

**Fifth Northern Region Auxiliary
Notes Of General Interest**

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1 - FROM DIRAUX

This will be the last NOGI that I will play to any degree of significance in drafting or editing. By mid-April, I will shift into a terminal leave status until my retirement from the Coast Guard in June. Although I will still be in the local area, CWO Joe Hartline will effectively be the region's DIRAUX until my relief, CDR Scott Rogerson, arrives later this summer (probably in June or July). That means that CWO Hartline will not only be handling his regular duties as the region's Ops Training Officer, but also those of the Director. I ask that you advise your Divisions and Flotillas in an effort to minimize the queries and concerns directed at our office during the next three months. Only matters of utmost concern that cannot be resolved by existing Auxiliary programs and chains should ultimately be written, e-mailed or phoned to this office. Please also begin sending such concerns "action to" CWO Hartline instead of me, and we will use April as a transitional month between us.

I do not know how many NOGI articles that I have generated nor the number of editions that I have helped edit during the past five years, but I sincerely hope that they have proven constructive, informative and of good counsel to you and your predecessors throughout that time. And while it has been remarkably rewarding to forward and reinforce information pertinent to D5-NR leaders and program managers, nothing has rivaled the sense of pride and gratitude that has always been behind our recognition of new coxswains, pilots, AUXOPS, QE's, etc. Even more so, the acknowledgement of D5-NR's

incredible generosity and support of the Coast Guard as reflected by its annual contributions to the Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA) fund has known nothing but ever-increasing respect and appreciation. Once again, as ceremoniously acknowledged at the recent spring conference, D5-NR not only led the entire Coast Guard Auxiliary in annual 2003 CGMA contributions for a fifth consecutive year, but its overall contributions again rose - this time to a level of more than \$7,500! Captain John Gentile, D5 Chief of Operations and the person to whom the ceremonial check was presented, was so overwhelmed by such a magnanimous gesture, he literally took the check back to Portsmouth, VA with him and duly presented it on D5-NR's behalf to Rear Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara, D5 Commander!! You can find that photo on the D5-NR web site. Please take a look - because it represents the results of the good-hearted, good-natured, caring and concerned outlook that characterizes all of D5-NR. I shall always remember all of that...and admire it always, too. Fair winds and all the best to D5-NR!!

2 - CONGRATULATIONS!!

The following personnel are recognized for their recent completion of rigorous qualifications:

Dorothy Smith (16-5) - Incident Response Center Watchstander
Stuart Brown (6-6) - Aircraft Commander
Aldo Guerino (7-12) - Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examiner
Linda Boice (4-9) - Coxswain
Karen Fessler (15-1) - Coxswain

3 - PERSONAL SECURITY INVESTIGATION (PSI) UPDATES

There is so much activity going on in the world of PSI's that it is difficult to monitor and stay abreast of it all. However, it is clear that our region has benefited from a "wait-and-see-approach" in that many changes to changes to changes in PSI policies have already occurred, and several regions have had to literally back-track on their initial actions. An upcoming change to the D5-NR Policy Manual will encapsulate many of the new PSI policies and procedures that have "settled out." In the mean time, here are some highlights of particular interest to D5-NR:

A - Can members still be disenrolled if they have not submitted their Personal Security Questionnaire (PSQ) forms? - Absolutely. These forms were initially due to our office by 15 January 2004 and were meant for Auxiliarists to express their willingness and understanding to undergo the PSI process that is now being instituted throughout the Auxiliary. **The deadline for submittal has been extended - until 30 June 2004. After that date, if our office has not received the PSQ from a current member, then they will be disenrolled at the end of 2004. This is a final determination.**

