



COMDTINST 16794.11A  
08 AUG 2018

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 16794.11A

Subj: AUXILIARY PADDLE CRAFT (AUXPAD) PROGRAM

- Ref:
- (a) Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual, COMDTINST M16798.3 (series)
  - (b) Memorandum of Agreement between American Canoe Association (ACA) and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary of 29 Jan 11
  - (c) A Paddler's Guide to Safety Public Education Course
  - (d) Vessel Safety Check Manual, COMDTINST M16796.8 (series)
  - (e) Rescue and Survival Systems Manual, COMDTINST M10470.10 (series)

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction supplements Reference (a) by providing guidance for the development of regional AUXPAD programs when authorized by the District Commander. AUXPAD programs are intended to promote recreational boating safety (RBS) for recreational paddle craft operators.
2. ACTION. All Coast Guard unit commanders, commanding officers, officers-in-charge, deputy/assistant commanders, and chiefs of headquarters staff elements must comply with the provisions in Enclosures (1) and (2). Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. Auxiliary Paddle Craft (AUXPAD) Program, COMDTINST 16794.11 is cancelled.
4. DISCUSSION. This Instruction provides guidance to train and qualify Auxiliarists to engage in RBS outreach to the recreational paddle craft community, and defines the parameters of the AUXPAD program.
  - a. The numbers of recreational boating deaths and injuries have been historically low across the states and territories in the last five years. However, the percentage of deaths from non-motorized paddle craft, compared to other vessels, has increased slightly over the

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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION: Auxiliary National Supply center, NEXCOM, DNACO-RBS, All DCO-RBS, ANACO-RB, All DSO-V, N-PC, DIR-B, DIR-V, DIR-E, All DSO-V

years. On average, there are approximately 186 deaths per year involving non-motorized paddle craft.

- b. The AUXPAD program supports the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program priorities and objectives by extending boating safety outreach and promoting life jacket wear and operator compliance with Coast Guard regulations regarding required safety equipment.
5. DISCLAIMER. This Instruction is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it a rule. It is intended to provide operational requirements for Coast Guard Auxiliary personnel and is not intended to, nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party outside the Coast Guard.
  6. MAJOR CHANGES. Major changes in this update include: new requirements adopted from the American Canoe Association (ACA); allowance to operate beyond 1,000 yards (0.5NM) from shore when authorized by the Order Issuing Authority (OIA); updated weather parameters; updated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements; and new physical fitness requirements.
  7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS.
    - a. The development of this Instruction and the general policies contained within it have been thoroughly reviewed by the originating office in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Management, Commandant (CG-47). This Instruction is categorically excluded under current Department of Homeland Security (DHS) categorical exclusion (CATEX) A3 from further environmental analysis in accordance with "Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)," DHS Instruction Manual 023-01-001-01 (series).
    - b. This Instruction will not have any of the following: significant cumulative impacts on the human environment; substantial controversy or substantial change to existing environmental conditions; or inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local laws or administrative determinations relating to the environment. All future specific actions resulting from the general policy in this Instruction must be individually evaluated for compliance with the NEPA, DHS, and Coast Guard NEPA policy, and compliance with all other applicable environmental mandates.
  8. DISTRIBUTION. No paper distribution will be made of this Instruction. An electronic version will be located on the following Commandant (CG-612) websites. Internet: <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/directives/>, and CG Portal: <https://cgportal2.uscg.mil/library/directives/SitePages/Home.aspx>
  9. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This Instruction has been thoroughly reviewed during the Directives clearance process, and it has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq, NARA requirements, and Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This policy does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.

10. FORMS/REPORTS. Forms referenced in this Instruction can be found here:

<http://forms.cgaux.org/forms1.php>

11. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Units and individuals may recommend changes in writing via the chain of command to Commandant (CG-BSX-1), ATTN: OFFICE OF AUXILIARY AND BOATING SAFETY, AUXILIARY DIVISION (CG-BSX-1), U. S. COAST GUARD STOP 7501, 2703 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVE SE, WASHINGTON DC 20593-7501.

