

District 13 Charts Course for Future at Strategic Planning Retreat

May 20, 2025

US Coast Guard Auxiliary District 13 leadership convened for a pivotal strategic planning retreat on May 19, 2025 at Base Seattle, setting the course for key organizational initiatives over the coming year. The session, facilitated by Commander Tricia Jantzen, brought together the Bridge, District Commodore Aides, District Captains, District Division Chiefs, Sector Coordinators, President of the Past Division Commanders Association and the District Secretary to identify priorities and establish clear action plans.



CDR Trisha Jantzen, facilitator, guiding the group to next steps. Photo by Klaas Nijhuis

“This retreat represents our commitment to thoughtful, forward-looking leadership,” said District Commodore (DCO) Klaas Nijhuis. “By bringing together our key personnel, we’ve been able to chart a clear course that addresses our most pressing organizational needs.”

Under Jantzen’s guidance, participants engaged in collaborative exercises designed to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities within the district. These discussions culminated in the development of three major initiatives, each with defined timelines and accountability measures to be undertaken in the near-term.



John DeFeo, DDC for Response reporting out on his breakout groups ideas. Photo by Klaas Nijhuis

Key Initiatives

1. Mentoring Training Program

A comprehensive mentoring program will be developed under the leadership of Debra Alderman and the Past Division Commanders Association. This initiative recognizes the critical importance of knowledge transfer and leadership development within the organization and will use a Train-the-Trainer approach.

Timeline: The program will be formally presented at the Fall District Training Conference (DTRAIN), with implementation to follow immediately.

Responsibilities: Alderman will coordinate with the Past Division Commanders Association to identify subject matter experts, develop curriculum, and establish program metrics. District Captains will identify potential mentors from each area.

2. Communications Protocol Development

Addressing numerous problems identified, and enhancing organizational effectiveness, a new communications protocol will be established. This initiative aims to streamline information flow and ensure consistent communication practices across all levels of the district. In addition it will

address timely communication to our various constituents and organize all communications in an easily retrievable archive structure.

Timeline: A dedicated working group will be chartered at the Fall DTRAIN, with final deliverables scheduled for presentation at the Spring 2026 DTRAIN, immediately launching into training delivered to all levels of the organization.

