

Chesapeake Chatter

Division 23

Volume 17 Issue 2

Summer 2025



Bob Harlan preparing breakfast Station Cape Charles



Blue Angels during practice



Spectators enjoy the Blue Angels practice

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As a division we have had the opportunity to assemble and share experiences numerous times this year. The first was our Division Change of Watch at Renditions in January, our Sector Maryland National Capitol Region (MD-NCR) Workshop at Curtis Bay in March and D-Train in April 2025.

The bonds that guide our principles and shape our values encourage us to build as an organization, help us get through the generational struggles as we continue to strive for the best outcomes to meet our critical missions. We meet those obligations as a cause we have saluted in our 86 year history as a volunteer uniformed service branch to augment the Coast Guard to stand ready, relevant and responsive as one TEAM, of our ports and waterways.

Part of the ready has always been to be vigilant and maintain our qualifications, training and performance standards to stand as colleagues responsive to emergency incidents, one team, one mission, one common goal.

As we move through the second quarter of the year and prepare for the Recreational Boating season it is incumbent of all our members to be accountable, safe, prepared, maintain situational awareness and avoid unnecessary risk using strategies and tactics to execute our vision/purpose. From the most experienced, tenured to the newest member all hands are critical to our sustainability. It is Imperative our units work together in harmony and cooperation to promote our mission and strengthen our links within our Division and Districts throughout the Coast Guard.

The future of our branch of service will require the Auxiliary assets to be major components in the Coast Guard operations and it is incumbent for all to comprehend that we are valued stakeholders in today's mission, now!

We thank you for those who are dedicated to the daily task and mentorship but we need all to be involved in the flotilla's activities. If you have been

seeking or looking for an opening or opportunity to participate 2025 is your time.

Mark Campbell

DCDR

Eighty-Sixth Anniversary of The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary

On June 23, 2025, we celebrate the 86th anniversary of the Coast Guard Auxiliary and its unwavering service to Coast Guard missions and personnel. As generations march by, Auxiliarists remain our uniformed volunteer sentinels of support ready to answer the Coast Guard's every call.

Founded by Congress in 1939 to provide the Coast Guard with a corps of volunteers who owned motorboats or yachts and dedicated to the promotion of maritime safety, Auxiliarists have exercised unparalleled flexibility and resiliency as the array of Coast Guard mission needs has grown over the years. Despite immense challenges ranging from wars to massive natural disasters to even a world-wide pandemic, Auxiliarists have always been right alongside the Coast Guard offering this fundamental truth, "We are here for you."

During the past year, Auxiliarists again distinguished themselves as consummate shipmates and premier emissaries of maritime safety. They conducted more than 77 thousand recreational vessel safety checks, distributed boating safety outreach materials to more than 66 thousand stores and marinas, devoted more than 1.7 million hours of mission support, and unselfishly accomplished it all by logging over 1.6 million miles of unreimbursed travel in their own vehicles.

Auxiliarists also etched another distinguished list of operational and administrative achievements i

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2025 Board & Staff

DCDR: Mark Campbell

VCDR: Rick Corrales

IPDCDR: Margaret Butler

23-1 - Annapolis

Lenny Butler, Flotilla Commander

Margaret Butler, Vice Flotilla Commander

23-2 - Solomons

Rick Sikorski, Flotilla Commander

George Weston, Vice Flotilla Commander

23-3 – Greater Annapolis

Jamel Lee, Flotilla Commander

John Krisko, Vice Flotilla Commander

23-4 – South River

Paul Feinberg, Flotilla Commander

Tam Cragg, Vice Flotilla Commander

23-6 – Drum Point

Larry Mattivi, Flotilla Commander

Joseph Enchill, Vice Flotilla Commander

23-7 – Herring Bay

Joseph Distefano, Flotilla Commander

Helen Gemignani, Vice Flotilla Commander

Division Staff

SO-AS—

SO-CM - Jim Welday

SO-CS - Steven Hildebrand

SO-FN - Michael Taylor

SO-HR - Dave Keyser

SO-IS - Ellen Hatcher

SO-MA – Jamal Lee

SO-MS - Wendy Norwitz

SO-MT - Willie Witters

SO-NS - Dave Sire

SO-OP - Justin Cashman

SO-PA - Jamal Lee

SO-PB - Connie Cosgrove

SO-PE - Joseph Distefano

SO-PV - Ron Price

SO-SR - Susan Casler

SO-VE - vacant

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30 September

Articles and pictures are encouraged and appreciated. Please email to the editor:
Connie Cosgrove at cjcosgrove@earthlink.net

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All Aboard for Spring D-Train at Richmond Marriott Short Pump

D-Train is a setting for District members, offering training to include C-schools, fellowship and understanding of roles within the Auxiliary. It provides an opportunity to reunite with old friends, make new ones, share stories and ideas, gain new qualifications and just have fun.

