

# RBS

# *Job One*



## **Changes in Life Jacket Labeling**

**WHAT BOATERS AND AUXILIARISTS  
NEED TO KNOW**

# RBS *Job One*

July / September 2019

Publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary  
Recreational Boating Safety Directorates

## INSIDE

**3 CHANGE IN LIFE JACKET LABELING**

**5 FLOAT PLANS SAVE LIVES**

**5 PADDLECRAFT VESSEL SAFETY CHECKS**

**7 NEW BOATER SAFETY COURSE**

**8 BOATING SAFETY RESOURCES**

ON THE COVER: Life Jackets worn properly are essential for safe boating.  
Photo Courtesy of US Coast Guard Boating Safety Division

RBS Job One is the flagship publication for the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary RBS Directorates; RBS Outreach (B), Public Education (E) and Vessel Examination and Partner Visitation (V). Its purpose is to inform all members of the Auxiliary of current developments affecting their job performance in conducting the core mission assigned by the Coast Guard and to share best practices. RBS Job One is published several times a year. Send submissions to [sydneyhay@mindspring.com](mailto:sydneyhay@mindspring.com).

Distribution: All Coast Guard Auxiliarists with email addresses in AUXDATA, COMDT (CG-BSX) staff, CGAuxA executive director, and U.S. Power Squadrons, via direct email.

Disclaimer: The appearance of any product or service advertisement on a site which hosts a publication of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary or on a site to which any link is directed does not constitute, and shall not be construed as, an endorsement of that product or service by the United States Coast Guard or Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Confidentiality Notice: PRIVACY ACT of 1974: The disclosure of the personal information contained in this publication is subject to the provisions contained in the Privacy Act of 1974. The subject Act, with certain exceptions, prohibits the disclosure, distribution, dissemination or copying of any material containing the home addresses, home telephone number, spouses names, and social security numbers, except for official business. Violations may result in disciplinary action.

Copyright © 2019 Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc. All rights reserved.



## NATIONAL CHAIN OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

COMO Larry L. King, National Commodore  
(NACO)

COMO Alex Malewski, Vice National Commodore  
(VNACO)

COMO Gus Formato,  
Deputy National Commodore (DNACO-RBS)

COMO Robert T. Shafer  
Assistant National Commodore for  
Recreational Boating Safety (ANACO-RB)

## RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY DIRECTORATES

Paul A. Soden, Director, Recreational Boating  
Safety Outreach (DIR-B)

COMO Robert M. Laurer,  
Director, Public Education (DIR-E)

Christopher Wilson, Director,  
Vessel Exam and RBS Visitation (DIR-V)

## STAFF

Dorothy Joan Riley, Division Chief,  
Communication Services (DVC-BR)

Sydney Hay, Branch Chief,  
Editorial Services (BC-BRE)

John Thomas Doyle, Branch Chief,  
Promotions (BC-BRP)

Donald G. Lindberg, Assistant Branch Chief, Editorial  
Proofreading (BA-BREP)

# US Coast Guard to Make Major Change In Life Jacket Labeling

## “Type” Ratings to be Replaced by Icons

By Greg Fonzeno, Division Chief, Course Development, Education Directorate

*Auxiliary members will continue to have a vital role to play in helping the public to understand the proper use of life jackets.*

For the past several years the U.S. Coast Guard has been moving away from the traditional “Type” labeling and categorization of life jackets. The U.S. life jacket labeling system will now be more consistent with the international labeling system. This will align both American and Canadian life jacket labels, a particularly positive move in states that share waterways with our Canadian neighbors.

Coast Guard Auxiliary members will continue to have a vital role to play in helping the public to understand the proper use of life jackets in light of these changes. The biggest change is that icons will largely replace words.

To make it easier for Auxiliary members to communicate this change to the boating public, the E-Directorate has created a short PowerPoint presentation that can be used in boating safety classes. This short presentation (four slides) can be included in any safe boating class to highlight the differences between current and new labels, including highlighting the various icons that will now be used to reduce wording on life jackets.

Likewise, the slides can be converted into PDF pages to use as handouts at vessel safety checks or program visits. This PowerPoint can be downloaded from the E-Directorate page at:

<http://edept.cgaux.org/ppt/New%20Life%20Jacket%20Labeling%20System.pptx>

A summary of the changes include:

No more life jacket “Types” such as I, II, III, IV, and V. The new designations will

be “Wearable” and “Throwable.”