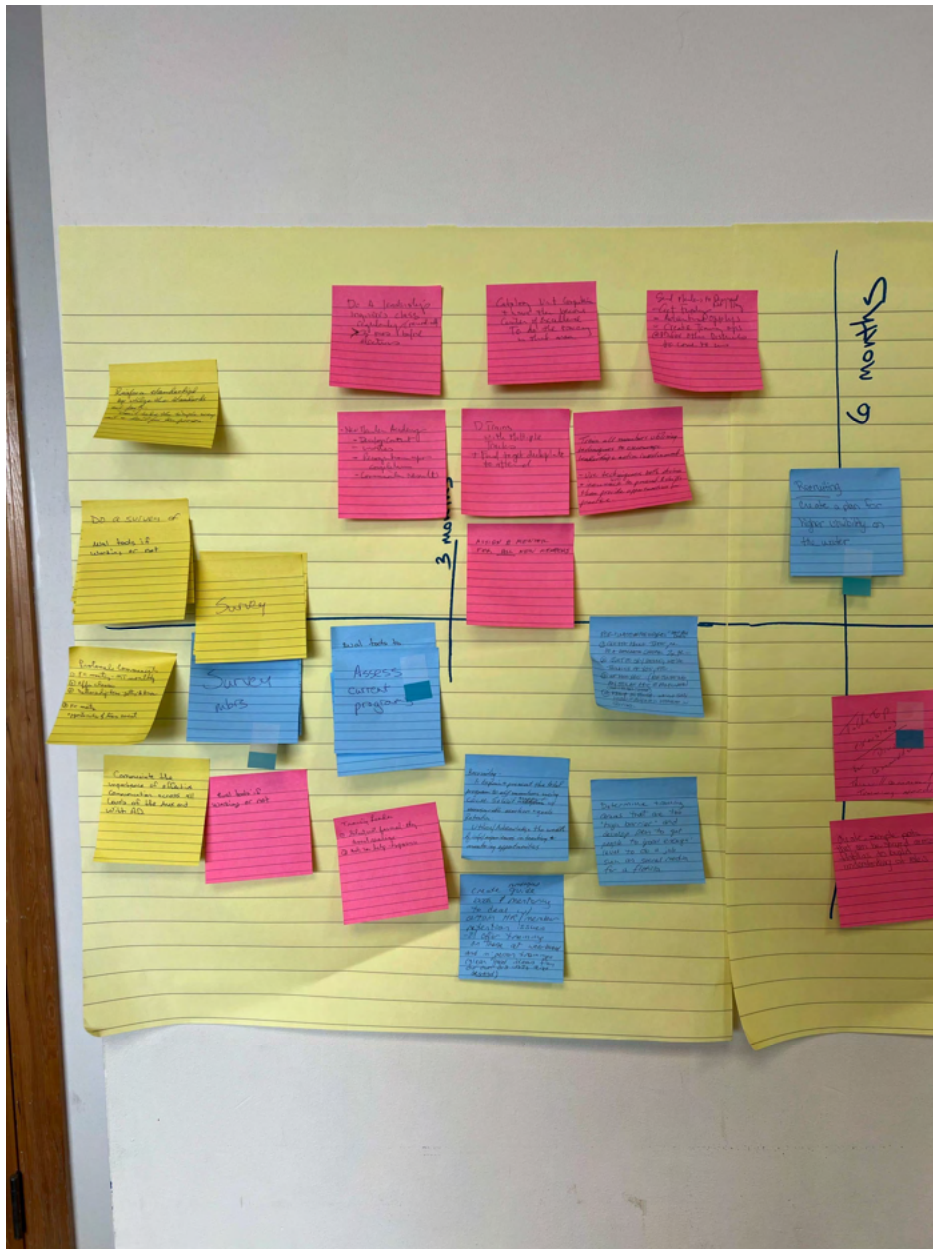
Responsibilities: The chartering group (to be formed) with instructions delivered by the DCO within the next two months will conduct stakeholder interviews, research best practices, and develop protocol documentation for review and approval by the Bridge.

3. Recruitment Training and Implementation

Recognizing the need for effective recruitment strategies, the third initiative focuses on developing comprehensive recruitment training and an implementation plan.

Timeline: The training program will be launched at the Fall DTRAIN with full implementation scheduled for the Spring 2026 DTRAIN.

Responsibilities: A recruitment task force convened by charter will develop training materials, establish recruitment goals, and design implementation strategies.





Develop Future Leadership

Provide all members w/ leadership training and mentorship across mission areas to ensure they are prepared and encouraged to take on appropriate leadership roles.

Strengthen Membership Growth and Retention

Achieve sustained growth by recruiting a net of 3 mbs per flotilla annual for 5 yrs, while equipping ldrs w/ strategies to engage both over- and under-utilized mbs.

Standardize + Tailor Comms

Establish clear, standardized communication protocols that are durable, respectful and retrievable, while tailoring messaging to meet the distinct needs of active duty, Auxiliary, and public audiences.

Some products of the deliberations. Photos by Klaas Nijhuis

Looking Ahead

The strategic planning retreat represents a significant step forward in District 13's commitment to organizational excellence. By focusing on mentorship, communication, and recruitment, district leadership has identified key leverage points for enhancing operational effectiveness.

"These initiatives directly address our most pressing needs and tie into the objectives of the Net Three program adopted by the Executive Committee (EXCOM)," noted Mark Hannibal, District

Chief of Staff. “With clear timelines and assigned responsibilities, we’re confident that we can achieve meaningful progress in these areas.”

Progress updates on all three initiatives will be provided at upcoming EXCOM meetings, with formal presentations scheduled for the respective DTRAIN conferences.

For more information about District 13 initiatives, please contact your District Captain.