



Becoming qualified in the Auxiliary Surface Operations Program

The world of Surface Operations is exciting, fast paced and demanding. It is also potentially very dangerous. The most important aspect of the program is safety. The Surface Operations staff holds regular training workshops and activities to keep all Boat Crew members current on issues involving program administration, operational skills, procedures and safety.

When operating under orders, qualified Auxiliary Coxswains and Crew members, while assigned to duty are considered to be Coast Guard Coxswains and Crew and Auxiliary Boats, while assigned to authorized duty, are deemed to be Coast Guard boats. This means that, to be a member of a boat crew it is not enough just to know how to run a boat; Coxswains and Crew members must be able to operate the Coast Guard way. This entails a greater level of thoroughness in planning, seamanship, in crew coordination and in all levels of boating safety. It also involves certain procedures and paperwork, all of which is necessary for Auxiliary Surface Operations to perform its function of assisting the active duty Coast Guard.

When Auxiliary Surface Facilities (boats) are underway, they have extra safety equipment and extra safety procedures to offer greater protection than the average boater may have. However, the most important piece of safety gear each Auxiliary Boat can have is a well trained crew.

To become involved in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Surface Operations Program applicants must complete the Auxiliary Boat Crew Qualification Program. The first step a person interested in Auxiliary Surface Operations should take is to get in contact with a member of the Surface Operations Staff or Member Training Staff in their Flotilla. The staff member will make sure that the prospective participant has the correct information on how to proceed through the qualification process, and will see that a mentor is assigned to assist throughout the process.

The specific qualification standards for the Auxiliary Surface Operations Program are detailed in the Auxiliary Operations Policy, Manual COMDTINST M16798.3(series) and the Auxiliary Boat Crew Training Manual, COMDTINST M16794.51(series). In general the process involves study of the appropriate manuals and demonstrating the ability to perform various tasks. Also, there are course to complete on Safety and the Incident Command System. There are additional tests to pass for advanced levels of qualification.

The importance of contacting a member of the Surface Operations or Member Training Staff cannot be over emphasized. Although the requirements for participation in Surface Operations are spelled out in detail, they may be obscure or confusing to those not already familiar with the Auxiliary or the Surface Operations program. It's important that the prospective candidate remain in contact with their mentor to insure they are guided through the qualification process correctly.

Written tests for NAV-Rules and Auxiliary Policy may be taken on-line via the Auxiliary Training Department On-Line Testing Center. <http://ntc.cgaux.org/>

After all tasks have been completed, including passing a check ride with a Qualification Examiner (QE), all records must be sent to the Coast Guard Operations Training Officer (OTO) for certification before the member may participate as a member of a boat crew.

If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in joining us in Auxiliary Surface Operations, please feel free to contact any member of the Surface Operations Staff at any time.

Becoming Operations Qualified At A Glance

1. **Join** USCG Auxiliary

- ✓ Become Basically Qualified (BQ'ed)
- ✓ Complete the Personnel Security Investigations (PSI)
- ✓ Complete ICS 100 & 700 courses –
 - The courses can be found on-line at the following links:
 - [IS 100 course](http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100b.asp) - http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS100b.asp
 - [IS 200 course](http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS200b.asp) - http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS200b.asp

2. **Contact** a Staff Officer for Member Training or Operations in your Flotilla

▪ **Download from the CHDIRAUX web site:**

<http://www.uscg.mil/auxiliary/publications/default.asp> and from the National Response Department –Surface Operations Division web site <http://www.cgaux.org/response/SurfaceOps/> the following material:

- ✓ **Auxiliary Manual - COMDTINST M16790.1**
This is the manual that provides general guidance for all Auxiliarists.
- ✓ **Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual – COMDTINST M16798.3 (series)**
This provides operations policy guidance for all CG AUX operations including surface, air and communications.
- ✓ **Auxiliary Boat Crew Training Manual – COMDTINST M16794.51 (series)**
This training material is for the education of USCG Aux members involved in the Boat Crew Program as a crewmember, coxswain or Personal Watercraft Operator.
- ✓ **Auxiliary Boat Crew Qualification Guide – COMDTINST M16794.5- (.52 for CREW, .53 for COXSWAIN, and .54 for PWO) (series).**
These individual Guides contain the various tasks and standards that must be met for each level of qualification. They also contain the sign-off sheets for these tasks.

3. **Study** the training materials.

4. **Begin** training activities at the direction of your Mentor to learn skills necessary to become qualified.