



UPDATE

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An Opportunity for Learning, NACON 99

The National Conference in Orlando, FL was a great opportunity for learning. If you attended the general meeting of the National Board or attended the Department Workshops, there was a great deal to learn.

The Conference was opened with a gala Parade of District Flags, the presentation of Colors (U.S and Canadian) and the national Anthems of all the Nations represented at the conference with Volunteer Auxiliary programs similar in purpose to our own. The superb music was by the United States Coast Guard Band.

Mr. Mortimer Downey, Deputy Secretary of the United States DOT, gave the Keynote Address to the National Board. Other speakers before the general meeting included James Hall, Chairman of the National Transportation Board, RADM Thad Allen, Commander Seventh Coast Guard District, Admiral Stillman, CG HQ, RADM E.R. Riutta, Assistant Commandant for Operations and CHDIRAUX CAPT. Mark Kerns. Commandant, Admiral James C. Loy gave the keynote address at the Commodores banquet.

Departmental Workshops included:

- New Business Directions
- New offerings in PE
- The New Millennium in Auxiliary Electronic Communications
- Review of Surface OPS and Education Program
- Update on the Re-engineering of the VE/MDV programs
- Marketing the Auxiliary
- Short Public Education Courses
- Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Program
- Operations, telecommunications and ATONS

There was an excellent trade show, including one about the History of the Auxiliary.

The Coast Guard announced the approval of four inflatable PFDs. Demonstrations of them were given at the Omni outdoor pool. Approval of one other PFD is imminent. Members should be reminded that these are officially classified as type V PFDs and are not authorized at this time to worn on official patrols.

Representatives of the various nations' voluntary Coast Guard Auxiliaries present included:

- Canada
- England
- Italy
- The Bahamas.

One came away from the conference with a positive feeling that our National Leadership is addressing the problems that have caused a decline in the number of CMEs, PE classes, Membership and Operations and will resolve them. with the support and help of the members.

In the Year 2000, the national Conference is planned for Kansas City. For those who have never attended a National Conference, try to make the opportunity to go.

Also, in January 2000, N-Train will be held in St Louis. This is an important National Training Conference in which District Staff Officers of various Departments will be in attendance for the latest training information. They are certain to return to the districts with a lot of useful ideas on how to help us to grow.

Boat U.S to Expand Life Jacket Loaner Program

For those flotillas looking for some ideas of serving the boating community, don't overlook the possibilities of working with Boat US to help save the lives of children under 12 years of age by actively participating in its Life jacket loaner Program.

During the first six months of 1999, the Boat U. S. Foundation distributed more than 2000 free life jackets to community organizations, marinas, Towboat US, marine assistance companies and several state organizations as a part of its Life Jacket Loaner program.

Since its inception in 1997, the program has made more than 7,000 life jackets available in various sizes to children age 12 and under.

Every Auxiliary Unit with an operations program should consider participating in the program. The availability of these loaner life jackets could mean the difference between life and death for many children.

Those considering participation in the program should call the Boat U.S. Foundation at 703-823-9550, ext.3200.

Marketing and Public Affairs Dept. Preparing for changes

The National Department of Public Affairs new Department Chief, Jack E. Banister, has been busy working to develop and implement organizational and structural changes within the Department to facilitate the introduction of the new Departmental Programs. The development and implementation of



new programs will touch on just about every person's responsibilities and duties. "We have a great Department, with many good people." Banister said, "Because our role in the Auxiliary has been modified, we are re-evaluating all of our members to determine if we can utilize them better than we perhaps have done in the past. This is a massive job, and I appreciate the patience members have shown while I am evaluating their skills.

Changes being considered, in addition to possible task realignment, include the development of new marketing skills to more aggressively promote the services of the Auxiliary. All members of the Department were given the chance to express their interests and concerns about reorganization as well as providing the new DC-A information on their background.

Opportunities Unlimited

A quality boat show provides the serious minded Auxiliarist almost unlimited opportunities to sell the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and its missions to the public, boat dealers, boat manufacturers and state boating law administrators.