J. P. NADEAU /s/  
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard  
Assistant Commandant of Prevention Policy

Encls: (1) AUXPAD Mission and Program Components  
(2) AUXPAD Afloat Training



**AUXPAD MISSION AND PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

1. **MISSION.** The primary mission of the AUXPAD program is to increase boating safety outreach, promote life jacket wear, and promote compliance with Coast Guard-required safety equipment within the paddle craft community. Regional AUXPAD programs may be more stringent in the training and operational parameters detailed in this guidance. The AUXPAD program consists of Ashore and Afloat Outreach components.
2. **IMPLEMENTATION.** Districts implementing the AUXPAD program Ashore and/or Afloat as outlined below must appoint an Auxiliary member, preferably an AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ) as the District AUXPAD Coordinator to provide program support, communications, coordination, and quality control.
3. **AUXPAD ASHORE OUTREACH.** AUXPAD Ashore Outreach consists of RBS activities targeted towards the recreational paddle craft community.
  - a. AUXPAD Ashore Outreach may be executed by any qualified Auxiliarist at a pier, dock, launch point, convention center, store location, classroom or similar venue. Ashore activities consist of classroom outreach and instruction; literature distribution; promotion of American Canoe Association (ACA) and other safety information, courses, and materials; paddle craft vessel safety checks (VSC); and promotional displays as authorized in Reference (b).
  - b. Auxiliarists participating in AUXPAD Ashore Outreach activities are encouraged to complete either the *ACA Paddlesports Safety Facilitator – General Knowledge Module* course or the *A Paddler's Guide to Safety* Public Education course.
  - c. Auxiliarists participating in AUXPAD Ashore Outreach activities are encouraged to qualify as an AUXPAD Operator or AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ).
  - d. Only Auxiliarists qualified as an Instructor (IT) are authorized to administer the *A Paddler's Guide to Safety* course as outlined in Reference (c).
  - e. Only Auxiliarists qualified as Vessel Examiners (VE) are authorized to perform paddle craft vessel safety checks (VSC) in accordance with Reference (d).
  - f. Auxiliarists must wear the authorized uniform of the day for AUXPAD Ashore Outreach activities, as prescribed by the Order Issuing Authority (OIA). The Auxiliary VE polo shirt is authorized.
4. **AUXPAD AFLOAT OUTREACH.** AUXPAD Afloat Outreach is an extension of ashore activities. AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities place qualified AUXPAD Operators in direct contact with recreational paddle craft users on the water. Afloat Outreach 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.

Enclosure (1) to COMDTINST 16794.11A

- a. AUXPAD Facility. Only kayaks offered-for-use and accepted by the Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX) may be utilized for AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities. AUXPAD facilities must only be non-inflatable, non-collapsible, one person kayaks. Canoes, Stand Up Paddleboards (SUPs), rafts, row boats, and any other watercraft primarily powered by oars, sweeps, or paddles are not authorized for use. Use the AUXPAD Facility Offer for Use Form (ANSC-7009).
- b. AUXPAD Facility Equipment Requirements. In addition to minimum federal and state<sup>1</sup> carriage requirements, the following required (R) equipment must be carried on all AUXPAD facilities while conducting AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities<sup>2</sup>. Optional/mission specific (O) equipment may be required by the OIA on a mission-specific basis.
  1. Deck lines or grab handles on kayak (if equipped), (R)
  2. One working, waterproof, floatable VHF-FM marine radio or portable VHF radio in a clear plastic waterproof bag. If a Digital Selective Calling (DSC) equipped radio is used, it must have a valid Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number and must be registered, (R)
  3. Waterproof flashlight, headlamp, or white all-around light, (R). (the required CG/SOLAS approved light on the PFD may meet this requirement)
  4. Spare paddle, (R)
  5. First Aid Kit, (R)
  6. Compass, hand-held or mounted, (R)
  7. Manual dewatering pump, (R)<sup>3</sup>
  8. Towline equipped with a “quick release” device, (minimum of 30ft and maximum 50ft in length) (R)
  9. Drinking Water-Accessible while underway, (R)
  10. Completed paddle craft “If Found” sticker affixed to the vessel (inside on starboard side), (R)
  11. Small notebook/logbook or any means of taking notes, (R)
  12. Pen or pencil, (R)

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<sup>1</sup> AUXPAD Facilities must also have the State/jurisdiction required equipment, if any, for their operating area.