B - When can we start submitting new member enrollment packages and what should they consist of? - We appreciate your patience and management of new personnel as we have deployed PSI training and equipment throughout the region during the past few weeks. We still need to deliver some fingerprint kits to Auxiliarists who have volunteered to facilitate the PSI process for fellow members (aka - "fingerprint technicians"). We expect those kits to be delivered within the next 2-4 weeks as well as for the fingerprint technicians to be fully certified. At that point, CWO Joe Hartline will immediately notify EXCOM and DCP's to give the all-clear signal for Flotillas to begin submitting new member enrollment packages. This is what a new member enrollment package should then consist of the following nine items:

- 1 - Enrollment Application (CGAUX-32 form)
Note - if a prospective Auxiliarist has a prior felony record, it is more important than ever for them to indicate such on this form as well as the year of the felony conviction, the city and state, the nature of the felony and the sentence.
- 2 - Check for \$13

- 3 - Prospective Member Interview (CGAUX-2 form)
- 4 - Operation Patriot Readiness form
- 5 - ID Card photo (on 3.5" floppy disk, per D5-NR Policy Manual)
- 6 - ID Card Info (D5-NR ADMIN-11 form)
- 7 - Authorization for Release of Information (SF-85 form -available on G-OCX web site www.cgaux.info/g_ocx/administration/security)
- 8 - Special Agreement Check (OFI-86C form - this form is listed on the G-OCX web site as "Security Agreement Check")
- 9 - Two (2) Fingerprint Cards (FD-258 form)

C - What's the deal with this new "Approved Pending (AP)" status for prospective members? In order to address the status of a prospective Auxiliarist during the longer time that is now expected between submission of a new enrollment package and notification that their fingerprint check is positive for final acceptance in the Auxiliary, the "Approved Pending (AP)" status has been created as in interim membership status.

Upon receipt of a new enrollee package, as described above, the DIRAUX office will make the appropriate AUXDATA entry to recognize the prospective Auxiliarist in AP status. Neither a "Welcome Aboard" letter nor EMPLID number will be issued to a prospective Auxiliarist until their fingerprint check results are received from the Coast Guard Security Center and they have satisfied all enrollment requirements. Concurrently, the DIRAUX office shall also change the new member's status to IQ or BQ, as appropriate, and place them in Operational Support (OS) status.

Prospective Auxiliarists in AP status *may* attend Flotilla meetings, participate in Auxiliary programs in a "guest status" (eg - ride on surface patrols), participate in member training efforts, and study for exams. They *may not*, however, wear the Auxiliary uniform, get any Auxiliary qualification tasks signed off and dated as such, log any time or activity in AUXDATA, hold any elected or appointed office nor vote on any Auxiliary business.

D - How long will it take from the time a prospective Auxiliarist's package is received in the DIRAUX office until they are notified that they have been enrolled? The answer to this question is still being established as the Coast Guard and Auxiliary institutionalize the PSI process. The best "guesstimate" right now is about 4-6 weeks.

E - What will the new enrollee receive if everything clears the PSI process? In this case, the DIRAUX office will mail a "Welcome Aboard" letter to the new enrollee along with their ID card. Their FC will receive a copy of the letter as well as their New Member Certificate for presentation at an appropriate time.

F - What about past members who re-enroll or prospective members in AP status whose packages do not clear the PSI process? Past members who re-enroll must undergo the same process as prospective Auxiliarists as described above. Upon favorable approval of their enrollment package, they will be restored to IQ, BQ or AUXOP status, as appropriate.

If a prospective Auxiliarist in AP status' package receives an unfavorable determination from SECCEN, then the DIRAUX office shall advise them and their FC of membership denial and appeal/adjudication provisions.

G - When can current Auxiliarists expect to begin submitting their PSI packages? Please remember that there is not a race to see which region can get its Auxiliarists through the PSI process first. Three years have been allowed to complete the PSI process for all Auxiliarists. As part of the Fifth District, D5-NR is second in priority to Auxiliarists in the Captain of the Port Hampton Roads/Portsmouth, VA area. Those Auxiliarists will probably not be finished with their PSI processing until next Fall. At that point, D5-NR will be authorized each month to submit 70 Direct Operational packages (ie - coxswains, pilots, comms watchstanders) and 200 Operational Support packages. Given our regional numbers of Auxiliarists in each of these

categories, it will probably take about 6-8 months to complete this region - then remaining portions of the Fifth District will commence PSI processing of their Auxiliaries.