Leadership Development: The focus was on promoting the next generation of leaders, developing project management skills, and improving performance for mission success.

Cost and Time Efficiency: D-Train is the perfect option for saving time and expense while preparing for your future in the Auxiliary.

Mission Success: Everyone has a role and plays a part in strategies that benefit the missions.

Recreational Boating Safety: This is the primary focus of the operational training sessions, emphasizing safety measures and best practices for recreational boating.

Operational Plan for 2025-2026 was presented by Commodore Jim Thomas. The session covered the operational strategies and plans for the upcoming year.

Legal Merit Issues: This session addressed legal concerns and updates relevant to the Auxiliary.

ICS Courses: The instruction focuses on workload benefits and the value they bring to the USCG, helping to fill in missing elements in GAP analysis and acting as force multipliers. These courses are required for many of our missions as well as to hold elected office.

The Board Meeting:— Highlights included special project video presentations by Margaret Butler; new preparatory excel tools spreadsheet by Phil

Amana, ADSO-FN; AuxData II changes; Dave Gamble, DCOS briefed updated changes to the D5 website and Joe Espino Cybersecurity standard rules for general Aux security access. New members enrolled in Flotilla Leadership or Auxiliary Leadership and Management classes get to attend part of the meeting to witness the meeting in progress with the District Captains from Sectors North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland and the Division Commanders from the various divisions.

Festivities: included dinner fellowship and award presentation on Friday night and the Commodores Banquet on Saturday Night highlighted with Rear Admiral John “Jay” Vann Commander Fifth Coast Guard District addressing to the audience.

Mark Campbell

DCDR

Anniversary—continued from page 2

Into the Coast Guard’s legacy of excellence. Distinct and shining examples ranged from critical post-Hurricane Milton overflights that helped quickly restore port operations in the Seventh District to invaluable video production and forensic animation in support of the TITAN submersible investigation to continued expansion of Auxiliary student programs that yielded dozens of accessions into the Coast Guard Academy and Direct Commission Officer program as well as into the Auxiliary.

Happy Birthday!...and a heartfelt, “Thank you!” to all Auxiliarists for the honor of their service!

With utmost respect,

Brent R. Schmadeke

Captain, U.S. Coast Guard

Chief, Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety (CG-BSX)

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Coast Guard renames geographic operational districts

The U.S. Coast Guard announced Thursday the renaming of its operational districts from numerical to geographic designations, a key initiative under Force Design 2028 (FD2028).

This strategic change, directed by Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem on May 21, 2025, aims to indicate more accurately the regions they serve and represent. Renaming operational districts revises a numbered system established during World War II, when the Coast Guard operated as part of the Navy to ensure alignment between the services. In the 80 years since the Coast Guard separated from the Navy, the Service has maintained the numbered districts. However, the Navy stopped using numbered districts over 25 years ago.

Updating operational districts to regional names will more clearly align districts with their areas of responsibility, facilitate collaboration with interagency partners, and ensure the American public and maritime stakeholders can easily find and understand the districts in which they live, recreate and operate. This change is a direct action within FD2028's organization campaign, which is focused on adapting the Coast Guard's structure to remain effective and responsive.

The new geographic names, approved by the Department of Homeland Security, are as follows:

District 1: USCG Northeast District
 District 5: USCG East District
 District 7: USCG Southeast District
 District 8: USCG Heartland District
 District 9: USCG Great Lakes District
 District 11: USCG Southwest District
 District 13: USCG Northwest District
 District 14: USCG Oceania District
 District 17: USCG Arctic District

"This renaming is more than just a change in

labels; it's a critical step in our journey to become a more agile, capable, and responsive fighting force," said Acting Commandant Kevin E. Lunday. "Under Force Design 2028, we are driving fundamental changes to speed decision-making, improve strategic alignment, and ultimately best serve the American people for decades to come. This initiative underscores our commitment to ensuring that change is lasting and has an enduring impact on the Service and the Nation."