<sup>2</sup> Total weight of the gear and operator must not exceed the capacity plate of the kayak (if there is one on the vessel) or what is recommended in the owner’s manual.

<sup>3</sup> Not required for Sit on Top (SOT) kayaks

13. Auxiliary Facility Decal, (R)
14. Handheld GPS (Global Positioning System)<sup>4</sup>, (O)
15. Electronic or paper chart of local area. If a paper chart is used, it must be enclosed in a waterproof bag designed for the marine environment, or be printed on waterproof paper<sup>4</sup>, (O)
16. Personnel Locator Beacon (PLB) (must have registered MMSI number), (O)<sup>5</sup>
17. Mobile phone in waterproof container. (O)

c. AUXPAD Operators.

1. Only qualified AUXPAD Operators may participate in AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities. AUXPAD Operators educate by example by appropriately carrying and operating proper safety equipment required by federal and state laws for their facility.
2. AUXPAD Operators are not authorized to teach paddle craft maneuvers or emergency/egress techniques while on patrol, though they may suggest a specific stroke to assist a paddler needing assistance.
3. Vessel Safety Checks are not authorized while on the water.

d. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

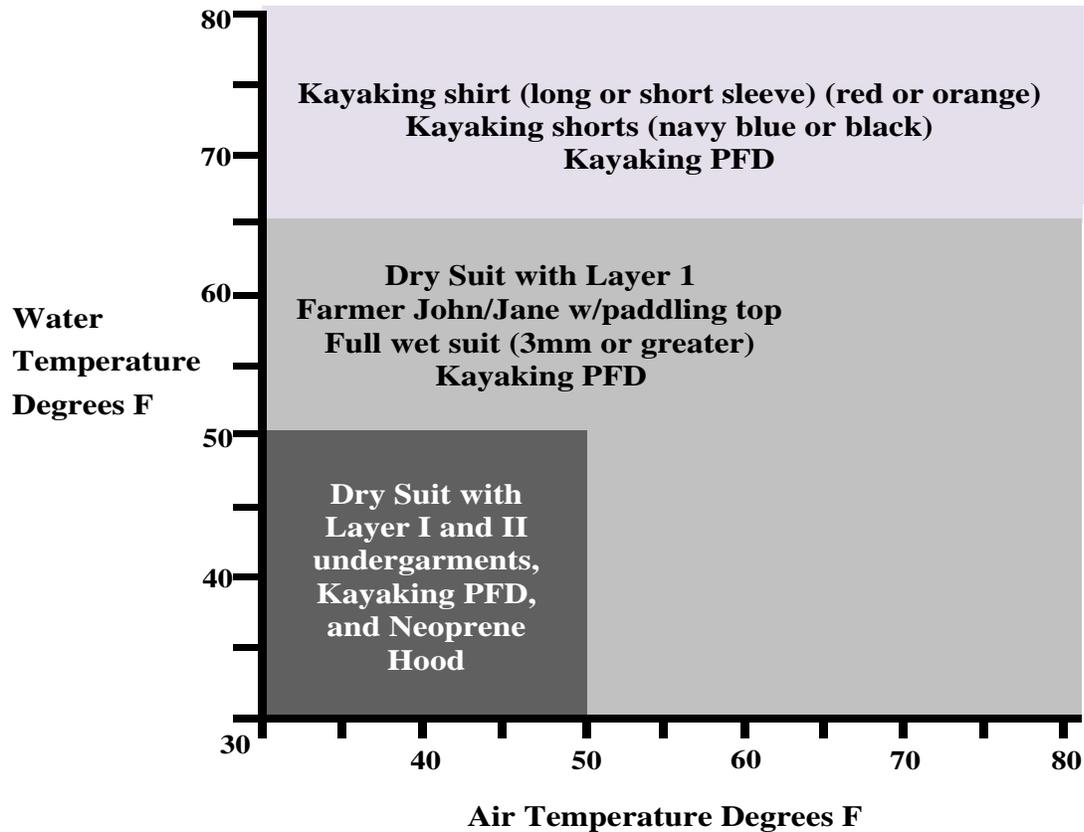
1. The Commanding Officer, Officer-In-Charge, or Order-Issuing Authority (OIA) must carefully weigh the risk versus gain of each mission. Mission planning for underway operations must include an assessment of personnel survivability and risk. This analysis must be based on the possibility that personnel might be forced into a survival situation during any phase of the mission. Coast Guard personnel should always be prepared for the most adverse conditions by carrying extra thermal protection.
2. Personnel must be appropriately outfitted for the forecasted environmental conditions. Standard guidance for all paddlesports is to **dress for immersion**. Use **Table 1-1** below to determine the minimum required PPE for each mission.

