnel Security Investigation (PSI) status and meet the minimum training and qualification requirements found in the PQS in Appendix A. If subject to the provisional membership program, then that too must be completed.
- b. The AUXLWO program does not have a currency maintenance scheme. However, in order to sustain assignments to duty in the AUXLWO program, an AUXLWO program observer's submitted observation record forms must maintain 98 percent accuracy as determined by CG-BSX-2.
- c. PQS training and qualification requirements must be processed as follows:
 - (1) An AUXLWO program observer applicant must submit a request to participate in the AUXLWO program to their cognizant AUXLWO State Coordinator ("State Coordinator") (email acceptable) who must review and relay it to the Auxiliary national Special Projects Division Chief (DVC-VS). The applicant must be sure to include their

Flotilla Commander (FC) on their request. The request must contain the applicant's basic information (i.e., name, employee ID number, flotilla number, membership status, & other qualifications) and a brief statement as to how the applicant intends to assist the AUXLWO program. Such requests must be processed in accordance with provisions in paragraph 3.

- (2) AUXLWO program observer trainees must have their PQS signed off by a mentor who is already qualified in the AUXLWO program. Trainees are strongly encouraged to extensively familiarize themselves with references (a)-(c), and communicate often with their respective State Coordinator for guidance. They are expected to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the AUXLWO program's purpose as well as proficiency in the conduct of life jacket wear observation including identification of vessel and life jacket types.
- (3) AUXLWO program observer training and qualification, and the functions of other key AUXLWO program administrators, must be performed in accordance with provisions of paragraph 3.

3. Program Roles and Responsibilities.

a. The Coast Guard Boating Safety Division (CG-BSX-2) shall:

- (1) Assign an AUXLWO Program Manager within staff to provide general guidance and administrative oversight to AUXLWO program participants, including serving as the liaison between the AUXLWO national Program Coordinator and the National Life Jacket Wear Observation Study Coordinator ("Study Coordinator").
- (2) Serve as the Order Issuing Authority (OIA) for AUXLWO program participants.
- (3) Provide appropriate orders in support of AUXLWO program observers. Travel reimbursement will not be authorized for AUXLWO program observers without prior CG-BSX-2 approval.

b. The Auxiliary national Chief of the Special Projects Division (DVC-VS) shall:

- (1) Serve as the AUXLWO national Program Coordinator under direct supervision of the Director of Vessel Examinations (DIR-V).
- (2) Serve as the principal point-of-contact for the CG-BSX-2 AUXLWO Program Manager and any designated State Coordinator.
- (3) Direct and coordinate regular AUXLWO activities across participating states to support AUXLWO study schedules and objectives. This includes regular communications with respective regional Auxiliary leaders and State Coordinators.
- (4) Provide state and observation site maps to State Coordinators.
- (5) Serve as the sole controlling authority for the issuance of the AUXLWO program observer PQS in Appendix A to Auxiliarists who are nominated to participate in the

AUXLWO program and provide it to State Coordinators for nominated AUXLWO program observer trainees.

- (6) Serve as the final approval authority for the AUXLWO program observer PQS in Appendix A as submitted by AUXLWO program observer trainees and as reviewed by their AUXLWO mentors and State Coordinators.
 - (7) Notify CG-BSX-2 of all approved AUXLWO program observer PQS completions as they occur, as well as complete rosters of qualified AUXLWO program observers and State Coordinators at least semi-annually, at the start of January and May, and as requested.
- c. The National Life Jacket Wear Observation Study Coordinator shall:
- (1) Identify States and observation locations to DVC-VS.
 - (2) Provide all AUXLWO program observer training.
 - (3) Provide study equipment to State Coordinators or their designees.
 - (4) Provide prepaid postage to allow for:
 - (a) return of observation data to the Study Coordinator; and
 - (b) transfer of study equipment to subsequent observation teams or return to the Study Coordinator.
- d. The Auxiliary District Commodore (DCO) shall designate a State Coordinator for each state that is subject to AUXLWO activity within their region, and advise the DVC-VS of such designations at the start of January each year.
- e. The AUXLWO State Coordinator shall:
- (1) Reside within the Auxiliary district/region containing the state for which they are nominated to serve by the cognizant DCO. Ideally, State Coordinators should also reside within the state for which they are nominated. In cases wherein more than one Auxiliary district/region geographically encompasses the same state (e.g., Pennsylvania), the cognizant DCOs shall collaborate and agree upon the designation of the State Coordinator from within their districts/regions.
 - (2) Participate in and successfully complete AUXLWO program observer training and if practical achieve observer qualification.
 - (3) Maintain regular and consistent communication with the DVC-VS and the Study Coordinator. This includes participating in AUXLWO program conference calls, and with emphasis during annual high program tempo periods like June through August.
 - (4) Follow all prescribed AUXLWO program recruitment guidance and recruit observer teams.

