



WAVES

Watercraft and Vessel Safety

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

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 6

DECEMBER 2003

Department Chief: Jesse L. Harrup, Jr., DC-B, 1201 Canterbury Lane, Colonial Heights, VA 23834-2709
Newsletter Editor: John Sikes, BC-BRN, 141 Southwold Circle, Goose Creek, SC 29445 jsikes@dycon.com

FROM THE CHIEF

Jesse L. Harrup, Jr., DC-B

The GMDSS Task Force met in Fort Myers, Florida on 24 October; some issues being followed by the Recreational Vessel Task Group chaired by Elaine Dickinson of BOAT US included the following:

a. BOAT US has now issued 12,844 MMSI registrations. Many operators are complaining that being restricted to two tries to encode the MMSI number is too limiting, especially with the FCC's refusal to recognize the original MMSI number when applying for a station license.

b. The BOAT U.S. Foundation plans to re-apply for a Coast Guard Boating Safety grant to develop an online DSC radio tutorial for recreational boaters, one of the training aids for which the Task Force has expressed a strong need.

c. LCDR Marien of the Coast Guard's Rescue 21 staff presented a briefing on the progress of the VHF-DSC upgrade program. Some delays are being encountered with the special software and getting the necessary permits for tower locations. Brochures outlining the program were distributed and questions about the details of the program were answered.

d. John Sabella and Bob Negrón showed the first cut of their new GMDSS training video for recreational vessels concentrating on VHF-DSC procedures. The Task Force has expressed a strong need for just such a training aid. The video content was well received and several individuals offered to make specific comments to correct any errors before the final version is produced. The video which runs almost an hour would be available on 3 VHS cassettes or a single DVD; the retail price has not yet been decided. Inquiries should be directed to John Sabella at 206-281-8626 or by email to info@johnsabella.com

e. The Task Force developed a questionnaire to survey the vessel assistance community in an effort to determine radio watchstanding practice by the boats and shore facilities of Sea Tow, Tow Boat US and Vessel Assist. Capt. Les Hall of Sea Tow offered to survey the Sea Tow franchise operators at an upcoming meeting. He also discussed the results he had gotten from a survey on his Boating Safety Forum at www.BoaterEd.com that asked 3 questions. The first asked responders to indicate their understanding of how DSC works; 6% said they understood fully and didn't

need training; 43% said they had basic knowledge but could use training; 24% said they knew nothing about DSC. The second question asked if their DSC radio was interfaced with GPS; 49% said yes and 51% said no. The third question asked if they had a DSC Radio whether they had an MMSI number; 65% had an MMSI number and 35% did not. Les felt that more training was needed and that equipment manufacturers could provide better guidance with their equipment. He also felt that the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadrons could play an important role in providing voluntary training for users of VHF-DSC.

Other questions raised on the Boater Education website are worth noting, some examples:

- 1) How are portable DSC radios registered since they will be moved to other boats?
- 2) Will there be a group MMSI number for reporting suspicious activity?
- 3) Some DSC radios don't display the Lat/Long of incoming distress calls?
- 4) How can the distress function of a DSC radio be tested?

f. The new Hawaiian Law requiring VHF Radio or an EPIRB on vessels going more than one mile offshore was raised again noting that it was assumed that the new (and less expensive) Maritime Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) would qualify as an EPIRB for this purpose. The National Search and Rescue Committee was considering recommending the Hawaiian law to other coastal states but the Chairman of the Recreational Vessel Group is on record that varying state laws were undesirable in the highly transient boating community and that any needed regulation for safety purposes should be undertaken at the federal level.

That's the latest recreational boating safety information from this group at this time. The Task Force will meet again at 9:30 am on Thursday morning 8 January 2004 in Washington at the Department of Transportation Headquarters at 7th and D Streets SW. The usual May Task Force meeting is planned for St. Petersburg Beach, Florida during the RTCM Annual Assembly, tentatively Thursday 20 May 2004.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and wishing you all happy holidays.