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<sup>4</sup> If using a mobile phone with mapping/charting capabilities and GPS, this is not necessary.

<sup>5</sup> Request issuance from cognizant Coast Guard unit per reference (e) or use personal PLB.

1. Draw a horizontal line across the table that is equal to the water temperature for the mission.
2. Draw a vertical line up the table that is equal to the air temperature for the mission.
3. Don the equipment identified in the shaded area where the lines intersect.



**Table-1  
50/50 Box**

3. Personal Flotation Device (PFD) Requirements. AUXPAD Operators must wear a kayak appropriate USCG approved PFD. The PFD must be equipped with a USCG/SOLAS approved PFD light and a whistle. A signal mirror and knife may be carried as optional items. PFDs must be red, orange or yellow in color.
4. Headgear. AUXPAD Operators must wear headgear appropriate for kayaking and the forecasted weather conditions. For warm weather (air temp >50°F) ball caps, the Tilley Hat, or helmets must be worn. For cold weather (air temp <50°), a watch cap, balaclava, neoprene hood, or other headgear designed for cold weather kayaking must be worn.
5. Gloves. For warm weather, gloves are optional but are recommended. For cold weather, AUXPAD Operators must wear gloves appropriate for kayaking

and the forecasted weather conditions. Neoprene paddling gloves (3mm or greater) or insulated waterproof gloves are typical choices

6. Footwear. AUXPAD Operators must wear footwear appropriate for kayaking, forecasted weather conditions, and ground conditions encountered at launch and landing sites. Paddling shoes/socks and neoprene booties are typical choices.

- e. AUXPAD Afloat Operational parameters. The following operational parameters and requirements outlined in the chart below must be strictly adhered to at all times to ensure the safe execution of AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities.

Weather Parameters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation is not authorized when there is a weather advisory or warning active in the mission area.</li> <li>• Daylight operations only (sunrise to sunset)</li> <li>• Visibility must be greater than 3 NM</li> <li>• Sustained winds must be less than 15 knots</li> <li>• Seas must be less than 1 ft</li> <li>• Current must be less than 3kts, unless authorized by the OIA.</li> </ul>
Geographical Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authorized to routinely patrol up to 1,000 yds (0.5NM) from shore unless specifically authorized further by the OIA in order to support a specified operation or event (e.g., paddle craft event) and should not exceed 3,000 yds (1.5NM) from shore unless accompanied by a powerboat.</li> <li>• Not near shipping channels/traffic lanes unless specifically authorized by the OIA in order to support a specified operation or event</li> <li>• Missions may not be conducted in the vicinity of whitewater areas or areas of breaking surf.</li> </ul>
Fatigue Limitations	Maximum of 6 underway hours per day. There must be a mandatory 8-hour rest period within that day, following completion of total underway hours. A one hour off the water break period is mandatory after 3 hours of underway time.
Mission Restrictions	AUXPAD Afloat Outreach is intended to promote paddle craft RBS. Other prevention mission activities, including ATON verification and Marine Events (e.g., paddle regattas or swim events) may be authorized under the AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activity as authorized by the OIA or Sector Commander.
Search and Rescue (SAR)	During the execution of an AUXPAD Afloat Outreach mission, an AUXPAD Operator may encounter a person(s) in distress (e.g., another paddler or person in the water). After assessing the risk using the current Coast Guard risk assessment model, AUXPAD Operators are authorized to render aid to persons in imminent distress based upon their level of training, skill and limitations, on-scene weather and other conditions. Upon encountering a person(s) in distress, the AUXPAD Operator may render assistance and must immediately notify the respective Coast Guard unit and report the situation and intended course of action or any actions taken.

