

Boat Crew Adaptability - Dunedin Flotilla 11-10

Coast Guard Auxiliary boat crew member adaptability has been tested in the first couple of months this year. The members of our flotilla and members from other flotillas on our flotilla's facility vessel have performed with calm professionalism thru it all.

As he prepared a pre-mission brief to send to his crew in late January, the coxswain, Harvey Prior, noticed the local water gulf temperature was in the upper 50s. Over the next couple of days before the mission, the water temperature crept up a little and then dropped again. On mission day, the call was made, everyone on the onboard must wear an anti-exposure suit.

These suits are full body outfits that qualify as type V personal flotation devices. The flotation material is thru-out the suit. Just putting it on is an effort. A trained Coastie can do it in two minutes or less. An insider hint is to put plastic shopping bags over your boots when putting the suit on.

With a boat loaded with men in orange suits, the crew went out upon the Gulf of Mexico waters and assisted with the C-130 drop training mission. Fortunately, the air temperature was also in the 50s so overheating was not a major problem. The mission was safe and successful.



Photo is from a previous mission showing from left to right Dan Lipman 11-1, Rob Bonnem 11-10, Tom Martin 11-6, and David McGee 11-10 performing crew activities similar to this article.

In February, a new problem arose for the Auxiliary crew to handle. The Aux vessel was scheduled to support C-27J drop training. Unfortunately, the Coasties working on the 27s had not learned from the 130 workers that two Coasties from the air station were to go along on the Auxiliary vessel. With no Coasties and no line reels that the Coasties bring, things were off to a bad start. The coxswain and four crew members discussed the situation and decided, "We can do this on our own."

The crew experimented and found that they could wrap the yards of line around the PADS can or the ASRK bags. While it was significantly more work for the Auxiliarists, their professionalism and devotion to duty made the Auxiliary mission a great success.

Photos taken by Harv Prior