BLAS MEET, AUXILIARISTS PARTICIPATE

Marshall E. Bullard, BC-BSI

Meetings involving the Boating Law Administrators of the Atlantic-West area have several Auxiliarists as participants. Two meetings in particular in 2003 are representative.

D7/D8 Joint RBSS Workshop

Auxiliarists were prominent at the D7/D8 joint RBSS workshop held 17-18 February in New Orleans. Kevin Kelly, RBSS D8, and Bruce Wright, RBSS D7 hosted the joint workshop. BLAs from 20 states plus Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands attended. Six Auxiliarists from 8WR, 8CR and D7, representing the SLO program, the Lewis and Clark bicentennial planning effort and Operation Boat Smart were active participants in the workshop. Active duty Coast Guard from D8 and special programs also participated.

Major themes of the workshop included state budget crises, drought conditions and the upcoming Lewis and Clark bicentennial reenactment on the Missouri River -- the fastest flowing river in North America. Several states, particularly in the upper Midwest, were suffering from an ongoing drought expected to heavily impact the boating public. Many ramps no longer go to the water's edge and boaters from more severely damaged areas were expected to head to other states/areas where they were not as familiar with boating regulations and conditions. Many of the states in attendance will be sites on the Lewis and Clark reenactment river trip and had concerns about boater safety while on their waters. BLAs and Auxiliarists discussed options for the L&C reenactment trip. Planning for this reenactment is made more difficult by the inability to predict how many people may want to follow and at what point they will attempt to join in. Many boaters who join in may be very unfamiliar with conditions they will encounter. Everyone in attendance agreed all safe boating organizations will have to work together closely to develop flexible plans.

Other discussions in the workshop included public education efforts, the VSC program and Operation Boat Smart. Throughout the workshop, it was obvious to me that the BLAs in attendance had a great deal of respect for the Coast Guard Auxiliary and appreciate the assistance the Auxiliary provides them in improving boating safety in their state. There is a bright future to the Auxiliary-States relationship.

Northern Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NABA)

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) has three divisions: NABA, Southern States Boating Law Administrators (SSBLA) and Western States Boating Law Administrators (WSBLA). This division of the states does not coincide with the Coast Guard/Auxiliary division of states into Atlantic-East, Atlantic-West and Pacific. I wanted to point this out to avoid the expected "What is an Auxiliarist from Oklahoma doing reporting on Northern

issues?" The three Branch Chiefs working with the SLO program each take one NASBLA division and make it 'theirs' to follow, attend their conferences and to report back to the Auxiliary membership. I have the NABA division.

NABA membership consists of the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maine (Inland and Marine), Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont and Wisconsin and the Canadian Province of Ontario. So you see many of the states of D8 and D9 (Atlantic-West) are members of NABA.

NABA '03 was held 9-11 June in Bar Harbor, Maine.

Public Education was a major topic at NABA '03 just as it has been in past NABA conferences. With many different state specific requirements, it can become confusing to a boater traveling from one state to another. Some states accept Auxiliary course completion for fulfilling minimum boating education requirements while other states do not. Some states have specific state courses while other states require only inclusion of state-specific information in a course provided by the Auxiliary, the USPS or commercial boating safety education providers. And some states accept other state's "certificates" as fulfilling their requirement for a non-resident boater. But some issues like minimum boat operators' age in one state may not be acceptable to another state.

Sounds like it can get pretty confusing, doesn't it? Well, it can also be difficult for a water patrol enforcement officer to enforce education laws when you consider all the state-specific requirements and even the different appearing "certificates" that could be encountered.

The appearance of the "certificate" was a topic of intense discussion. There are committees within NASBLA working to compile user-friendly guides to state boating laws and their reciprocity between various states. Also identified as a major need is some sort of standardization of the content of education courses "certificates". (Certificates is in quotes because many times, these course completion cards represent only completion but not any form of certification.) One suggestion put forward was for a compilation of images of all available boating course and/or state "certificates" so an officer in the field would be able to verify the authenticity of a "certificate" presented to him. That might be impractical due to the very large number of "certificate" images that would have to be compiled and available (and subject to nearly constant change). Another suggestion brought forward was for standardization of the information on the course completion "certificate". It was even suggested NASBLA could require the "certificate" conform to standards as a part of the NASBLA approval.