- f. Risk Management. All AUXPAD Operators and OIAs must exercise prudent risk management and utilize the current Coast Guard risk assessment model before commencing or continuing any AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activity.
- g. Tandem Operating Requirement. Auxiliary paddle craft must operate with another vessel. This vessel may be another Auxiliary operational vessel facility (boat or personal water craft), a Coast Guard boat, a law enforcement/public safety agency boat, or another AUXPAD facility. No AUXPAD facility will operate out of sight from its tandem vessel/facility.
- h. AUXPAD Operator Training.
  - 1. The training and qualification standards of the ACA will be the governing standard for all AUXPAD Operators and AUXPAD AOs.
  - 2. Training and qualification standards are not universal for all types of approved AUXPAD facilities (i.e. traditional decked kayaks vs. Sit on Top (SOT) kayaks)
  - 3. All AUXPAD Operators must successfully complete/pass all the required training and skills evaluations listed in Enclosure 2- AUXPAD Afloat Training, according to ACA standards. AUXPAD Operators are not required to become members of the ACA.
  - 4. Two AUXPAD AOs are required at a minimum, per district, to properly establish and maintain a regional AUXPAD program. Auxiliarists can only become qualified AUXPAD Qualifiers after successfully passing the required skills evaluations and training for AUXPAD Operators in Enclosure 2.
  - 5. Since participation in this program is voluntary, Auxiliarists may be responsible for costs associated with obtaining the required training<sup>6</sup>. The Office of Auxiliary & Boating Safety (CG-BSX) and/or DIRAUXs may fund training classes.
- i. AUXPAD Operator and AO Qualification Process. Auxiliarists are authorized to participate in AUXPAD Afloat activities only after their DIRAUX has:
  - 1. Verified and retained a copy of the individual's successful completion of required courses and assessments for his or her specific facility, and:
  - 2. Verified the AUXPAD facility has properly completed a Vessel Safety Check and received the "Inspected Facility Designation" letter.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> CG-BSX and/or DIRAUXs may fund training if budget allows for the expenditure of funds.

<sup>7</sup> See AUXPAD Facility Offer for Use form (ANSC-7009)

j. Communications.

1. All AUXPAD Operators while under orders must carry a working, waterproof, floatable VHF-FM radio as stated earlier in Paragraph 4.b.2. OIAs may require additional means of communication.
2. Prior to launching, the AUXPAD Operator must contact and establish a radio guard with a Coast Guard unit, Auxiliary vessel facility or Auxiliary shore/mobile radio facility. AUXPAD Operators must conduct a communications check every 30 minutes with their tandem facility. Operations and position reports must be conducted with the unit maintaining the radio guard at intervals not to exceed 30 minutes unless otherwise established by the OIA per current Coast Guard Directives.
3. As AUXPAD facilities are required to operate in tandem or as a group, one AUXPAD Operator will be designated to keep the other's radio guard. The designated AUXPAD Operator will make operations and position reports to the OIA for both facilities.
4. Lost Communications Plan. Lost communications is defined as lost communications with any AUXPAD facility, whether by its tandem facility or by the unit maintaining its radio guard. AUXPAD Operators must read and understand the OIA's lost communications procedures and strictly adhere to all communications plans and schedules. Since AUXPAD Operators will likely operate in areas where CG small boats cannot travel, it is strongly encouraged to have multiple means of communications with redundancies (extra batteries for radios, solar charger for mobile phones, GPS tracking tags and web-based applications etc.). The OIA must work with AUXPAD Operators to determine the most suitable communications plan for AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities.
5. If reliable communications cannot be established and maintained via the portable hand-held radio or cell phone, abort the mission and immediately return to the station following the same route that was used to transit to your current position. This is extremely important since any search efforts that may be initiated will follow the route given during operations and position reports.
6. If on a down-river patrol where returning upstream is impossible or impractical, safe takeout points should be pre-arranged in the patrol briefing. Proceed to the safe takeout point and make contact as soon as possible.
7. If the Coast Guard unit or Auxiliary unit maintaining the AUXPAD Operator's radio guard determines there is a loss of communications with a vessel, follow the OIA's lost communications procedures.

k. Patrol Procedures.

