



WAVES

Watercraft and Vessel Safety

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF BOATING

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 5

OCTOBER 2003

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FROM THE CHIEF

Jesse L. Harrup, Jr., DC-B

The Global Maritime Distress Safety System (GMDSS) Task Force met in Washington DC on 7 August 2003. What follows is a summary of potential RBS issues and decisions; the full summary record is provided for information and is posted on the Task Force portion of the U.S. Coast Guard web site at www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/ (click on GMDSS, then GMDSS Task Force)

An FCC representative acknowledged that recreational vessels which already have an MMSI number from BoatU.S. and apply to get an FCC Station License for international voyages will run into a problem with the automated Universal Licensing System (ULS). The ULS does not accept an existing MMSI number but insists on assigning a new number. The applicant is then required to enter the new MMSI number in the equipment perhaps incurring a service fee if a technician is needed to make the change.

The FCC has looked into the problem but noting the complexity of the ULS, any changes to the programming would be quite expensive. They desire to get more data from BoatU.S. and others to see how extensive the problem is before concluding that the system needs to be changed. Since no solution was immediately available, BoatU.S. and the FCC will pursue the issue offline and it will be revisited at the next Task Force meeting. It was noted that such difficulties induce boaters to ignore the FCC Rule requiring Station Licenses for foreign port visits.

Other potential issues/decisions associated with RBS vessels, include:

- Voluntary vessels using VHF not equipped for VHF-DSC, will now be required to watch channel 16 when underway and not working on another channel (eliminates the option of cruising with radio "not in service").
- Non-mandatory vessels voluntarily equipped with GMDSS systems are required to watch the appropriate distress channel when underway and not working on another channel; for recreational vessels equipped with VHF-DSC, this means watch on channel 70).

- Elaine Dickinson reported for the Recreational Vessel Group that BoatU.S. had now issued more than 12,800 MMSI numbers to recreational vessels.

There was discussion of a new Hawaiian Law requiring that power vessels going more than one mile offshore be equipped with a VHF Radio or an EPIRB. Comparable Federal regulation seems unlikely but the Coast Guard chaired National Search and Rescue Committee is considering a recommendation to coastal states that they consider similar action. It was noted that compliance with a portable VHF radio and/or a Personal Locator Beacon would be less expensive than installed VHF radio or a regular EPIRB. Because numerous small vessels can easily travel one mile from shore, BoatU.S. questioned the practicality of such a requirement for all recreational boats.

Shortly after the Task Force meeting, NOAA announced the availability of online registration procedures for EPIRBs, ELTs, and PLBs. Although beacons can still be registered by mail or Fax, the addition of online registration will be officially launched on 2 September 2003. The details are available on the website at: <http://www.beaconregistration.noaa.gov>.

The Task Force will meet again from 8:30 - 11:00 am on Friday morning 24 October 2003 at the Sanibel Harbor Resort and Spa in Ft. Myers FL during the Annual Meeting of the National Marine Electronics Association.

That's the latest from GMDSS; to find out more, log onto the following web site:
http://www.uscgboating.org/safety/gmdss_brochure.pdf
and don't forget to: "keep'er , 'tween the bouys"

NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK

Bill Griswold, BC-BLN

It's not too early to begin planning for next year's efforts centered on National Safe Boating Week, the International Boating and Water Safety Summit, and looking at other boating products the National Safe Boating Council has to offer.

National Safe Boating Week falls on May 22-28,

2004. You can use the Action Manual you received this year to begin planning for your event. Other materials for your campaign can be found on the National Safe Boating Council's web site at www.safeboatingcouncil.org, or check out the additional resources at www.safeboatingcampaign.org.

Some of the **FREE** things for your use are radio and TV public service announcements, Homeland Security and Carbon Monoxide brochures, information about children's PFDs, testing PFDs, accident statistics, personal watercraft safety and more. Check out the PRESSROOM, where there are news releases, survivors' stories, boating tips and facts and more. These things are there for your use, download them and put them into your yearlong campaign.

The International Boating and Water Safety Summit will be April 18 – 21 at the Marriott Bay Point Resort in Panama City, Florida. This is a new location and might interest Auxiliarists living in the 8th Coastal Region. The program is currently being drawn up, but will undoubtedly contain a wealth of high quality information. You can check out last year's Summit on the web site above, where there are reports and pictures. Scholarships will again be available, the deadline for those is February 1, 2004, and the application is an online deal on the NSBC website above.