Another discussion relating to PE classes was on the NASBLA approval itself. Should NASBLA adopt specific

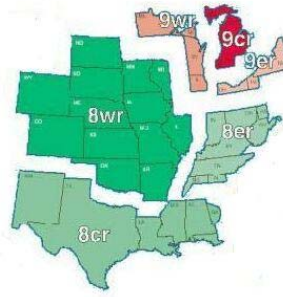
minimum standards for approval? Should there be a more formalized NASBLA approval process? Can NASBLA approval be made more timely for new course providers? These questions will surely be debated for some time to come.

We have identified a lot of potential confusion factors relating to PE thus far. So what is an Auxiliary Instructor to do? Is it hopeless to keep up with it all?

To insure they are maintaining the highest standards for their classes, Auxiliary Instructors should be looking to their State Liaison Officer (SLO) for specific state requirements that relate to PE courses. Some states make their acceptance of a course dependent on the inclusion of a minimum requirement of state-specific information or test questions. You should also be aware that NASBLA approval of Auxiliary courses is dependent on including each state's specific requirements in the PE class curriculum. Keeping up with the state's PE requirements is one of the primary duties of the SLO. Each year, they meet with the BLA and make PE course requirements a part of the discussions.

But now there is an even faster, more up-to-the-minute way to keep up with your state's boating laws. The Auxiliary is providing a list server system where any interested person can register their e-mail address. The BLA can then use that list as a distribution address to notify literally hundreds or thousands of persons with one e-mail. If you are not familiar with this great new tool, visit the Education Department and Boating Department websites for full details. The BLAs are interested in using this tool. We discussed it at NABA and I expect to see many BLAs using the service as we move into 2004. Of course, we need to be sure all Auxiliary Instructors are registered on their state's list so they can keep current. Please be sure you are registered with your state's list.

NABA represents 21 states (and 1 Canadian province) - almost half the states of the Union. The members of NABA represent a significant portion of the U.S. boating public and a wide variety of waters - coastal waters to rivers, lakes and reservoirs. To be sure, each state has its own unique issues to deal with - but a common theme for all is the need to better educate the boating public. With our new list server system, we can help improve the educational opportunity for all boaters. Let's get behind the BLA list server system and make it a huge success.



Heartland Roundup

Marshall Bullard, BC-BSI and featured SLOs

THE STATE LIAISON OFFICER

By Diane Williams, DCO 8WR

The Department of Boating Mission Statement says, "Department of Boating provides liaison with State Boating Law Administrators and other recreational boating safety organizations, i.e., State, Federal and public sector". The liaison with the Boating Law Administrators is the State Liaison Officer (SLO). The SLO is the Auxiliary's avenue to work with the Boating Law Administration (BLA) in each state of the union. Where we have more than one region/district in a state only one SLO is chosen for the state. The SLO is the conduit for all communication between the state and all those involved in Recreational Boating Safety. The SLO is our link in having an excellent working relationship with the BLA and his/her staff. This relationship brings together joint efforts in doing Vessel Safety Checks, Public Education and Operations.

Several BLAs have requested the SLO testify on Boating Safety to their state legislative committees. This resulted in several laws being passed. After receiving permission from Commander D8, Tom Spieker, SLO-NE, testified before a Nebraska legislative committee relative to boating safety and the Auxiliary's efforts to educate and assist the boating public. Herb Angell, BLA, felt Tom's knowledge and sincerity played a role in Nebraska lowering the blood alcohol limit for boating under the influence to be in line with the state's driving under the influence statutes. In Missouri Tom Hunt, SLO-MO, after receiving Commander D8 approval, was able to testify before a legislative committee considering mandatory boating education legislation. Tom's testimony resulted from a request for assistance by the Missouri BLA, Col. Jerry Adams. Col. Adams felt Tom's testimony and knowledge were definitely helpful in getting the legislation, which will take effect in 2005, passed. Testimony by our SLOs is possible under limited conditions. It is something that will probably grow in the future as the BLAs look to the Auxiliary for assistance. The Auxiliary is very important to the future of our state laws and the SLOs are on the front lines for us.