This change will not impact operations or change existing geographical district boundaries. To memorialize the updated names for operational districts, the Coast Guard is undertaking the process of formally changing district names in the Code of Federal Regulations. Through this process, the Coast Guard will continue to communicate with stakeholders and provide updated resources and information as appropriate.

For more information, please contact Coast Guard Media Relations at MediaRelations@uscg.mil.

Read more about the Coast Guard's transformation through FD2028 here: **USCG Force Design 2028**.

Editor's Note: the above was came from Coast Guard Fifth District Mid-Atlantic News

New members

The following members have joined the Division since the last edition of the Chatter:

Rachel Sanders, Joseph L. Stehle, John Elstner, and Joseph Stanik; 23-1
 Charles Carrington and William Cartwright; 23-2
 Benjamin Turk, Christopher W. Meyd, and Tracy Smith; 23-3
 Kathleen Feinberg, 23-4
 John Wright, 23-7
Connie Cosgrove
 SO-PB

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Auxiliarists Provide Culinary Support

Do you like to cook? If you do, the Auxiliary has a program that is perfect for you! The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Culinary Assistance Program (AUXCA) supports the Coast

Guard and the Coast Guard Auxiliary for all culinary needs. The AUXCA, formerly the Auxiliary Food Service Program (AUXFS), was established in 2021 as a program in direct support of Coast Guard galleys on land and at sea. You can support at a level that is comfortable for you.

The two certification levels are AUXCA-1 and AUXCA-2 Specialist. An AUXCA-1 supports the Coast Guard aboard Cutters, in Station Galleys, and at Headquarters. An AUXCA-2 supports Coast Guard Auxiliary events only. If you are interested, there is a place for you in the AUXCA program. Cooking experience is NOT required. Bring your enthusiasm and we will teach you. The time involved is a minimal 12 hours a year for AUXCA1. AUXCA2 requires just an annual Sanitation workshop and exam.

D5SR Culinary Assistants (CAs) have been busy onboard several vessels at Curtis Bay, prepping for meals and serving the crew when vessels are short-handed. Crew size varies from a dozen to fifty, depending on the boat size, but all of whom are very appreciative of Auxiliarists' help. AUXCA1 Towers is currently serving onboard CGC Hollyhock. We have also supported CGCs Sledge and Hickory while their CAs were on leave or training and are actively supporting Stations Cape Charles and Hobucken as well. Food is the #1 morale maker for a crew. Good food means happy crew.

There are plenty of training and service opportunities in D5SR. The next local culinary training event is 26 - 27 April aboard Coast Guard Training Center, Yorktown, VA. Sign up, learn the ropes, have fun and make a difference! Contact

the DSO-CA for more details: Robin Moon at robin.graf.moon@gmail.com

Robin Moon,

DSO- CA

Auxiliary-Sea Scout Youth Development (AUXSCOUT) Program – SOP Revision

1. In November 2019, the inaugural national Auxiliary-Sea Scout Youth Development (AUXSCOUT) Program Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) document was issued to provide information and policy for the conduct of enhanced partnering between the Auxiliary and the Sea Scouts. It was last revised in October 2022 to address new AUXDATA II entry guidance and new provisions including the requirement of at least one adult (i.e., 18 years of age or older) Auxiliarist or Sea Scout leader to have specified training when conducting certain activities with Sea Scout youths.

2. The AUXSCOUT SOP has been revised again. New key provisions include:

a. Termination of authorization for enrollment of Sea Scout youth under 17 years of age stemming from renewal of the AUXSCOUT Letter of Intent (LOI).

b. Boy Scouts of America's new moniker, Scouting America, is predominantly applied throughout this SOP.

c. All references to the Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc. have been removed because it is no longer a party to the AUXSCOUT LOI.

3. The revised AUXSCOUT SOP (AUX-SOP-002(D)) will be posted on the Chief Director of Auxiliary website (SOP section SOPs (<https://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=BX-GROUP&category=sop>)) on or about May 08, 2025, and is also available on the Coast Guard Auxiliary Youth Programs website (<https://auxscout.com>)

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Awards

The following members have earned awards and qualification.

