

AUXPAD FAQs

Q: What is AUXPAD?

A: *The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary has initiated a paddlecraft safety outreach program called Auxiliary Paddlecraft, or AUXPAD. There are two components, AUXPAD Ashore Outreach and AUXPAD Afloat Outreach. AUXPAD Ashore will include traditional dockside Auxiliary boating safety activities such as public education, public affairs, literature drops at vendors, and vessel safety exams. AUXPAD Afloat is a new element, in which the Auxiliary will go on-the-water in kayaks to deliver safety messages to novice and occasional paddlers.*

Q: Why is the Auxiliary doing AUXPAD?

A: *Paddle sports are a fast growing segment of recreational boating in the US. Unfortunately, as participation has grown, so have the number of fatalities and accidents related to paddlesports. The Coast Guard wants the Auxiliary to educate this community about safety practices.*

Q: Who is the target audience for this program?

A: *New paddlers, novice paddlers, and occasional paddlers. AUX paddlers will be expected to be experienced paddlers and obtain required training and/or certifications.*

Q: What are the messages of the program?

A: *The program has three major safety messages for the public: the need to have and wear a proper life jacket, the need to be prepared and have proper safety equipment, and the need for general awareness about all aspects of paddling safety, including situational awareness and the need to practice skills.*

Q: What will AUXPAD Ashore Outreach involve?

A: *AUXPAD Ashore Outreach involves RBS activities targeted toward recreational paddle craft users. Ashore activities consist of: classroom outreach and instruction, literature distribution, promotion of safety courses and materials, paddle craft vessel safety checks (VSC), and promotional displays. AUXPAD Ashore may be executed by any Auxiliarist at a pier, dockside, convention center, store location, classroom or similar venue.*

Q: What will AUXPAD Afloat Outreach involve?

A: *AUXPAD Afloat Outreach is an extension of ashore activities. AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities places qualified AUXPAD operators in direct contact with recreational paddle craft users on the water. It promotes paddle craft RBS via personal example and affords an opportunity for Auxiliarists to assimilate with the paddle craft community and develop networks to promote boating safety. Only kayaks that are offered for use and approved by the Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) may be utilized for AUXPAD Outreach Afloat activities.*

Q: Why are we using kayaks to operate in AUXPAD Afloat?

A: *AUXPAD operators will work directly with coastal kayakers while they are on the water, serving as exemplars of paddling skill and safety practices, as well as sources of safety information.*

Q: What kind of patrols will we be doing?

A: *Patrols will be where paddlers congregate to interact with them. This is an RBS mission, not operational, so paddlecraft.*

Q: How does my kayak become an AUXPAD facility?

A: Use Form 7012a for the vessel examination. Districts are developing their own AUXPAD facility offer for use forms. These forms form lists additional equipment needed.

Q: How do paddlers qualify for the on-the-water program?

A: *Participants in this on-the-water program are required to demonstrate ACA L-1 and L-2 coastal kayaking skills. Auxiliarists designated as AUXPAD Qualifiers, that is, supervisors, will be required to hold currency as L-1 and L-2 coastal kayak Instructors. Skills will need to be demonstrated semiannually to an AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ).*

Q: Why are we using American Canoe Association courses?

A: *The American Canoe Association (ACA) has carefully prepared and reviewed skills for paddlers. The skills are progressive and include a focus on stroke technique and fine boat handling skills. Each task is peer reviewed and submitted for comment by experienced paddlers before it is adopted by the ACA. Skills have specific performance standards and rubrics so that evaluators can accurately compare paddling ability. This makes it more objective and allows minimum training and skills standards across Districts. Districts may also create a higher standard.*

Q: How do I become an AUXPAD Operator?

A: *You must demonstrate the skills outlined in Appendix A to COMDTINST 16794.11. That requires you to demonstrate the skills appropriate for a sit on top or decked kayak at ACA Levels 1 and 2. Consult your OTO.*

Q: How do I become an AUXPAD Qualifier?

A: *You must demonstrate the skills outlined in Appendix A to COMDTINST 16794.11 and be certified and current as an ACA Instructor at the L-1 and L-2 levels. Instructor currency includes CPR and First Aid. AUXPAD operators must consult their OTO for District specific AUXPAD guidance and authorization. Not all Districts participate in the AUXPAD program as it has to be authorized by the District Commander via a district instruction.*

Q: How much does it cost to become an AUXPAD operator?