Numerical levels of flotation will indicate the buoyancy of the life jacket:

**Level 50** for paddle board use or use close to shore where help is likely to happen quickly;

**Level 70** for inflatables, active wear, or use where help is nearby;

**Level 100** to provide higher performance than level 70 with better buoyancy;

**Level 150** for off-shore use where help is not likely for some time. This level will keep the wearer face up;

**Level 250**, which is a commercial and industrial designed for heavy off-shore use.

The lower the Level the less likely a person will be turned face up.

Labels will indicate whether for use by Adults, Youth, Toddler, or Infant; also recommended weight and chest size.

Icons will replace wording to offer more detailed information and will be used to indicate how effective the life jacket will turn a person face up.

The preference is also to use the term “life jacket” and no longer PFD or personal flotation device.

While manufacturers have five years to comply with the new labeling system, some have already started to use it. Mustang has started using the new labels, with Kent Sporting Goods expected to begin this year. The boating public should be

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**



made aware of both labeling systems as both will be seen in stores during the transition period. It is important especially for instructors, program visitors, and vessel examiners to inform the public about the changes and that life jackets with the current label are still legal as long as they are in good and serviceable condition, are readily accessible, and the correct size for each person on board.


No vessel should be penalized during a vessel safety check based only on which label is on the life jacket but these checks offer an excellent opportunity to educate boaters on both the importance of life jackets and this important change in labelling.

A new video produced by the Water Sports Foundation gives a summary of the purpose of the new labeling. View it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J40wbCQtDjo> Additional resources can be found at <http://www.wearitlifejacket.com>.

Right: **Jack Pauly**, Staff Officer for Public Affairs for Division 10, IISR, provides a new Coast Guard approved life jacket to a boater at the annual Life Jacket Exchange during National Safe Boating Week.



(Photograph submitted by **Jack Pauly**, Flotilla 10-07 Metro Phoenix District 11)



## New Icons

CHOOSE THE DEVICE YOU WILL WANT TO WEAR

**SIZE & FIT**

- Check label for user weight and chest size.
- Different body types float differently.
- A good fit is secure, comfortable, and adjustable.

TRY IT ON

**PERFORMANCE**

- Lower number offers greater mobility, comfort, and style with good flotation for most people.
- Higher number offers greater flotation, turning, and stability in the water.

**50**

**70**

**100**

**150**

← Near Shore (Calm)

(Waves) →

Offshore →

← Increasing time to rescue →

No Turn


Turns Most

CONSIDER YOUR ACTIVITY & ENVIRONMENT

**RISK MANAGEMENT \***

- In over 80% of boating fatalities the person was not wearing flotation.
- Most of these are sudden falls overboard or capsizing of a small boat.
- The first moments in the water are critical, even for experienced swimmers.
- Cold water shock causes gasping, loss of muscle control and swim failure.
- Long term immersion in cold water requires thermal protection and flotation position to conserve energy.

FLOTATION DEVICES SAVE LIVES



Copyright 2019 - Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary has presentations available to inform the boating public about the new life jacket labeling and how to use it effectively to choose the right life jacket.

- Choose the level of buoyancy for the type of activity.
- The curved arrow indicates that it is likely to turn an unconscious wearer face up in the water.

# Float Plans Save Lives

By Sydney Hay

Whether in a 45-foot power boat or a kayak, besides checking the weather, inspecting life jackets and briefing guests, one other preparation is essential for safe boating—every boater should file a float plan and give it to a trusted friend or neighbor.

A float plan includes a complete description of the boat, your destination, the time of expected return, the number of passengers, and emergency contact information. An additional best practice is to include a photograph of the vessel. If a boater is overdue for the planned return time, authorities can be notified to begin a search.

Boaters should remember to update their friend when they arrive safely home or decide to extend their stay on the water so that no unnecessary search is begun.

Another safe-boating essential is the US Coast Guard Mobile Application where a boater can:

- Find the latest safety regulations
- Request a vessel safety check
- Check safety equipment
- File a float plan
- Learn Navigation Rules
- Report a hazard, pollution or suspicious activity
- Request emergency assistance

Float plan information, including a fillable PDF of a plan can be found at <http://floatplancentral.cgaux.org/>



The USCG Mobile Application is an excellent resource .

## The “LSD” Approach to Getting Involved in Paddlecraft Vessel Safety Checks

By Gene Little and William Antoshkiw

After a presentation to our flotilla about the importance of Vessel Safety Checks (VSC’s) for paddlecraft, I decided to spend the upcoming Saturday at the launch ramp at our local state park and venture into the world of kayaks, canoes and SUPs (stand-up paddleboards).

In preparation, I read the available information, familiarized myself with the Paddlecraft Vessel Exam form, gathered appropriate literature and set off wearing my Vessel Examiner polo shirt and shorts. I checked-in with the Park Ranger and set-up my table by the launch ramp.