1. Paddle craft are assigned to patrol duty in the same manner currently used for vessel and air patrols. AUXPAD Operators must request orders through AUXDATA Order Management (AOM) system. AUXPAD Operators must coordinate with their OIA to determine the most appropriate or most effective patrol area.
  2. The AUXPAD Operator's primary mission is to enhance paddle craft safety awareness and educate by example to all members of the boating public. While on patrol, all AUXPAD Operators must conduct themselves and operate their paddle craft in a professional and courteous manner. Operators must comply with all state/local regulations, be sensitive to operating in environmentally sensitive areas and act responsibly.
  3. Prior to launching, AUXPAD Operators will complete a printed pre-underway equipment checklist.
  4. Prior to launching, the AUXPAD Operator will establish an appropriate radio guard according to Paragraph 4.j of this Instruction.
  5. All AUXPAD Afloat operational hours must be recorded in AUXDATA utilizing the specific AUXPAD mission/activity code for all authorized AUXPAD activities.
  6. AUXPAD Afloat Outreach activities are only eligible for meal reimbursement and mileage driving to/from AUXPAD launch sites. Patrol claims must be processed using AOM.
- l. Passengers. Passengers are not authorized on board an AUXPAD facility while it is under orders.
- m. Cooperative Relationships. The Auxiliary and ACA share similar concerns and responsibilities for educating the public. It is highly encouraged that Auxiliary members reach out to the ACA to facilitate and expand their reach when conducting AUXPAD events in accordance with the current Memorandum of Agreement.
- n. Patrols on Sole State Waters. Due to the likelihood in many areas that paddle craft enthusiasts may be found on sole state waters, the conduct of AUXPAD afloat activities must be mindful of the provisions of Section 205 of the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2015 (Pub. L. No. 114-120) which require the Coast Guard Auxiliary only patrol a waterway if:
1. The waterway is navigable for the purposes of Coast Guard jurisdiction (i.e., an area of normal Coast Guard operations), or
  2. A state or other proper authority with jurisdiction over the waterway has requested the patrol pursuant to 14 U.S.C. § 141.

**AUXPAD AFLOAT TRAINING**

1. Physical Fitness Assessment – All potential AUXPAD Operators and AUXPAD Qualifiers (AQ) must complete a 5-mile paddle trip in 3 hours or less, overseen by a certified AQ or ACA instructor.
2. All potential AUXPAD Operators and AOs must be basically qualified (BQ). Auxiliarists in an Approval Pending (AP) status may train and qualify as an AUXPAD Operator provided all Core Training is complete. Auxiliarists must also pass the open book CGAUX Navigation Rules Course.
3. AUXPAD Operators and AOs must complete Auxiliary Boat Crew Member tasks BCM-05-01-AUX *Operate a VHF-FM Radiotelephone* and BCM-05-02-AUX *Use the VHF-FM Radiotelephone to Give a Position or Operations Normal Report*.
4. AUXPAD Operators must demonstrate the ability to navigate to a waypoint using a handheld GPS or mobile phone with marine charting application.
5. AUXPAD Operator Required Training – To obtain initial qualification, all AUXPAD Operators must complete the following ACA skills courses:
  - a. Level 1: *Introduction to Kayaking* (included in the Level 2 courses),
  - b. Level 2: *Essentials of Kayak Touring*, or *Essentials of Sit On Top (SOT) Kayaking* (applicable if operating a SOT kayak).
6. AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ) Required Training - Complete the ACA Level 2: *Essentials of Kayak Touring-Instructor* course and be fully qualified as an ACA Level-2 Instructor, which includes currency in CPR and First Aid and membership in the ACA Safety Education and Instruction Council.
7. AUXPAD Operator and AO Currency Maintenance – AUXPAD Operators and AOs must successfully demonstrate proficiency annually in the following tasks:
  - a. Level 1: *Introduction to Kayaking Skills Assessment* (included in the Level 2 skills assessments),
  - b. Level 2: *Essentials of Kayak Touring Skills Assessment*, or *Essentials of Sit On Top Kayaking Skills Assessment*. (applicable if operating a SOT kayak)
8. AUXDATA Competencies - Upon qualification, AUXPAD Operators or AOs will be assigned the appropriate competency in AUXDATA.
  - a. AUXPAD Operator (PDLO)
  - b. AUXPAD Operator Sit-on-Top (PDLO-SOT)
  - c. AUXPAD Qualifier (AQ)

Enclosure (2) to COMDTINST 16794.11A