CG Meritorious Team Commendation

Rick Corrales, 23-3 work with the District Seven 2024 D-Train Team from 17-22 Sept 2024
Jamal Lee, 23-3

CG Meritorious Team Commendation – Sector Maryland – Francis Scott Key Bridge response

Kathleen Sullivan, Charles Eames, Marie Squillace, Denise Collins, 23-1
Le Roy Culley, Bruce Johnson, Holly Johnson, John Fewer, John Krisko, Henry Murray, Hector Corrales, 23-3
Willie Witters, 23-6

CG Meritorious Team Commendation for Safety at Sea Event

Hank Murray, 23-3

CG Meritorious Team Commendation for Youth Programs Sea Scout Ship Development Team

Holly Johnson & Bruce Johnson, 23-3

Meritorious Team Commendation for Sea Scout and Young Adult Recruiting Talent Management Transformation Team

Holly Johnson & Bruce Johnson, 23-3

Auxiliary Achievement Award

Bruce Johnson, John Fewer, 23-3

Auxiliary Commandant Letter of Commendation

Denise Collins, 23-1
Anthony Wisniewski, Roy Culley, 23-3

AUXOP

Ruth Hatcher, Nancy Hames, Stephen Fridakis, Rachel Sanders, 23-1
John Krisko, and Benjamin Turk, 23-3

Culinary Assistant 1

Michael Makatache, 23-1

Instructor

Ellen Hatcher and Stephen Fridakis – 23-1

Advanced Instructor Golden Key Award – over 50 hours

Carter Rardon, 23-1
Bruce Johnson and Rick Corrales, 23-3

Boat Crew Qualification

Tracy Smith, Stephen Andrews, Chris Saabye, Chris Meyd, and Ben Turk, 23-3

Leadership Competency Level Three

Rick Corrales, 23-3

Sustained Service Award

Margaret Butler, 9th award; Leonard Butler, 4th award; Ruth Hatcher, 3rd and 4th award; Susan Casler, 2nd award; Richard Thompson, 2nd award; 23-1
Mark Bertacchi, 10th award; Donald Parker, 9th award; Hector Corrales, 4th award; Bryan Teague, 4th award; 23-3
Joe Distefano, 3rd award; 23-7

Membership Service Award

5 year

Leroy Mattingly, 23-2
Joe Enchill, 23-6
Helen Gemignani and Joe Distefano. 23-7

10 years

Le Roy Culley, 23-3
Fred Mobley, 23-6
Donna McMillan, 23-7

15 Years

Ronald Price, Wendy Norwitz, 23-1

Marine Safety Training Ribbon

Richard Sikorski

Annual PE Service Award

Ed Martin, Carter Rardon, David Sire; 23-1
George Weston, 23-2

Lynn Disque, Bruce Johnson, Hector Corrales, 23-3

Annual OPS Service Award

Ed Martin, Kathleen Sullivan, Darian Pringle, David Sire, 23-1
John Fewer, 23-3
Harry Scott, 23-6 for watchstanding

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Annual VE/MDV Award

Bruce Johnson, Holly Johnson, 23-3
William Smith, 23-6

Recruiting Service Award

Hector Corrales, 23-3

Certificate of Achievement

Jamal Lee PA3 certification, 23-3

Herring Bay Flotilla Kicks Off Boating Season with Safety and Fellowship

In proud support of National Safe Boating Week and as part of a cherished tradition, Flotilla 23-07 (Herring Bay) launched the 2025 summer recreational boating season with two successful events focused on vessel safety, training, and public outreach.

Vessel Safety Check Training Refresher

Ahead of the May Flotilla Business Meeting,

members gathered for a hands-on Vessel Safety Check (VSC)



conducted aboard my Auxiliary facility. This annual refresher not only helped our qualified Vessel Examiners (VE) sharpen their skills, but also served as a valuable training opportunity for those in VE training and members interested in becoming a certified examiner. The event fostered peer learning and reinforced our commitment to promoting recreational boating safety through excellence and professionalism.

Marina Safety Day at Herrington Harbour South

On Saturday, May 17—the official start of National Safe Boating Week—our Flotilla hosted its annual Marina Safety Day at Herrington Harbour South. With the sun shining and boaters bustling about the marina, our members set up a vibrant Public Affairs booth to engage the boating community. We spoke with dozens of recreational boaters about the importance of onboard safety equipment, proper preparation, and safe boating practices.

In tandem with the outreach, our team conducted over a dozen VSC throughout the day, ensuring that boaters had the required safety gear and offering recommendations for safer boating. These efforts were well-received by marina members, many of whom expressed appreciation for our service and expertise.

To wrap up the day, our members came together for a celebratory BBQ, enjoying fellowship and camaraderie after a productive and impactful event.

Looking Ahead

Both events highlight the strength of our Flotilla's commitment to boating safety, training, and community engagement. As the summer season begins, we remain dedicated to our mission of promoting safety on the water and building strong relationships within our maritime community.