I want to encourage each and every DCO to become involved and appoint SLO's in each of their states. I realize there are some districts that only share states with other districts, however the district that does not select the SLO can work with the DCO that does so everyone can be part of this relationship between the BLA and the Auxiliary.

Here's Wishing a Happy, Healthy and Joyous Holiday Season to One and All from the Department of B Staff.

THE KANSAS/DIVISION 31 MODEL

Jack Gumb, SLO-KS

The complete geography of Kansas is covered by one Auxiliary Division – Division 31 8WR. The Auxiliary and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks have had a very good relationship for many years and it is continuing to grow. This success story has developed primarily because of a “we are all in this together” attitude of both the Auxiliary and the State.

Many planning functions of the Auxiliary and the State are done in conjunction with each other to ensure the maximum synergy possible. Each year, the Flotillas of Division 31 submit their schedules of planned boating classes to the State Boating Law Administrator, Cheri Swayne. Ms. Swayne includes the Auxiliary class schedule on the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks website as well as publishing the schedules on various brochures and mailings made by her Department.

Most Kansas Auxiliary Instructors are also certified to teach the state boating course. They are frequently asked to teach state courses for a targeted area where the BLA cannot get her people into in a timely fashion. In addition, Auxiliary Instructors do joint teaching and presentations with the BLA. In 2003, joint efforts were directed toward Boy Scout troops and other youth groups.

Kansas was one of the first states to enter into an MOU with the Auxiliary for conducting VSCs. The MOU also involves the USPS and the Corps of Engineers. A VSC steering committee is chaired by the SO-VE of Division 31. The steering committee is involved with several important planning efforts including developing a coordinated campaign for VSCs based on needs identified by the State. In 2003, several joint efforts to conduct VSC stations were done. Generally, an Auxiliary VE teamed with a Wildlife and Parks Officer. This partnership worked very well at Hillsdale Lake, Perry Lake and Clinton Lake in 2003. The same lakes are in the planning stages for these joint VSC efforts in 2004.

Wildlife and Parks often requests Auxiliary assistance in crowd control at sights of boating accidents. Primarily providing crowd control, the Auxiliary will frequently assist by towing disabled boats to nearby ramps while the LE officer conducts his on-scene investigation.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition reenactment will travel through Kansas during the summer of 2004 and the Division 31-Kansas safe boating team will be there. This time, they will also be working with Division 30 8WR and the Missouri Water Patrol in Western Missouri. Eight (8) segments of river have been defined from Kaw Point (where the Kansas River joins the Missouri River) and Brownville, Nebraska. Division 31 has assigned vessels and crew to work four (4) segments that they will be responsible for providing escort service for in Kansas. Division 30 will handle the four (4) segments from St.

Joseph, Missouri to Brownville, Nebraska. Auxiliary vessels will be responsible for preventing observers vessels from interfering with the official reenactment expedition. Of course, the Kansas Wildlife and Parks and the Missouri Water Patrol will be on hand to provide whatever law enforcement actions may be necessary to support the Auxiliary and the reenactment expedition.

A successful Auxiliary-State relationship takes time to develop. Kansas has been working on their relationship for many years. As a result, the boaters of Kansas have increased opportunities for educational experiences in terms of both public education classes and Vessel Safety Checks.

OPERATION BOATSMART IN EIGHTH WESTERN RIVERS

Stuard D. Soffer, 8WR OBS Coordinator

Notable progress was made fostering Operation BoatSmart (OBS) Coalition partnerships in Eighth Western Rivers (8WR) through improved communication and scheduling coordination, joint training and follow-on events at boat ramps and marinas. COMO Diane Williams' 2003 OBS goals began with raising internal OBS awareness then working with Coalition partners to reach most at risk groups of recreational boaters through publicity, proclamations, joint event vessel safety checks and public education courses in areas not traditionally served by flotilla's. These goals were clearly accomplished and we believe will result in a re-education of recreational boating fatalities in 8WR.