A: *That depends on the skill level of the individual and local prices. ACA instructors are independent contractors and there is no standard pricing set by the ACA. After AOs are qualified, they may become instructors for operators at nominal or no cost. AUXPAD operators must consult their OTO for more information. Each District with an authorized AUXPAD program may have different training arrangements with the ACA or additional training requirements.*

Please review the authorized AUXPAD facility construction types, to determine what type of facility best suits your needs before purchasing a kayak. Remember, this activity is voluntary so members must be cognizant of the total cost of the kayak and that of any additional equipment as the Coast Guard will not purchase these items.

Q: How do I find an AQ or ACA instructor?

A: *ACA instructors can be found on their website at http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/sei-documents/instructor_list_-_kayak.pdf You may also contact the Safety Education and Instruction Coordinator, Kelsey Bracewell, at kbracewell@americancanoe.com or at 540-907-4460. AUXPAD operators should consult their OTO for more information.*

Q: How much does it cost to become an AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ)?

A: *Since AQs must be current Instructors, they must also maintain membership in the ACA and the Safety Education and Instruction Council. Typically, a student takes an Instructor Development Workshop one or more times. When the Instructor trainer deems the student ready, the student takes the Instructor Certification Exam. Each of these is 2-3 days. Instructors charge, generally, within a range of \$100-\$150 per day. Individual instructors may be willing to negotiate group rates. Remember, this activity is voluntary and not all Districts fund the training of their members for this activity. Please consult your OTO for more information.*

Q: Isn't that expensive?

A: *Not when compared to the investment made by members offering their boats or aircraft for service*

Q: Will the Coast Guard pay for instruction?

A: *The Boating Safety Office (bsx-1) has authorized the use of Coast Guard funds for ACA training, however individual Coast Guard Districts are not obligated to fund AUXPAD training. Each District will have to determine whether to allocate funds, if they chose to adopt this program. The Auxiliary leadership is looking at possible funding for the initial round of AQ qualification courses, with a decision coming later.*

Q: How do I find an ACA instructor trainer?

A: *ACA instructor trainers can also be found on their website at http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/SEI-documents/Instructor_List-Internationa.pdf You may also contact the Safety Education and Instruction Coordinator, Kelsey Bracewell, at kbracewell@americancanoe.com or at 540-907-4460.*

Q: Do I have to join the American Canoe Association (ACA)?

A: *AQs, as indicated above, will need to maintain membership and currency. Operators may or may not have to join, if their skills match the requirements.*

Q: How do I stay out of REYR?

A: *Currency maintenance will require semiannual skill assessments by an AQ—that is, twice a year.*

Q: What kind of kayak should I buy to become an AUXPAD operator?

A: *If you don't own one, you are behind the curve. The program is aimed at people already skilled in paddling and is not designed to provide paddling skills instruction for novices.*

Q: Does it have to be a kayak or can I use a SUP or canoe?

A: *The Instruction says it must be a rigid hulled kayak—no inflatables, canoes, or SUPs.*

Q: Can I use my Sit-on-Top kayak?

A: *yes*

Q: Will I put patrols in AOM?

A: *Yes under a specific AUXPAD activity code that is to capture all AUXPAD activities.*

Q: Will I get a badge for being an AUXPAD operator, like a Coxswain or PWC Operator?

A: No, because it is RBS, not Operational. Some hours may count toward the RBS award. That issue is currently being reviewed.

Q: Where can I get more information about the program?

A: COMDINST 16794.11 is available at: http://www.uscg.mil/directives/ci/16000-16999/CI_16794_11.pdf

Q: Where do I find the paddling skills information I need?

A: *The required skills are posted on the ACA website at: http://www.americancanoe.org/?Courses_Kayak Look at Flatwater Kayak Safety & Rescue; Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking; Level 2: Essentials of Kayak Touring and Level 2: Essentials of Sit On Top Kayaking.*

Q: Do you have to be able to roll your kayak?

A: No

Q: *Can I go out alone in my kayak for afloat missions?*

A: *No, all afloat AUXPAD activities must be in tandem at all times with another AUXPAD facility, an vessel facility or a an operational personal water craft.*

Q: How long can we go out for?

A: *6 hours, with a one hour break in the middle.*