Bravo Zulu to all who participated and helped make these events a success!

Brian Shrift

Past Flotilla Commander, 23-7

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Blue Angels showcase their aerial talents

As in years past, the Blue Angels prepared to showcase their aerial talents in front of many spectators and boaters along the Severn River. The bright clear skies and brisk day was a perfect canvas for this annual airshow. The initial trial run of the air dynamics took place on Tuesday, 20 May in Annapolis Maryland with backdrops of the US Naval Academy, the radio towers and Severn River bridges.

There were two training performances one in the morning and in the afternoon. The audience anticipation was obvious as boaters arrived on the scene with enthusiasm excitement and fanfare ready for a festive day. Many vessels were playing music and setting up for that fantastic photo or special spot to witness the air dynamics. The majestic cover of fleets of boats along the river is always daunting, a canopy of appreciation for the Blue Angels.

The morning airshow featured four plane formations dazzling the crowds. With precision and speed, they demonstrated their skills flawlessly. The afternoon airshow featured the full complement of six airplanes diving and circling through the skies to the throng of applause and awe below. You could sense the effect of amazement of those who witness the acrobatic feats of these flying machines as they were treated to a live performance that fairy tales are made of.

The blessing of the fleet was spearheaded by the Blue Angels this day and we pray for their continued success and safe return as they continue to deliver sensational theatre in the skies above. We thank the Blue Angels for sharing their talents and skills in the land of the free and home of the brave.

Mark Campbell

DCDR



Maritime Heritage Festival

Solomons Maritime Heritage Festival took place on Saturday, May 3, 2025 at the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Md. This festival is an annual event that Flotilla 23-6 supports. There were approximately 1300 visitor including children.

Bill Smith set up the booth on Friday event, 2 May. The event on Saturday had many vendors with displays of all maritime type items; sail boats, power boats etc. There were food vendors selling crab cakes, hot dogs, soda, water, etc.

The Calvert Marine Museum was open free. There was a large Quilts of Valor display - Women were sewing Quilts and presenting them to Service members of all branches of Service with a presentation Ceremony.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary had a display of life Jacket and Safe Boating Information. Robert Harlan, Flotilla Commander, 25-07 spoke with the boating public about joining the Coast Guard Auxiliary and also spoke with a person about their son/daughter joining Coast Guard. Robert gave information to him about both.

Bill Smith spoke about boating safety, showing how to fit a life jacket along with what should be on the life jacket. Both Bill and Robert gave out a lot of information about Kayaks, canoes, paddleboards and the safety items that are need. Hot items included reflector sheets, whistles, coloring books, crayons, pens, pencils, and flying disks.

Both spoke about getting Free Vessel Safety Check, and our next Boating safety class in Prince Frederick.

Bill Smith

FSO-PA 23-6

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Flotilla 23-6 receives annual NSBW proclamation

The Board of Calvert County Commissioners (BOCC) presented Flotilla 23-6 with an annual National Safe Boating Week (NSBW) Proclamation on May 13.

Commissioner Mike Hart asked our members to introduce ourselves. Members were Connie Cosgrove who said she had been in the Auxiliary since 1987 and currently held three positions in the Auxiliary. Mark Campbell, Division Commander and Flotilla Staff Officer (FSO) for Operations introduced himself and thanked the Commissioners and told them it was a privilege to be in the Auxiliary. Harry Scott, FSO for Human Resources introduced himself and told the Commissioners he had been a member since 2001.

The Commissioners proclaimed 17-23 May NSBW week in Calvert County. The proclamation encouraged boaters to wear a life jacket. The Commissioners also said that while boating is an excellent source of recreation that it also be risky. They stated that many lives are lost each year in the United States due to boating accidents; with the majority from human error. They also stated that 85% of recorded drownings were not wearing a life jacket. Commissioner Hart also talked about the importance of boating safety education. Auxiliarist Cosgrove took that opportunity to give a plug for the Flotilla's upcoming boating class.