Even though I had a good assortment of brochures, I found by the end of the day that the following brochures stimulated the most interest and discussion:

- “Be Smart, Be Safe” (3004a)
- “Guide to Federal Requirements” (3006)
- “US Aids To Navigation” (3022)
- “If Found” Decals (3004)

As cars began to arrive, I learned that the best time to approach paddlers or our paddling partners was when they were unloading or had just unloaded their craft and were preparing for launch. Wearing a life jacket to emphasize a talking point, I introduced myself and asked if they would like to spend a few minutes for a courtesy Vessel Safety Check.

Most boaters were cautiously receptive and I soon learned to focus on the LSD Formula: Life jackets, “Sound-producing devices” and “If Found” decals.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6





**Auxiliary Paddlecraft training in Galesville, Maryland provides safety guidelines to beginners and the experienced alike.**

*(Photo courtesy of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary)*

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5**

- Step 1: Life jackets-it was important to stress the need to wear life jackets at all times and to emphasize that roughly 80% of boating fatalities are drownings and roughly 80% of drowning victims were not wearing a life jacket. I explained that on a windy day, their craft could quickly float away from them and that, even if they were able to grab their jacket, donning it while in the water is very, very difficult. Additionally, a life jacket can help mitigate cold shock.
- Step 2: Sound-producing devices: about half of the boaters did not know that having a sound producing device on board was a requirement. Fortunately, I had purchased a number of orange whistles with breakaway lanyards (very inexpensively on Amazon) and was able to provide them at no charge. This was very appreciated.
- Step 3: “If Found” decals (3004): most boaters had not thought about the impact that an empty paddlecraft can have on limited search and rescue resources. The decal and a Float Plan are very direct ways to address this issue.

If the paddler was receptive, I continued with discussions about hypothermia, visibility (Paddlecraft Tip Reflector) and VHF radios. By the end of the day, I had learned five important lessons:

- Paddlecraft Vessel Exams are fun and easy to perform following the LSD Formula. Don’t forget to report your hours and exam information to your IS Officer.
- It is important to have whistles and “If Found”

decals on hand.

- It is important to learn more about paddling by taking available Auxiliary and American Canoe Association courses.
- Consider acquiring a paddlecraft and taking lessons on how to use it. It’s a great way to enjoy time on the water and taking lessons will help develop relationships with other paddlers.
- Start planning to have a fully-equipped paddlecraft available on-site to both attract interest and stimulate discussions about our safety checklist.



*“If Found” decals are applied by Auxiliarists at a paddlecraft event.*

*(Photo courtesy of the US Coast Guard)*

# New Introduction to Basic Boating Safety Course Introduced

By Dave Fuller, DIRd Education Directorate

**D**irector of Education, Commodore Bob Laurer and I were approached by a representative of the ski boat industry while attending the 2018 International Boating and Water Safety Summit (IBWSS). He had an important question on the topic of boating education. We were challenged to produce a basic, bare-bones education seminar delivered in less than two hours which would convey the most critical safety instruction to new boaters who purchase ski boats.

The representative explained that customers do not want or are not willing to sit for an entire day in an eight-hour certification course, but would be receptive to an abbreviated version. Working with a target of under two-hours duration and deciding to deliver it in a classroom setting with Auxiliary Instructors, we first identified the most critical information new boaters would need to know.

*...the students were thoroughly engaged, questions and answers were lively ...*

Limited by those time constraints, we knew it could never be a certificate course with National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) certification. We accepted the challenge and began work to build a seminar fulfilling those needs.

At about the same time as IBWSS, America's Boating Club Atlanta received a request from the local MarineMax dealer for a similar seminar. MarineMax wanted a safe-boating seminar they could offer their customers who never owned a boat and knew nothing about boats or



*Bad things can happen when basic boating rules are not followed.*

**(Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard Auxiliary)**

rules on the water. As a dual member in both the Auxiliary and US Power Squadrons, I seized the opportunity to utilize our partnership with US Power Squadrons to not only build the seminar, but to present and beta test it.

I was exceptionally fortunate to have a colleague who is an outstanding instructor (licensed CG Captain) and a member of America's Boating Club Atlanta to co-author and co-present the seminar with me. We collaborated as we built this seminar requiring multiple revisions, and then the day finally arrived for the first presentation and our beta test. The initial beta version was co-branded with Auxiliary and USPS logos as it contains material from both organizations and was presented by members of both organizations.

The presentation was highly successful; the students were thoroughly engaged, questions and answers from students were lively, and the session lasted a full two hours. Our evaluation of the beta test revealed the need for more content, so more was added to address common questions.