The Council has a wealth of other products for the boating professional which range from an Instructor's kit, a great shipping box filled with everything you'll need to present a boating class, from an anchor to inert flares to PFDs to lots of other goodies. They have a range of activity books, the *SIDEKICKS* series aimed at youngsters. *SIDEKICKS GO FISHING*, and *SIDEKICKS GO PADDLING* are the newest additions. These publications have a reasonable price and might fit your children's programs perfectly. Other publications include *SAVED BY THE JACKET*; actual stories by survivors whose life jacket saved their life, *SIDEKICKS* tattoos and a ball cap, plus more.

The National Safe Boating Council is a group of over 300 organizational members representing a broad cross section of the recreational boating community. The Auxiliary is a proud member of the Council, and individual memberships are available. The Council hopes you can use some of the services they provide, so check it out.

Waterways Management Committee Report

Robert J. Auchenleck, BC-BSB

The Waterways Management Committee was created by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in response to the emergence and encroachment of environmental management issues and social policy actions on recreational boating safety. Efforts to restrict the use of certain types of recreational

boats are having unintended consequences. Moreover, as boating agencies are increasingly tasked with the enforcement of environmental and social policy mandates there is the potential for the diversion of scarce boating safety resources to other purposes. Through a proactive review and analysis of the environmental and social issues affecting the state recreational boating safety (RBS) programs, NASBLA is better able to assist both the states and the Coast Guard in meeting the challenges these issues present.

Exactly who has jurisdiction over such matters and which agency or agencies will emerge as the lead federal agency(s) is yet to be determined. Waterways management is a very broad term that deals with a number of diverse issues, including water quality, air quality (e.g. pollution from marine engines), endangered species, invasive species, shoreline zone protection and the marine soundscape (e.g. noise from marine engines). All of these issues involve or impact recreational boating and navigability. They have also introduced a number of new, well-funded special interest groups to the RBS picture. These are groups and issues that the Auxiliary and other traditional RBS players have had little or no contact with before.

How they can impact RBS can best be seen from some current examples. Using the Endangered Species Act, the Save the Manatee organization, supported by well-known environmental law groups have delayed construction of docks, piers and moorings in a great part of Southwest Florida. Idle speed zones have been established in many parts of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Both initiatives result in changes in boating patterns and shifts in emphasis of marine law enforcement resources.

Invasive species are also a growing concern since they can cause both economic and environmental devastation. By 2000, they had caused "\$137 billion a year in cumulative economic losses nationwide", according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A few months ago, a two-day summit focusing upon invasive marine species in Chicago's waterways generated the recommendation to construct physical barriers between some of Chicago's channels and Lake Michigan, which would "block recreational boats and cargo ships," according to the **Chicago Tribune**.

In Rhode Island Sound, a proposal to establish a wind-driven generator farm has generated controversy instead of electricity, pitting clean, renewable energy advocates against recreational boaters and other marine interests along with wildlife groups concerned that the windmills would be located in a migratory bird flyway.

In San Francisco Bay, concern regarding invasive species and ballast water as a source may end up resolving part of the lead agency question. Responding to requests from a coalition of 15 environmental and fishing groups that had asked the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) to declare that ballast water was a pollutant that could be regulated under the federal Clean Water Act, EPA's director of wastewater management, Jim Hanlon said, "we consider ballast water and invasive species a real concern, but EPA really doesn't have a presence on vessels across the U.S. "The Coast Guard is the arm of the government there. "Vessels are part of their mission. "Our feeling is that adding ballast water to their (Coast Guard's) responsibilities is better than adding vessel management to EPA's." The environmental groups said it is likely that they will now sue the EPA to attempt to persuade a judge to force the agency to use the Clean Water Act in the fight against invasive species.

The Auxiliary's Department of Boating is doing a good job assisting NASBLA, the Coast Guard and Auxiliary officers at the national level in maintaining awareness of these broadening issues as well as offering our extensive RBS experience. At the local level, however, Coast Guard Marine Safety Offices (MSO's) frequently have established port development and security committees in the major commercial and recreational port cities in the U. S. It is equally important that local Auxiliary organizations, along with other recreational boating interests join and participate on these committees. One thing for sure, the nature of potential customers for the Auxiliary's boating safety message and RBS mission expertise is growing and changing.

Grants, Grants, and More Grants

Ed Sweeney, DVC-BR

It's fall, and while many people turn their thoughts to football, hunting, and other autumn activities, I urge you to turn your thoughts to grants. Yes – GRANTS! Grants from the programs outlined below can help your Flotilla or Division fulfill some of those projects you've got on your "wish list."