Connie Cosgrove

SO-PB



Restoration Of Online Proctor Requirement for AUXOP Specialty Course Exams

Ref: (a) ALAUX 027-20 - TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF ONLINE PROCTOR REQUIREMENT FOR AUXOP SPECIALTY COURSE EXAMS

1. Sections 8.C.2.(b) and (d) of the Auxiliary Manual (Commandant Instruction Manual M16790.1 (series)) require all Operational Auxiliarist (AUXOP) specialty course exams to be proctored and have a minimum passing score of 75 percent. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reference (a) temporarily suspended the proctor requirement for the following AUXOP specialty course exams when taken online: Auxiliary Navigation (AUXNAV-A / also listed as AUXACN), Auxiliary Weather (AUXWEA), Auxiliary Patrols (AUXPAT), Auxiliary Seamanship (AUXSEA), and Auxiliary Communications (AUXCOM). As part of this suspension, reference (a) also temporarily increased the passing score from 75 percent to 90 percent, instituted a 120-minute time limit, authorized these online course exams to be taken open-book, and identified conditions for when these temporary changes should be ended.

2. COVID-19 safety protocols now allow the temporary suspension outlined in reference (a) to come to an end. To allow Auxiliarists to complete their exams for AUXOP specialty courses already in progress, the provisions of the temporary suspension will remain in place for an additional 30 days from today's date before the normal policies are restored.

3. Beginning 19 May 2025, the temporary suspension outlined in reference (a) will end and the normal policies outlined in sections 8.C.2.(b) and (d) of the Auxiliary Manual will be restored. The normal policies for the five AUXOP specialty course exams mentioned above include the following provisions:

- a. Exams, including online exams, are proctored.

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- b. Exams are closed book with a minimum passing score of 75 percent.
- c. Exams have no time limit but must be taken in one sitting without breaks.
- d. The following proctor eligibility criteria remain unchanged: “A commissioned, warrant, or petty officer of the Coast Guard or Coast Guard Reserve, any Coast Guard civilian employee or any Auxiliarist designated as an AUXOP, specifically appointed by the Director, may proctor and process the exams, including on-line exams. An Auxiliarist who has successfully completed a specialty course(s) but has not yet achieved AUXOP designation, and who has been specifically appointed by the Director, may proctor and process the exam for that course(s), including the on-line exam.”

SAVE THE DATE - D5SR D-TRAIN SEP 2025

D5SR D-Train is scheduled for Thursday Sep 04 through Sunday Sep 07, 2025.

A limited number of Coast Guard-funded Travel Orders are available for the following courses:

AFLC and AUXLAMs: APC and either AFLC or AUXLAMs are now required to hold elected office. All elected officers or those seeking office for 2026 must meet this requirement. Screening committees must include this requirement in their reports on the eligibility of candidates to hold office. Both AFLC and AUXLAMs will be offered at the SEP D-Train. This is the last in-person class opportunity to meet the requirement for this fall’s election season.

ICS-300: ICS-300 was a huge success at the APR D-Train and will be offered again at the SEP D-Train.

The foundation for Auxiliarists to support Incident Command Posts (ICP) in situations like the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse, the Presidential Inauguration, and the Washington D.C. Air Collision.

EM0105: Introduces participants to the role of the Public Information Officer (PIO) in emergency management, along with basic information about the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS). The PIO topics covered include the role of the PIO, communication tools and resources encompassing social media, effective communication, preparing the community through outreach and other means, and communication in an incident. The (IPAWS) topics include what the system is and does, preparing alert and warning messages, and writing common alerting protocol messages. EM0105 enables members to lead a Joint Information Center (JIC) at an Incident Command Post (ICP). D5SR continues to build a cadre of PA-certified members to support the 5th District, Sector, and Unit PA needs.

AUX 06 & AIDS VERIFIER PQS: An opportunity to complete both AUX 06 and the Aids Verifier PQS curricula simultaneously. The only tasks remaining will be the PATON verifications under supervision to complete the AV-PQS. Support the Coast Guard with NS mission support after completing these two courses.

This is an excellent opportunity to take AFLC, AUXLAMs, ICS-300, EM0105, AUX 06, and Aids Verifier-PQS, and receive Coast Guard Travel Orders that include reimbursement for mileage, tolls, per diem meals, and hotel costs. D-Train will also offer two sessions of the required annual RM/TCT Refresher, as well as other excellent training and fellowship opportunities. However, the above courses are intensive and will require a full commitment that will preclude taking any other training that weekend.

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If you are interested in attending D-Train to take one of the Coast Guard-funded courses above, you need to do two things ASAP.

- If you already have an E2 Solutions (ETS) account, great. If not, you need to start the process of setting up an E2 Solutions (ETS) account NOW. Instructions for obtaining a FINCEN Supplier Number and setting up an E2 Solutions (ETS) account can be found on the D5SR Website at <https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=054>. Click on the E2 Travel Help link in the left column.

