

Watercraft and Vessel Safety

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

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FROM THE CHIEF

Jesse L. Harrup, Jr., DC-B

In this newsletter, we often showcase our three divisions' missions in various ways, so that our members can better understand the Boating Department's responsibilities.

Since until two years ago, our department had no district staff officers – unlike the other nine national departments – it was often difficult for our members to understand, relate to, or even see evidence of any of our missions at the flotilla, division, or district levels.

However, many of our Boating Department missions can affect members at the flotilla level.

The easiest mission to present comes from our Resources Division. This division enables Auxiliarists to request grant funding for local projects, by coordinating with CGAuxA to develop and maintain grant programs.

The Web Branch of the Resources Division maintains list servers that facilitate communication directly from the DC-B to Flotilla Commanders. This streamlined process greatly increases the likelihood that key information will reach you, the member, in a timely manner.

Finally, the Resources Division's Newsletter Branch is yet another way we communicate RBS information to our membership.

The Liaison Division works largely behind the scenes, coordinating with CGAuxA to draft and maintain MOAs and MOUs (Memoranda of Agreement and Memoranda of Understanding) with our commercial partners. These valuable negotiations result in free or reduced cost services and RBS equipment for Auxiliary members.

Our third division, the States Division, works with the USCGAUX district SLOs (State Liaison Officers) and DSO-SL's (or equivalent management officers) to promote maximum benefits from our partnerships with all fifty states, plus Washington, DC, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. These benefits include education, public affairs, vessel safety checks, and operations. The states and USCGAUX also share personnel resources for marine environmental missions: these mutual RBS-type missions not only augment the states' limited on-water personnel resources, but also provide the Auxiliary additional mission opportunities.

It is because of the hard work of our Liaison Officers that so many flotilla-level members have the opportunity to participate in joint USCGAUX-State missions.

So, although there are few DSOs, SO's, and FSO's to remind Auxiliarists of the Boating Department on a regular "face-to-face" basis, I hope this description of our Divisions' work provides a glimpse into how we in the Boating Department are, in fact, "putting our members first" through our missions.

"Till next time, keep 'er 'tween the buoys."

Jess

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RAISING THE BAR IN BOATER EDUCATION

Gus Formato, BC-BSA

The bar has been raised. Is your state leading the nation in boating safety education or is it trying to catch up?

During the weekend of March 24-26, 2006, the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, First District, Southern Region held its annual District Conference in Groton, Connecticut.

Reflecting D1SR's active support of boating safety programs, a notable highlight of this event was the SLO Roundtable presented by Harvey Miller, DDO, CG/SS, Steve Biro, SLO, CT and Eleanor Mariani, BLA, CT.

The focus of the roundtable discussion was local states' Boating Safety Education Requirements. Roundtable participants began by discussing Connecticut's requirements for the issuance of a Safe Boating Certificate. Connecticut was a pioneer in requiring most state boaters to successfully complete one of three safe boating courses before legally operating a boat on state waters.

In Connecticut, boaters must have a Safe Boating Certificate in order to operate any motorized vessel or sailboat in excess of 19.5 feet in length. All Connecticut residents, owners of real property in Connecticut, and anyone using Connecticut waterways more than 60 days per year are subject to these requirements.

As an alternative to the classroom course, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection allows experienced boaters to take a 50-question, multiple-choice Equivalency Examination.

Connecticut also requires PWC operators to successfully complete both an approved boating course and a personal watercraft course in order to obtain a Certificate of Personal Watercraft.

Frank Catena, SLO, NJ, informed the group that New Jersey has recently adopted similar legislation. In New Jersey, successful completion of an approved boating safety course is now a requirement to obtain a boating operators license. This requirement is applicable to all motorized vessels in excess of 10 HP, as well as PWCs.

Like Connecticut, New Jersey legislation provides for a "test-out option", whereby experienced boaters (100+ hours of operating experience), born prior to 1979, may take an exam in lieu of completing a boating safety course. Candidates may only attempt to pass this exam

once. If they are unsuccessful, they will be required to complete an approved boating safety course. Currently "test-out" exams are only administered by the New Jersey State Police. However, provisions are being drafted to allow the USCGAUX as well as the United States Power Squadron to administer the "test-out" exams.