4 - THE AUXILIARY MANUAL - CHECK YOUR MAILING ADDRESS!!

A recent update from the Chief Director's office about the status of the Auxiliary Manual indicated that it is literally in the final concurrent clearance/review process at Coast Guard Headquarters. By the middle of April, this process will be completed and the targeted date for final approval signature by the Chief Director is May 27.

After that, the manual will be sent out for bulk printing. Here's where you come in. Every Auxiliary will receive their own copy of the Auxiliary Manual by direct mailing to their home address. **PLEASE** get the word out **NOW** so that every Auxiliary has a "last call" opportunity to ensure that their **current home address, as listed in AUXDATA, is up-to-date**. Mailings will be based on member information in AUXDATA. If addresses are out-dated or wrong in AUXDATA, then members will not receive their copies. We will NOT mop-up after these manuals are mailed by making arrangements for members to get copies - so fore-warned is fore-armed!

5 - AND SPEAKING OF ADDRESSES, HERE ARE SOME KEY POLICY CHANGES

We have received many reports of incorrect addresses for Auxiliaries listed on the Division and Flotilla summary pages of the 2004 D5-NR Telephone Directory. All of that information was pulled directly out of AUXDATA - because AUXDATA was modified last year to be able to download such Telephone Directory reports for Auxiliary units. But once again, the validity of AUXDATA reports is only as good as the information within it. For example, if a member who lived in southwestern New Jersey never submitted an update to their home telephone number when the area code for that region changed from 609 to 856...about 5-6 years ago...then neither the old AUXMIS database nor new AUXDATA database were ever updated to reflect the change.

By using the AUXDATA Telephone Directory reports for our regional Directory, we avoided a lot of work in terms of phone calling, re-mailing and re-typing basic information that had been submitted by Flotillas and Divisions. We will continue to use this report to build future Telephone Directories. But, we need your help again in terms of ensuring that your Division and Flotilla counterparts make sure that their information is up-to-date in AUXDATA.

There is a benefit for you from all of this. Starting this year, Division Captains and Flotilla Commanders will no longer have to submit the D5-NR ADMIN-3 form - to anybody. That means that you will not have to write, type or mail an ADMIN-3 form to us or anyone else after your next elections. However, because your SO-IS still needs to know who your elected and appointed staff officers are in order to up-date AUXDATA (and allow us to print accurate Telephone Directory reports), you will need to inform the SO-IS of such. We recommend that you use the Annual Unit Officers Report (ANSC-7007) form to do this. The ANSC-7007 is available for download from the Auxiliary web site. Once the SO-IS has this information, the form need not be sent anywhere else.

So, we have four points to recap:

Make sure your Division and Flotilla members have updated their point-of-contact information in AUXDATA (the sooner, the better)

Still use and submit the ADMIN-2 form after your next elections (this will remain a criteria for the Director's Administrative Award)

Do not use or submit an ADMIN-3 form (at all!) after your next elections (this will no longer be a criteria for the Director's Administrative Award)

Use an ANSC-7007 to submit your elected and appointed staff officer summary to your SO-IS for AUXDATA entry (no further routing - it should stay with the SO-IS)

All of this will be reflected in Change 1 to the D5-NR Policy Manual.

6 - AND SPEAKING OF THE D5-NR POLICY MANUAL...

The last major D5-NR Policy Manual revision was promulgated last summer. Already, there are many modifications that can and should be made to it. We will shoot to have Change 1 issued by the end of April 2004.