- Immediately send an e-mail expressing an interest in a specific course to:
Andy Kelly, DSO-MT @ andykelly86@msn.com

The official registration site will be open in a few weeks, but we need an initial headcount on how many of the limited seats to assign to each course. All questions should be routed up your Chain of Leadership/Management. The D-Train Registration Website, including the Hotel registration link, will open in a few weeks.

DO NOT wait until registration opens to start the process of obtaining an E2 Solutions (ETS) Account. All questions are routed up the CoL/M; do not send questions to DIRAUX.

Our D-Train will be held at the Richmond Marriott Short Pump in Glen Allen, VA. A hotel reservation link will be available when the registration site opens.

Your District Leadership looks forward to seeing you at the September D-Train.

DCO Jim Thomas

Letter of Intent signed with West Marine

I'm pleased to share exciting news that strengthens our mission and amplifies our impact: the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary has signed a national **Letter of Intent (LOI)** with **West Marine**, one of the nation's leading retailers serving the recreational boating public.

This Letter of Intent isn't just symbolic—it's a **game-changer**. West Marine serves more than **1 million customers** across 230+ locations in 38 states and Puerto Rico. Many flotillas have already forged successful relationships with local stores. Now, this LOI provides a **formal framework to grow those relationships with the support of the company leadership** and empowers **every flotilla where there is a store** to activate new opportunities for public outreach, **Vessel Safety Checks**, and **boating safety education** in a trusted, high-traffic venue.

What This Means for You and Your Flotilla:

- **Local Access** to host events, VSCs, or safety tables inside or outside West Marine stores
- **Promotional Support** from West Marine's marketing team and national visibility for store events
- **Safety Talks and Public Education classes** in store (facility dependent)
- **New Recruitment Pathways** to engage boaters and future Auxiliarists
- **Increased Impact** during National Safe Boating Week and year-round campaigns

Already in 2025 as part of the LOI, over 200 Flotillas have coordinated with their local West Marine store to engage in some 217 safety events including VSCs, PA events or safety talks during National Safe Boating Week May 17- May 23, 2025! Well Done!

Whether you're in a flotilla with a long-standing West Marine relationship or looking to create one,

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this LOI opens the door to **strategic engagement that advances our mission and saves lives.**

We encourage every flotilla to begin coordinating with store managers and planning outreach in alignment with your DSO-VE, DSO-PA, and local chain of leadership. Additional details and support are available by contacting our Recreation Boating Outreach team members, Michael Plavnicky Branch Chief-Advocacy Partners, at michael.j.plavnicky@cgauxnet.us or Rodney Janssen Division Chief, at rodney.l.janssen@cgauxnet.us.

Please take a moment to read the West Marine **official press release.**

Let's use this partnership to show the boating community who we are—**America's Volunteer Guardians**—and how we serve with excellence, every time we wear the uniform.
Semper Paratus,



Mary Kirkwood
National Commodore



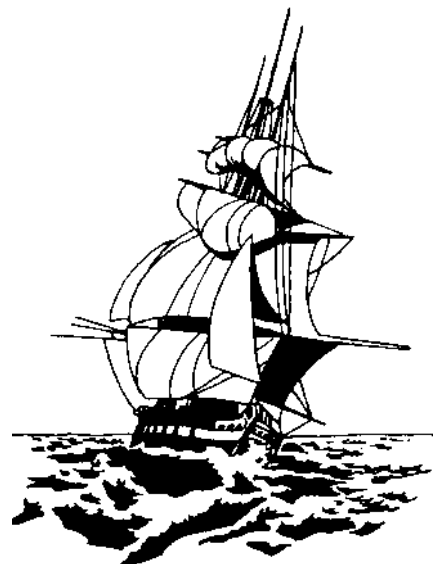
Auxiliary Procedures Course restored

At the 2024 Auxiliary National Training Conference (NTRAIN), held virtually in March, four recommendations were placed before the National Board. One of the actions was to restore the Auxiliary Procedures Course (APC) to qualify for election.

National Board Action: Based on the APC's inherent value in providing elected leaders with policy awareness, the recommendation was amended to retain the APC as an election eligibility requirement in conjunction with either the AFLC or AUXLAMs. Its final wording was, "It is recommended that the Auxiliary eliminate the Basic Qualification Course II as a course that meets eligibility requirements for elected office in favor of the Administrative Procedures Course and either AFLC or AUXLAMs effective 31 December 2024." The recommendation was approved as amended.

Chief Director Final Action: Concur, approved understanding the effective date will be January 1, 2025.