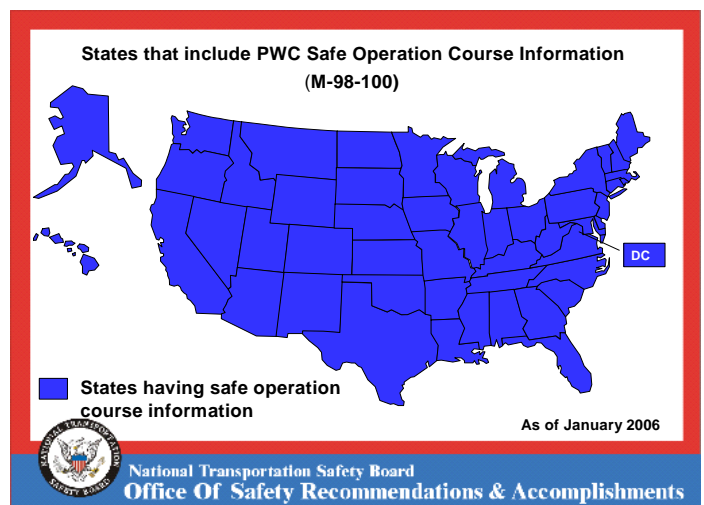
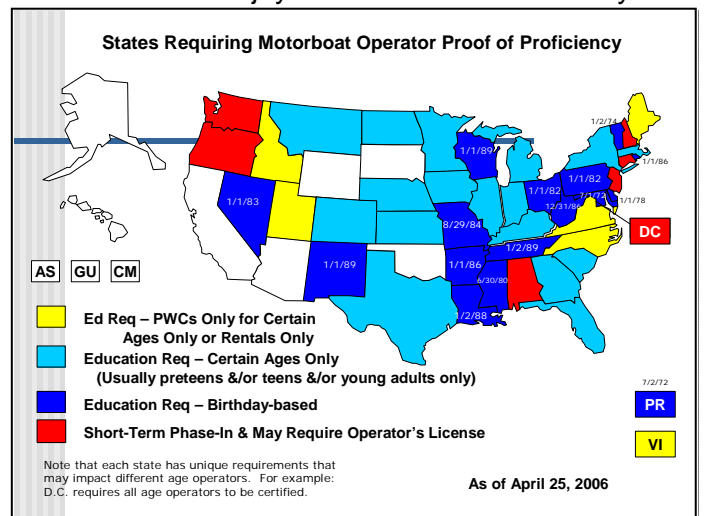
Louis Liotti, SLO, NY advised the group that the Empire State is exploring similar legislation.

How does your state compare? Check the graphic below, or find specifics at the following website:

http://www.nasbla.org/education_requirements.htm

Additional information is available at the NASBLA website, <http://www.nasbla.org/>, as well as the USCGAUX Boating Department website, <http://www.auxbdept.org/>.

In conclusion, proactive approaches to boating safety legislation ensure all recreational boaters a safer and more enjoyable time on our waterways.



SOUNDINGS MAGAZINE

BENEFITS NOW ONLINE!

David Delich, BC-BLP

Easy Access via <http://shopauxiliary.com/>

The tremendous benefits being provided by **Soundings Magazine** can now be accessed online by going to <http://shopauxiliary.com/> and clicking on the "members only" access block for **Soundings!**

The agreement signed with **Soundings Magazine** includes the following key benefits:

- Discounted annual **Soundings** subscription
- Free copies of **Soundings** for PE class students when requested by FSO-PEs
- Discounted price for booklet, **101 Answers To Your Toughest Boating Questions**
- Free publishing of PE class schedules in regional editions of **Soundings**
- Free subscription to **Trade Only** journal to requesting FC's, PE officers at national, district, division and flotilla levels.

Also, watch for news in December about how consenting FC's and PE officers at national, district, division and flotilla levels can receive **free** annual subscriptions! This benefit must wait for the new calendar year when new appointees take office.

Soundings publishes a magazine containing very interesting articles focused on topics not found in other boating magazines. Many relate to boating safety and seamanship issues. Regular features include **Know How, Seamanship Quiz, Coast Guard Response Report, Regional Calendar** (containing boat shows, dealer events, tournaments, instructional classes including PE classes) and much, much more!

Soundings contains articles relating to both sail and power boats!

A sampling of some of the articles in the May 2006 edition included **New Propulsion Systems, Fire Destroys Storied Bimini Bar, Boat Show Delivery Turns Into a Tragedy, Wraparound PFD Tops PFD Contest, Taking the Search Out of Search and Rescue, Analysis of Tour Boat Tragedy on Lake George, NYK...** and the list goes on... This is a vital magazine for Auxiliarists!

The **Trade Only** journal is published by **Soundings** and has timely articles about developments in the recreational boating trades. Auxiliarists qualify for this magazine by virtue of our involvement in the Auxiliary's mission of recreational boating safety.

What about Auxiliary members without access to online services? They are encouraged to ask another Auxiliarist who does have online access, such as the FSO-CS, to log on to the above website so they can obtain these fantastic benefits.