8WR encompasses a large diverse geographical area of 13 states from the Canadian border to Arkansas and from just East of the Mississippi River to the Rockies. It is home to about 20 percent of the country's registered recreational boats. As of October 30th, 4,117 vessel safety checks, 1,775 marine dealer visits and 206 public education classes (871 sessions) were completed as part of Operation Boat Smart (OBS). Additionally, there were 749 public appearances at events attended by 281,681 people and our members appeared on 52 radio or television shows.

Lasting working alliances were formed as OBS Coalition partners at the working level realized we all have the common goal of reducing recreational boating fatalities. And, it was not a contest to see who can reach the boater first. Multiple agencies teamed for events with the Auxiliary providing the manpower and BLA or Army Corps of Engineers (COE) logistical support and even several Coast Guard cutters participated and were "crowd pleasers."

A few benchmark success stories include the Kansas BLA purchasing VSC banners for Auxiliary VE's and funding training; Auxiliary PE's delivering classes at COE campgrounds, joint water safety events with many different agencies, some which are not formal OBS Coalition partners; the common-place sight of U.S. Power Squadrons uniforms at Auxiliary conferences and vice-a-versa; and several great Boating Safety Week

Proclamation presentations with all OBS Coalition partners participating and in the presentation photo. Participation by PFD Panda and Coastie contributed to the success of several joint events.

The key to OBS success in 8WR stems from dedication of the District, Division and Flotilla leadership and key staff officers and our ability to communicate effectively with each other. Commander Kim Pickens, CG Atlantic Area Operation BoatSmart Project Officer, focused on providing more training and presentation resources which enabled us to get the OBS message down to the people who have direct contact with boaters. However, the unique ability to motivate volunteers and a congenial leadership style of Commander Dave Roundy, 8WR DIRAUX, is perhaps most singularly responsible for significant leap forward 8WR has made with Operation BoatSmart. The high esteem that Auxiliarists have for this "Coastie" coupled with his excellent working relationships within the Coast Guard, resulted in our receiving outstanding across-the-board support.

We anticipate bigger and better things for OBS in 8WR now that we have the "You're In Command" materials. We are already gearing up to educate all 1,776 8WR members then the boating public about the significant carbon monoxide problem as part of our 2004 OBS emphasis.

AN AUXILIARY STATE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Marshall E. Bullard, BC-BSI

The partnership that has developed between the Auxiliary and the State of Nebraska is a real success story.

In the Omaha area of Nebraska, the Heartland Water Safety Council is a consortium of boating safety related agencies. Membership consists of law enforcement agencies and many volunteer agencies. This organization provides a wide array of safety services to the boating public including Search and Rescue on the fast-flowing Missouri River. The Auxiliary is one of the charter members of the Water Safety Council. The current president of the Heartland Water Safety Council is a Division 33 8WR Auxiliarist.

The Nebraska BLA, Herb Angell, routinely attends Auxiliary meetings at the Flotilla, Division and District level. He is an active participant in the meetings and often challenges the Auxiliary to meet growing needs. One topic in particular is related to mandatory boating education. Nebraska has mandatory boating education requirements and the Auxiliary is the backbone of the Instructor corps there. Despite the state requirement, attendance at boating classes continues to be disappointing and frustrating for Instructors. Mr. Angell is strongly encouraging all his Instructors to not let the poor attendance get them down – even if only one life is saved, the effort was well justified. In recent years, Mr. Angell has purchased newspaper space promoting the

Auxiliary's boating courses. Nebraska prints an Auxiliary Public Education schedule on the back page of their boating regulations manual, which has a circulation in excess of 150,000, at no charge to the Auxiliary. In addition, when a member obtained a substantial discount for billboard postings of boating safety information, Mr. Angell was right there with a check to double the number of billboards that could be rented.