Too often, a few unthinking Auxiliarists have unintentionally torpedoed boat shows by using them to seek an opportunity to gain free admission to the show. Thinking Auxiliarists are able to accomplish their missions and also get the opportunity to visit the exhibitors.

Many boat show operators have expressed an interest in working with the Auxiliary to make their show a success. Safety has become an important factor in boating. We can continue to work with boat shows in the future only if we contribute to efforts of the producers to promote boating safety. At the heart of the issue is the recognition that many states have already taken steps to expand the concept of **mandatory** Boating Safety Education, the wearing of PFDs, and other actions to address a growing concern about an apparent increase in the number of boating accidents and deaths associated with those accidents.

Too often too many "wannabe" boaters have the money to purchase a new or used watercraft of their preference. Too often, they lack the skills, education and experience to operate

that watercraft in a safe, sane and competent manner.

Too often, accidents under both State and Federal Law that are preventable and which are required to be reported are not. A boat show provides the serious minded Auxiliarist almost unlimited opportunities to sell the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and its missions to the public, boat dealers, boat manufacturers and state boating law administrators.

Proper attention to details at an outstanding boat show will expose us to more boaters than any other event. If we do our job and work those visitors/boaters in a professional manner, we are bound to reap rewards of new membership, increased CMEs, increased MDVs and increased Boating Safety Educational courses.

Working a boat show may not be everyone's "cup of tea". If you are interested only in getting free admission to a boat show, buy your tickets or get comps from elsewhere. Yes, those who work will undoubtedly gain free entrance, but it will be earned.

We anticipate Boat Show managers will be interested in working closely with us to develop a boating safety program that is positive and one in which we will use adequately trained members to reach the public and the exhibitors.

The Auxiliary is completing a **new Boat Show Training Program** to help train members interested in working boat shows. It is anticipated this training program will be available around the first of the year. Working a Boat Show is serious business. Take advantage of the opportunity to take the course when it is offered.

How Do You Work As A Public Affairs Officer?

Some Public Affairs Officers were recruited for their job without any training and support with words to the effect, "there is nothing to the job." Every good Public Affairs Officer knows that their job is not only important, but carries with it a great deal of responsibility. The first thing you need to do is to become familiar with the Auxiliary Public Affairs Manual. If you don't have one, see your material officer or Unit elected officer to get you one. You can't

operate effectively as the Public Affairs Officer if you don't have a clue as to what is expected. Under the New Marketing and Public Affairs Department, we will be developing a close working relationship with the other Staff officers to promote the various Auxiliary safe boating programs.

It is the policy of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to make available to the public all information concerning the activities of the Auxiliary, except that which is restricted by law and to do so in a frank, forthright and expeditious manner.

Flotilla Public Affairs Officers serve as spokespersons for their flotillas and conduct media, internal, and community relations programs.

The unit's public affairs activities must be structured in a way that permits specific goals to be achieved within stated time frames. The PA Officer has to also take into consideration the need to permit necessary rapid response to unexpected local events in which the Auxiliary may participate, alone or in concert with other emergency response organizations. Every PA Officer should conduct a media relations program. Without the media, we have no job.

Every PA Officer must also conduct a Community Relations program, including the establishment of a speaker's bureau. Every PA Officer should work with the Publications Officer to produce a periodic unit publication to distribute important internal information.

Every PA officer should maintain an up-to-date "album" or slide show library of the Units activities and missions. If possible, copies of these photos should be shared with the District. The PA Officer should have a camera available. Having photos available will enhance the chances of getting a story about the unit published. To function as a PA officer requires some administrative skills in maintaining files of news clips, correspondence and contact files of resource persons, including the maintenance of appropriate log files.

Unit PA officers should always seek to establish and maintain liaison with each other and with PA Officers in other agencies, including local military services units.

Distribution: The National EXCOM; all National Board Members; The CHDIRAUX; all District Directors of Auxiliary; All District Division Captains; all DSOsPA and PB, all SOs PA and PB and FCs via