And remember, FC's, we are depending on **you** to distribute this issue of **WAVES...** if you don't, your flotilla members may miss out on accessing the terrific benefits outlined above.

To view the complete MOA and a summary document, visit the Boating Department's website at <http://www.auxbdept.org>. For questions about the **Soundings** MOA, contact David Delich, BC-BLP at southcross@bellsouth.net ... and go to <http://shopauxiliary.com/> right now while you are online to visit the members-only **Soundings** site!



A NEW WAVE OF COOPERATION BETWEEN USACE & USCGAUX

Atul Uchil, PhD, BC-BLA

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the USCGAUX have always cooperated at the local flotilla level.

In September 2005, a new era of cooperation dawned between the USACE and USCGAUX. Many months of negotiations, backed by the will and perseverance of a few determined individuals, led to the signing of a tri-lateral Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the USACE, USCG and USCGAUX.

The MOU focuses primarily on the following functional areas:

1. Vessel Safety
2. Public Education
3. Charting and Mapping
4. Homeland Security
5. Search and Rescue

The MOU is being furthered by the Boating Department's Liaison Division, under the able guidance of Division Chief John Potts (LCDR – USCG Retired).

To date, the Liaison Division has conducted several meetings with its USACE counterparts, resulting in the rudiments of a plan. The first draft of the plan addresses the following actions to be taken jointly by USACE and USCGAUX (box to right).

Those interested in more information can find a copy of the USACE-USCG-USCGAUX MOU at the Department of Boating website, <http://www.auxbdept.org/main.htm>. You may also contact Atul Uchil, PhD, BC-BLA at auchil@uchil-llc.com.



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Primary action items

1. Vessel Safety
 - Identify a pilot site (lake) where there is no local CGAUX flotilla
 - Identify the process detailing how to train and qualify certain USACE personnel as VE's for this pilot area
 - Detail the logistics involved to certify Corps of Engineers personnel in the CGAUX VE program. Such details may include (but are not limited to):
 - Training
 - Exams
 - Procurement of VE Decals
 - Monitoring of program
2. Public Education
 - Identify opportunities for CGAUX and USACE to collaborate

Secondary action items

3. Charting and Mapping
 - USACE currently has a program with US Power Squadrons to report key information for charting in USACE navigation database (e.g., bridges, marinas, gas availability, buoys, sandbars, etc.)
 - Identify if something similar is possible with the CGAUX and the USACE
4. Homeland Security
 - Identify the USACE DHS contact and initiate discussions with the USCGAUX Americas Waterway Watch contact
5. Search and Rescue
 - TBD



GRANT PROPOSAL TIPS: PART 2

Thomas Nunes, BC-BRG

Editor's Note: Part 1 of this series was in our last issue; watch upcoming issues for more valuable tips on preparing grant proposals.

In the last issue, we outlined some initial steps in the Auxiliary grant writing process. Part 1 of this article covered Auxiliary grant procedures, how to prepare a grant proposal, and the need to identify a problem and its potential solutions in order to find a project to submit for grant funding.

Brainstorming is a technique to help you overcome mental roadblocks in order to identify such thorny problems or to help you list solutions to an identified problem. Productive brainstorming sessions will generate healthy lists of useful projects in need of grant funding.

Brainstorming

A good general idea or goal is a great place to start, but specifics are needed before you can write a grant proposal. Good planning is another key component of the project's success. In addition to brainstorming and clarification processes, a proposal writer must research a project's feasibility. Here are a few questions to consider:

- What do you want to do?
- How much will it cost?
- How much time will it take?
- What difference will the project make and for whom: your flotilla, division, boaters, the state, the nation, the world, etc.?
- What has already been done in the area of your project? By whom? What were the results?
- How does the project fit within the Auxiliary's?
- Is the project strictly local in nature or can it be replicated in other places by other organizations?
- Can the problems you claim to be addressing actually be solved?
- How will you accomplish your goals? What is your plan?
- How will the results be evaluated?

- How will the project be maintained once it's implemented?
- Why should you (your organization), rather than someone else, do this project?
- Why should this project be done now?

On pages 5 & 6, we present detailed instructions for the brainstorming process.

WELCOME ABOARD! NEW BC-BSA

Tony A. Lorenc, DVC-BS

The Boating Department takes pleasure in welcoming its newest member, Gus Formato. Gus will serve as BC-BSA in the States Division, where he will be responsible for activities of all SLOs (State Liaison Officers) in the Atlantic East Region. As BC-BSA, Gus will collaborate with Boating Law Administrators and law enforcement individuals. He is very qualified for the task due to his active membership in the Nutley, NJ, Police Department for the past 23 years. For 16 of those 23 years, he has been a Detective; for the past three years, he has served as a Senior Detective, assigned to a major case squad.