Now local municipalities that have jurisdiction over lakes are beginning to pass ordinances requiring boating education when using their lakes. At an even lower level of organization, homeowner associations that control bodies of water are turning to mandatory boating education, seeing it as an essential means of addressing liability they think they have from boating activities on their lakes. Mr. Angell has been working with the Auxiliary to take the education training on the road to these forward-thinking municipalities and associations.

The Heartland Water Council association, with the Auxiliary in the lead and the state BLA supporting and encouraging it, has become the one stop shopping site for anyone in the Omaha area looking for boating safety materials, programs or training.

UPDATE ON GRANT PROGRAMS

Ed Sweeney, DVC-BR

It is my pleasure to announce that 47 Auxiliary Units submitted grant applications to the Boat U.S. Foundation Boating Safety Program (formerly called the Grass Roots Grants Program) and the total of those applications exceeded \$138,000. BoatU.S. is currently reviewing these applications, and winners are expected to be announced in late January 2004.

These applications contained many new and innovative ideas on how to prevent the loss of live of recreational boaters. Notable projects included the production of Dangers of CO Poisoning video, as well as numerous literature and signage programs to warn the public about CO poisoning. Moreover, there were various projects to enhance VHF-FM radio communications, etc.

But the grant season isn't over yet. As a reminder, the BoatU.S. Foundation will continue to accept grant applications for up to \$4,000 for its Clean Water Grants Program through February 2, 2004. Applications can be downloaded directly from the BoatU.S. web site at <http://www.boatus.com/cleanwater/grants/applicationselect.htm>.

Also, the National Safe Boating Council is awarding up to \$1,000 in local Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) grants. The goal of the Local RBS Grant Program is to reduce boating safety accidents and enhance the boating experience by distributing grants for local recreational boating safety programs. These programs should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Improve the quality or quantity of essential safe boating services or materials
- Provide funds to small local non-profit groups to build on and support the national campaign's effort to enhance safe boating
- Develop innovative ideas that can be replicated by groups in other areas to improve boating safety.
- Provide an opportunity to improve boating safety for specialized activities, including, but not limited to, paddle-sports (including canoeing and kayaking) and sportsmen programs.
- Develop children's programs or adaptive boating for the disabled.

All grant decisions are solely within the discretion of the Grant Committee and are not subject to appeal. The Local RBS Grant Program does not require that the recipient match grant funds, however the grant amount awarded must represent at least 50% of the project's budget. The Program offers grants up to \$1,000 for each boating safety project. The Grant Committee will have the discretion to award a grant amount lower than the requested amount. The project may not exceed one year in length. Methods to measure expected results must be identified and included in the application.

The NSBC will **not** provide grants to fund:

- Salaries, transportation, meals or lodging
- Start-up money for new organizations or businesses
- Membership drives for organizations
- Endowment programs
- Debt reduction
- General operating expenses

Grant recipients must keep accurate accounting records and comply with the reporting intervals specified in the letter of agreement. Excess funds must be returned to NSBC and will be included in program funding for subsequent years. All printed materials must be submitted to the Executive Director of the NSBC for approval prior to being printed. Camera-ready artwork of required Grant Program logos will be provided to grant recipients for display on all printed materials.

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.

Applications for the local National Safe Boating Council RBS Grant program are available at <http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/localrbsapp.htm> .

For examples of What Worked in 2003, visit: <http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/rbswinners03.htm> .

Please accept my wishes not only for a successful grant application, but for a happy and health holiday season.



REMEMER:

The ***You're In Command*** Resource Center has a number of resources available to help promote recreational boating safety. Visit the web site at: http://www.uscgboating.org/incommand_rc/index.htm

There you will find public service announcements for YIC, sample press releases for VSCs and America's Boating Course. You will also find information on boating under the influence, including a chart showing the impact of consuming alcohol based upon body weight.

There are other ***YIC*** supplies available for Auxiliarists, including videos and Federal regulations that you can order through ANSC. Ask your materials officer for more details!

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.