As subsequent versions were produced and proceeded through the Auxiliary chain of leadership for comment, further refinements were made and now we are at the version posted in the E-Directorate Library.

This seminar is designed for a novice boater who desires

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8**



to learn the most basic safety information in a one- to two-hour time slot. This seminar could be used at boat shows, boat dealers, yacht clubs, retail partners, or any other venue where we want to reach the public with a short seminar designed to give them the bare basics. Understand that it was never intended to be a certificate course. It was designed to be used as a teaser to promote a longer certificate course. Additionally, it promotes the Vessel Safety Check program and even touches on Auxiliary membership. The concept is to give folks a taste of what they need to know and perhaps whet their appetite for more. Most folks who make up the audience for this seminar simply don't know what they don't know, and this seminar may help them decide they need to learn more.

Seminar package materials include a PowerPoint presentation along with an instructor guide, instructor notes within the PowerPoint, and a resource document. It is critical to note that this material is designed to be modified with local resources as well as adding any local

knowledge boaters will need specific to that area. This is a truly customizable seminar that works best when tailored to fit local needs.

The E-Directorate is currently designing new products and producing material envisioned to be locally customized to fit specific needs. Our two certificate courses cannot be altered by subtraction of material, but instructors and course supervisors are encouraged to add local content to them. We highly encourage local customization in all our other products which will allow flotillas to better meet the needs of their students. It is our expectation Auxiliarists will use the seminars and other material available in our Library to bring greater diversity to their Public Education offerings while simultaneously generating additional income for the flotilla.

Stay tuned for more new products in the coming months. Let us know how we can help you reach more of the public to advance the Auxiliary's effectiveness with Job # 1 – Recreational Boating Safety.



Two teens are rescued by the US Coast Guard off Narragansett, Rhode Island. Both were wearing life jackets.

**(Photo courtesy of National Safe Boating Council)**



# Education Directorate Unveils New Boating Safety Resources

By Dave Fuller DIRd Education Directorate and Sydney Hay

The Education Directorate of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary recently announced a highly-prestigious new national award recognizing the best-of-the-best Auxiliary instructors. In addition, they unveiled three new seminar courses focused on the core mission of recreational boating safety.

## The Commodore Daniel Maxim Award for Excellence in Education

Based on feedback from districts requesting additional incentives and recognition for our best instructors, the Education Directorate developed a national award to recognize the most highly effective Auxiliary Instructors. The award is named after Commodore Daniel Maxim, who was highly respected within the Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Community. COMO Maxim was a former ANACO-RB and served as the Chairman of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council. An educator and author, he made countless contributions toward educating the public about boating safety. This award honors his legacy of superior education performance by recognizing the best-of-the-best Auxiliary instructors.

It is hoped that the award will lead to:

- An increase in diversity of courses offered by flotillas and additional numbers of classes offered
- Improvement in Public Education and Member Training Instructor effectiveness and performance
- Improved mentorship of newer or lesser-experienced Instructors
- Development of new and innovative teaching methods and techniques

The initial winner will be announced at NACON 2020 based upon performance during 2019. Details and requirements to win this award can be found at <http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=E-DEPT&category=maxim-award>

Auxiliarists from the Metro Phoenix Flotilla teach water safety to children and parents at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona during summer break.

(Photo by Rob Kerr, Flotilla 10-07 Metro Phoenix)

## Waterfowl Hunting and Boating Safety Course

People who use boats in the sport of hunting typically identify themselves as hunters, not as boaters, and they frequently lack basic boating safety train-



CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

ing. This seminar describes how hunters using boats can stay safe while hunting on the water. Instructors can use this seminar in classrooms, hunting clubs, outdoor groups, civic groups, etc.

## Introduction to Basic Boating Safety Course

Developed based on a request from boat manufacturers and dealers, this course delivers a short, one-hour presentation to their customers who may have had little to no background or training in boating safety and yet were unlikely to sit for an entire day in a boating safety class. It can be used at boat shows, yacht clubs, homeowner associations, boat dealers, marinas, or anywhere you find boaters – especially those new to boating or without formal training.

## Kids and Paddlecraft Course

The Kids and Paddlecraft course is designed for the pre-teen audience and focuses on teaching kids paddlecraft safety using a highly-customizable PowerPoint presentation meant to be delivered to youth groups and schools. These courses may be found at the E Directorate website at <http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=E-DEPT&category=WHATSNEW>. Auxiliarists are encouraged to let the E Directorate know what seminar or certification courses you would like them to develop as they work to fulfill the Auxiliary mission of recreational boating safety.



*As all types of paddlecraft gain in popularity, specially-designed safety courses are vital.*

**(Photo courtesy of US Coast Guard)**