7 - A DIFFERENT KIND OF RSVP

A few months ago, an Auxiliarist in Division 13 made application to the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Burlington County, NJ for some of its program benefits. I had never heard of this organization, nor had many others including those at National and CG Headquarters level. But to make a long story short, RSVP may be applied for and utilized by Auxiliarists. The following Q&A is message is meant to make you aware of RSVP and its potential benefits and to also prescribe how Auxiliarists may participate in the program.

A - What is RSVP? The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is founded in and funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency. It is also a United Way member agency. The program provides opportunities and limited support for older adults (men and women 55 years of age and older) to develop a recognized role in their communities through volunteer service. There are no restrictions based on income, education, handicap, experience, race, religion or sex.

B - Where can I find out more information about RSVP or its local offices? Information can be obtained by going to the National Service web site (www.nationalservice.org), then click the "Senior Corps" tab, then click the "RSVP" link, and you will find yourself in the RSVP section where you can click your appropriate state and obtain a listing of county-by-county points-of-contact. The entire web site has a lot of useful information about volunteer service of all sorts.

C - What does RSVP have to offer for Auxiliary service? RSVP recognizes Auxiliary service as the type of volunteer service that it is meant to support> Potential benefits include: 1) reimbursement for travel mileage associated with your Auxiliary service (up to 15 cents/mile, up to \$1.85 per trip, up to 8 trips per month to volunteer stations); 2) if a volunteer works over a lunch hour and the agency (ie - Coast Guard) does not provide a meal, RSVP may pay up to \$1.25/meal up to 6 meals/month; 3) recognition in the form of each spring, most local RSVP offices hold a luncheon to recognize volunteers for their service; and 4) periodic RSVP newsletters.

D - What does RSVP need in return? Foremost, RSVP asks that volunteers in its program commit themselves to their volunteer service on a regular basis, remain interested in their volunteer opportunities, and demonstrably show that they are willing to share their wealth of experience in life. RSVP's support in terms of federal funding depends upon documentation of volunteer hours (sound familiar...?). Towards that end, local offices send out a form each month to the individual volunteer or through the participant's "volunteer station". The form is necessary for RSVP's documentation of volunteer hours. It has to be filled out by the individual volunteer in order to be reimbursed for allowable transportation and meal expenses. It must ultimately be signed by both the individual volunteer and their volunteer station supervisor.

E - What is a "volunteer station"? RSVP is accustomed to dealing with volunteers who normally volunteer at a fixed "station" (eg - a hospital, a library, a youth athletic league). The nature of Auxiliary volunteer service can result in a wide variety of "stations" (eg - a high school public education classroom, a storefront boating safety booth, a vessel safety check boat ramp). Therefore, Auxiliarists who apply to participate in the program may have to explain to the appropriate RSVP office exactly what the nature of their service entailed for which they might seek RSVP reimbursement.

Applications for RSVP reimbursement should be intellectually honest (ie - claims should not be filed for meal reimbursement if the Auxiliarist did a bunch of staff work in their own home). But cases like involvement with a boating safety booth at a boat show, or a day's worth of VSC's at a boat ramp would make for legitimate claims. Again, these are things the details of which should be brokered directly with your local RSVP office. In terms of signatures on the RSVP reimbursement claim forms, an FC is authorized to sign as the volunteer station supervisor.

F - What about the RSVP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)? As best I have been able to determine, RSVP requires an initial MOU to be signed by an "agency representative". The MOU describes some basic expectations of the participants in the RSVP program, and it is provided by RSVP. It also calls for the development and submission of a volunteer job description for each volunteer activity performed. The DIRAUX office will not craft or draft such job descriptions. However, Division Captains are authorized to sign such MOU's if any Auxiliarists in their Divisions desire to apply for the program. Prior to signature, Division Captain's should forward the MOU to DSO-LP for review and approval, similar to the contract review process. Copies of any MOU's that are ultimately signed and accepted by an RSVP office must be sent to DSO-LP, DCO and DIRAUX.