In addition, Gus is a certified Range Master and an Instructor at the Essex County Police Academy. He also serves on the New Jersey State PBA (Policeman's Benevolent Association) Critical Stress Management Team and served as a stress counselor to officers at Ground Zero in the aftermath of 9/11. Most impressively, Gus has the distinction of being a member of the Honor Legion, Police Departments, State of New Jersey, one of only 432 such police officers in the state. This honor is bestowed on officers for gallantry and risking their life in the line of fire, while saving others.

Gus is a member of Flotilla 10-13, 1(SR), where he serves as Fingerprint Technician and FSO-PS. He is also Executive Officer of Sea Scout Ship 66, Nutley, NJ; and a member of the Navy League of the United States as well as the Naval Reserve Association and Nutley Elks, Lodge 1290.

Gus is married to Donna; they have three sons and one daughter. His middle son, Christopher, is Nutley's newest Police Officer. Of course, Gus has other joys in his life; these include boating, baseball and travel. Please join the entire Boating Department in welcoming Gus. He can be reached via email: uscqa270@aol.com

BRAINSTORMING PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES: A COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE

by Phil Bartle

The purpose of a brainstorming session is to work as a group to define a problem, and find, through creative thinking, the best group decision for a plan of action to solve it. These basic guidelines will help you lead a group to making a decision by consensus. The technique can be used in a variety of settings and is essentially a way to facilitate creative group decision making.

While you need good leadership qualities to conduct the session, and must be very firm in ensuring that the format and ground rules of the session are followed (e.g., no criticism; no cross talk), following this process ensures that the resultant decisions are truly those of the group, untainted by your preferences and pressure.

Requirements

- A problem to solve
- A group with potential to work as a team. This process can work with a small management or operational team of five to ten people (e.g., trainers, field workers, a trade union), all the way up in size to a village meeting of a few hundred people
- A board, large sheets of newsprint, or something that can be seen easily by all (often an easel and “chart paper” pads), and some large markers to write on it
- A facilitator (you). The facilitator’s task is to draw out the suggestions from the participants, not to impose her or his own opinions, while still using leadership skills to maintain the order and purpose of the session. [Note: Formal facilitator training is available if you wish to pursue it.]

Define the Problem

- Ask for suggestions: What is the most important problem, or aspect of the problem?
- Use the General Guidelines above to collect and prioritize problems
- Determine the top problem or aspect of the problem

Generate the Goal

- Reverse the definition of the identified problem to find its solution. This solution is your goal!
- Write a “goal statement” large enough for all group members to see that clearly defines your goal as the solution to your problem.
- Create ownership for group members by linking the goal back to your identified problem.

Ground Rules

- Facilitator leads each session
- Stick to the topic of discussion
- Stay positive – no criticism allowed

Collect & Prioritize (General Guidelines for Suggestions)

- Ask for suggestions on given topic
- Focus on collecting information – no criticism allowed!
- Write all suggestions on the board
- Record all suggestions voiced, no matter how outlandish or improbable they may seem
- As a group, cluster similar/related suggestions
- Prioritize suggestions using a group technique such as multi-voting to create ownership of the prioritization process

Define the Objective

- Explain the difference between goals and objectives: a goal is a generalized destination, whereas objectives (measurable, finite, and with completion dates) are the waypoints to achieving the goal!
- Use the General Guidelines above to collect and prioritize objectives

Identify Resources and Constraints

- Ask the group to consider resources available to help achieve the identified objectives, and potential constraints that may prevent achievement of objectives
- Use the General Guidelines above to collect and prioritize resources and constraints

Identify a Strategy

- Strategies are ways of selecting and combining objectives, while maximizing resources and minimizing constraints, in order to achieve a goal
- Use the General Guidelines above to collect and prioritize strategies
- The top priority strategy will be the one the group adopts

Action Plan!

- Summarize the following group decisions on the board:
 - Problem (or aspect of problem)
 - Goal
 - Objectives
 - Resources
 - Constraints
 - Strategy
- Inform the group that they have produced a plan of action!
- Ensure that the scribe or secretary has recorded the strategy and its components (i.e. the Action Plan)
- Remind the team that they have collaborated to produce an Action Plan; it truly reflects their decisions

Conclusion: Brainstorming is simple. That does not mean it is easy. It improves with practice. You can intersperse the different phases of it with role-playing, group games and other techniques of group work. Experiment with it and try different styles.

Good luck and successful mobilizing!



Distribution: All FC's, DCO's, VCO's with email addresses in AUXDATA, plus NEXCOM, G-PCB-2, and G-PCX-1 via direct email from DC-B. Upon receipt, FC's are asked to copy and provide copies to Flotilla members.