- (5) Coordinate regular AUXLWO program activities across their respective state to support AUXLWO study schedules and objectives. This includes regular communications with observer teams and other AUXLWO program participants with particular emphasis on minimizing logistical challenges and maximizing program efficiency.
- (6) Coordinate observer site schedules at all locations within their geographic purview, and ensure such schedules are shared with the DVC-VS and the Study Coordinator.
- (7) Inform the DVC-VS and the Study Coordinator of all AUXLWO program observers and trainees within their state at least semi-annually, at the start of January and May, and as requested.
- (8) Receive equipment from the Study Coordinator, facilitate equipment transfers between observer teams, and ensure such equipment is returned to the Study Coordinator within five business days of final observation.
- (9) Review AUXLWO program observer applicants' requests and nominate them to the DVC-VS. If there is a reason not to forward a request, the State Coordinator must notify the applicant of the reason (email acceptable).
- (10) Assign mentors to AUXLWO program observer trainees upon receipt and forwarding of the AUXLWO program observer PQS from the DVC-VS.
- (11) Review, endorse, and forward AUXLWO program observer PQS to the DVC-VS once successfully completed by AUXLWO program applicants and received from the respective mentor (email acceptable). If disapproval is considered, then return it and reconcile concerns with the mentor.

f. The AUXLWO Mentor shall:

- (1) Work with AUXLWO program observer applicants to help shepherd them to successful completion of the AUXLWO program observer PQS.
- (2) Serve as task sign-off authority for AUXLWO program observer applicants.
- (3) Forward successfully completed AUXLWO program observer PQS to the cognizant AUXLWO State Coordinator (email acceptable).
- (4) Work with State Coordinators to reconcile any concerns about AUXLWO program observer PQS approval.

g. The AUXLWO Program Observer shall:

- (1) Apply for AUXLWO program observer qualification in writing (email acceptable) to the respective State Coordinator in accordance with provisions in paragraph 2.

- (2) Successfully complete the AUXLWO program observer PQS in Appendix A including all requirements for Basically Qualified (BQ) membership status and currency in Auxiliary Core Training (AUXCT) prior to being assigned to duty in the AUXLWO program in other than trainee status.
 - (3) Successfully complete land-based observations as scheduled at locations specified by the State Coordinator and the Study Coordinator.
 - (4) Maintain flexibility in observation scheduling due to weather and other issues.
 - (5) Perform observation assignments at designated sites for a full four hours or to a count of 300 recreational boats, whichever comes first.
 - (6) Facilitate the transfer of study equipment between the cognizant State Coordinator and/or other observation teams and AUXLWO program participants.
 - (7) Immediately communicate any site anomalies and unusual conditions to the Study Coordinator.
 - (8) Photograph loaner board and site changes, and transmit that information to the Study Coordinator.
 - (9) Return completed observation forms to the Study Coordinator in accordance with provided instructions within 72 hours of observation completion.
 - (10) Not conduct or report observations prior to completion of the AUXLWO program observer PQS, unless accompanied and supervised by an AUXLWO mentor.
 - (11) Not receive equipment and data collection forms prior to completion of the AUXLWO program observer PQS.
 - (12) Not conduct AUXLWO field activities wearing any Auxiliary uniform item.
 - (13) Not draw unnecessary attention to an observation team in any manner that may influence the outcome of the study.
- h. The District Director of Auxiliary shall make appropriate AUXDATA entries upon receipt of notification of an AUXLWO program observer's successful PQS completion.

Appendix A

AUXILIARY LIFE JACKET WEAR OBSERVATION (AUXLWO) PROGRAM OBSERVER PERSONAL QUALIFICATION STANDARDS (PQS)

AUXLWO Applicant Name /

Auxiliary Region / Flotilla: _____

Task Number	Task Description – AUXLWO Program Observer	Task Sign-off
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks 1 and 2 must be signed off by the Auxiliarist’s Flotilla Commander or higher elected officer in their chain of leadership, or their AUXLWO program mentor. • Tasks 3-5 must be signed off by the AUXLWO mentor or State Coordinator. 	<p><u>Include</u> Signature Printed name Command / Unit Date</p>
1	Successful completion of the boating safety course requirement for Basically Qualified (BQ) membership status.	
2	Current in all Auxiliary Core Training (AUXCT) requirements.	
3	Review the most recent National Life Jacket Wear Rate Observational Study Report, available for download from the “Statistics” section of the Boating Safety Division’s (CG-BSX-2) website at: http://www.uscgboating.org .	
4	Successful completion of annual online training and certification testing provided by the Study Coordinator, available at: https://elearning.jsi.com/	
5	Successfully complete two observation sessions, under supervision of the mentor or another qualified AUXLWO program observer, in which a 98 percent accuracy rate is achieved and properly documented on observation forms.	

Validation and routing of AUXLWO program observer PQS completion from applicant:

AUXLWO Mentor: _____ Date: _____
(Printed name and signature)

AUXLWO State Coordinator: _____ Date: _____
(Printed name and signature)

Auxiliary national Chief of the Special Projects Division (DVC-VS)*:
_____ Date: _____
(Printed name and signature)

* - Forward PQS to cognizant District Director of Auxiliary for record retention and AUXDATA entry

Appendix B

AUXLWO Program Observer PQS Routing Process