Respectfully,
S. J. Minutolo Chief Director of Auxiliary (CG-BSX),
Acting



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Chief Director's Final Action on National Board Recommendations at NTRAIN 2025

At the 2025 Auxiliary National Training Conference (NTRAIN), held virtually in March, two recommendations were placed before the National Board.

1. Subject: Authorization of Rescue and Survival Systems (RS) Officers (Originator: Director of Response Larry Fletcher / 11 January 2025)

a. Recommendation: Authorize Division Staff Officer (SO-RS), and Flotilla Staff Officer (FSO-RS) positions for Rescue & Survival Systems (RS) to oversee this activity for surface related operations. The goal is to provide focus to this program along with the training and support to ensure effective implementation. These officers will oversee PPE assignment, maintenance, and inspection for Surface Operations, Paddlecraft, Vessel Examiners, and Marine Safety personnel. These officers will be appointed PPE Data Managers by the district DIRAUX to enter this information into AUXDATA II.

b. Discussion: Auxiliarists engaged in operational and other missions that expose them to risk are required to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), specified in various manuals, guides, and handbooks. The Auxiliary is required to inspect and maintain issuance/inspection records for each piece of equipment.

The goal of this is to ensure that members are assigned the appropriate authorized PPE, that it meets the requirements for the mission, is up-to-date and properly inspected, and maintained in serviceable condition. All PPE assignments and inspection records are required to be recorded in AUXDATA II.

Air Operations has procedures in place to forecast, assign, and inspect PPE. There is variation across the districts and while they all maintain PPE

assignment and inspection records, not all have been uploading this data in AUXDATA II. Aviation best practices will be standardized nationally.

c. National Board Action: Approved.

d. Chief Director Final Action: Concur, approved. Division Commanders and Flotilla Commanders may appoint these new staff officers immediately. AUXDATA II will be modified to recognize these new staff offices and enable them to enter and review PPE gear in AUXDATA II at the earliest opportunity.

2. Subject: Removal of Sitting Commodores (Elected and Appointed) from Auxiliarist of the Year (AOY). (Originator: D9-WR COMO Rob Kumpf / 03 January 2025)

a. Recommendation: To remove from eligibility all sitting (currently in office) Commodores, elected and appointed, for the Coast Guard Auxiliarist of the Year Award.

b. Discussion: The Auxiliarist of the Year award is meant to recognize and honor an outstanding member of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. By the nature of the commodore roles, as senior leaders, the base expectation is that a commodore is an outstanding performer going above and beyond the expected call of duty of a deck plate Auxiliarist. Removing sitting commodores from the eligibility pool ensures that we are recognizing our deck plate membership for their outstanding efforts versus creating a perception of commodores recognizing other commodores. Similar awards, such as the Daniel Maxim Award, have restrictions that exclude program management or senior leaders from their eligibility, thus their (sic) is precedence for such action.

c. National Board Action: Approved.

d. Chief Director Final Action: Concur, approved commencing with nominations for the 2024 Auxiliarist of the Year.

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As I sit here on July 5th completing this issue of the Chatter and looking to fill one last page my thoughts are on those who fought in the wars so that we can have our freedom. I have many, as I know you all do also, who served in our military to give us this freedom. I had a distant cousin who was a Staff Sargent in the Army and a part of the invasion on D-Day during World War II. He went ashore at Utah Beach and never made it home. He is currently buried in France.

I also have an uncle who was captured by the Germans during the Battle of Bulge on Christmas Eve, 24 December 1943. He was held as a prisoner of war until 16 April 1944. He weight 68 pounds when he got home. I always think of them on Memorial Day and the 4th of July.

I have an elementary school classmate who enjoys writing poetry. I want to share her 4th of July poem from 4 July 2024.

Red is for courage, valor and the blood that was shed for you so we can be free.
 White is for purity, innocence and independence for you and for me.
 Blue is for perseverance and staying strong throughout our history.
 When you see our flag blowing in the breeze, I hope you are proud of what you see.
 If you say the pledge of allegiance, I hope you think about what it means.
 The 4th of July is a celebration of us becoming a country. It is a time for family, friends and fun.
 It is a time to eat good food, like watermelon, ice cream, a grilled burger on a bun.
 Thank Got that we live in a country, that we have all the freedoms that we do.
 Have fun, Stay Safe, and Happy 4th of July to each of you.

Bonnie McGuffin

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

FIRST CLASS

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Coast Guard

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