There are three grant programs presently available to Auxiliary units. These include:

1. **The BoatU.S. Boating Safety Grants Program (aka the Grassroots Grant Program).** The BoatU.S. Foundation awards local volunteer organizations (including the Auxiliary) up to \$5,000 for the promotion of boating safety education. This year, in light of recent studies and reports, the Foundation is putting a special emphasis on carbon monoxide poisoning education. While the Foundation encourages applications with an emphasis on carbon monoxide education, it will accept all applications covering any boating safety topic. The deadly is rapidly approaching though – applications must be post-marked no later than November 1, 2003. The grants will be awarded in late January 2004.

2. **The BoatU.S. Clean Water Grants Program.** Grants of up to \$4,000 are available for projects that educate mariners about cleaner boating habits (**NOTE:** Prior year programs had a maximum funding of \$2,000, so this represents a significant opportunity). Grants that address issues such as petroleum pollution prevention, pump out education, and littering prevention will be considered. This year, clean fueling of boats is the grant focus topic; although all clean boating education proposals will be considered. What's Clean Fueling you ask? There are specific actions boaters can take to prevent small fuel spills while fueling their boats. The Foundation is looking for proposals that effectively educate boaters with positive and practical habits at the fuel dock. For instance:
 - a. Always keep your hand on the fuel nozzle while fueling to make sure there is no accidental overflow or discharge overboard.
 - b. Use oil absorbent cloths or "fuel bibs" at the fuel dock to catch drips when handing the nozzle over the water.
 - c. Capture overflow from the boat's fuel tank vent with a "spill collector" product that attaches itself to the hull with suction cups.
 - d. Know how much your fuel tank holds, and fill it to 90% to allow room for expansion when the fuel gets warm.

Applications for the Clean Water Grants are now available, and will be accepted through February 2, 2004.

3. **The National Safe Boating Council Local RBS Grant Program.** The purpose of the National Safe Boating Council's (NSBC's) Local RBS Grant Program is to further the North American Safe Boating Campaign's efforts to reduce accidents and enhance the boating experience through public education, marketing and outreach, and expanding on the North American Safe Boating Campaign. Local projects of national significance will be considered as well. With funding from the Program, local efforts addressing boating safety concerns will be identified and grants will be awarded to improve those efforts.

The Program offers grants up to \$1,000 for each boating safety project. The NSBC Grant Committee will have the discretion to award a grant amount lower than the requested amount.

BoatU.S. Grants in Action

The NSBC will not consider applications proposing to purchase items such as laptop computers, projectors and other non-expendable equipment

The Local RBS Grant Program must receive completed applications no earlier than October 25, 2003 and no later than January 25, 2004. Grants will be awarded in March 2004. After the Grant Committee has selected the applications to fund, the recipients will receive written notification.

Please keep in mind that, for legal and tax reasons, all grant monies received must flow through the Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc. All of the monies will be passed through the CGAuxAssn to the unit that was awarded the grant.

Links to the applications for the above grants are as follows:

- **The BoatU.S. Boating Safety Grants Program**
<http://www.boatus.com/foundation/Grants/applicationselect03.htm>
- **The BoatU.S. Clean Water Grants Program:**
<http://www.boatus.com/cleanwater/grants/applicationselect.htm>
- **The National Safe Boating Council Local RBS Grant Program:**
<http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/localrbsapp.htm>

Additional resources may be found by visiting the Boating Department's Grants Page at <http://www.uscgaux.org/~boating/Grants.htm>.

On behalf of the Department of Boating, I urge you to take advantage of the tremendous opportunities offered by these programs. Adhere to the guidelines above and submit your application – you'll be glad you did.

Questions about the above programs can be directed to Robert Johnson BC-BRG at bmjohnson@atlantic.net or me at esweeney-uscgaux@comcast.net

Happy Hunting!

P.S. Check out some photos of the BoatU.S. Grants in action in the next column!

Distribution: Via direct email from BC-BRN to: NEXCOM, N-H, G-OPB-2, G-OCX-1, GOCX-2. Upon receipt, DCOs are encouraged to copy and/or provide the widest possible dissemination to DCPs; DCPs are further requested to provide the widest possible dissemination to FCs. Upon receipt, FCs are asked to copy and provide copies to Flotilla members.



ABOVE: Members of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 9-5, based in Marco Island, Florida, help kids learn about safe boating at their Water Wise event. They received a grant to print advertising and educational material in Spanish and English. **BELOW:** Young kayakers display trash collected while kayaking as part of the Baltimore County Sailing Center's 2002 grant to educate youth about nonpoint source pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