G - Where can Auxiliarists get RSVP forms and MOU's? From their appropriate RSVP office (see #2 above for finding appropriate RSVP offices).

H - How does the Coast Guard interact with RSVP? It doesn't. This is not an endorsement of RSVP, either positively or negatively. It is notification of a heretofore unknown program that can be used by Auxiliarists...if they desire to participate by RSVP's rules and policies.

If you have any further specific questions about Auxiliary interaction with RSVP, I recommend that you contact DCP 13 who already has at least two members cleared for their local RSVP program.

8 - SO WHAT ABOUT ICS-100?

A few years ago, the Coast Guard adopted the Incident Command System (ICS) as its basic emergency response organizational set-up in the event of any significant contingency. For example, when Pier 34 collapsed in Philadelphia in 2000, Group Philadelphia set up an ICS to coordinate Coast Guard and inter-agency response efforts. The same held true for initial 9/11 response efforts. Everyone in Team Coast Guard should have a fundamental working knowledge of ICS - and that's what the ICS-100 course provides. Auxiliarists who would like to take the ICS-100 course can take the associated end-of-course test electronically...courtesy of the Auxiliary National Test Center (NTC). In addition to conventionally ordering the ICS-100 manual from the Coast Guard Institute, you can view and/or download the ICS-100 manual by going to:

<http://www.auxetrain.org/ICStext.html> (note - download "2439", the first manual on the list).

If you would like to read just the overview and course material, go to:
<http://www.auxetrain.org/icsmodule1.htm>.

To review the flash version of the ICS-100 Powerpoint presentation, go to:
<http://www.auxetrain.org/ICS-Flash/ICS-100.htm>.

When you are ready to take the ICS-100 test, go to:
<http://cgexams.info/testing/index.asp?bhcp=1> .

After you have read the testing rules, select the Incident Command System Course Exam.

Complete the testing enrollment form and take the exam. Within minutes after taking the exam, you will receive an email with your results. In the unlikely event that you did not pass the exam, you are eligible to retake the exam anytime after you have received your results.

The Auxiliary National testing Center hopes to have the ICS-200 course available for e-testing by 15 April 2004.

9 - AWARDS - SOMETHING'S MISSING IN D5-NR.....

If you look in Chapter 12 of the D5-NR Policy manual, you will see that section B.5. deals with awards to individuals. Among these, the AMOS Hope Award for Most Outstanding Assist performed by an Auxiliarist during the year. Life-saving assists come to mind as best candidates for this award, and every year there are several lives saved by D5-NR Auxiliarists, as reflected in AUXDATA. The unfortunate side of this story is that for too many years, this award has not been issued..because no nominations were made.

When it comes to awards like these, the District Awards Board can only act upon information that it is made aware of during the course of the year. As leaders, Flotilla Commanders and Division Captains must ensure that EXCOM and this office are made aware of significant assist cases that involve your Auxiliarists. This can be done simply enough by e-mail description of the circumstances and actions of the case. The bottom line is that there are ways to recognize these kinds of performances..but a little action has to be taken in order to recognize a great action. Please keep this in mind as 2004 progresses - and let's see that such awards like the Amos Hope Award are duly made next year.

In the same vein, an All-Coast Guard message (ALCOAST 115/04) was recently issued to solicit nominations for the annual Association for Rescue at Sea (AFRAS) Silver Medal. This award is the highest award presented to an Auxiliarist by a civilian organization. Nominees must be Coast Guard Auxiliarists who contributed directly to an event that involved the rescue of life from sea where the heroic action of the person being nominated was uniquely distinguished. Actually, consideration is given to all rescues involving life-threatening situations...even if performed on a lake or river. If you are aware of such performance by one or more Auxiliarists of this region during Calendar Year 2003, please let EXCOM and our office know soon - because the deadline for submission of nominations is April 15!

Other D5-NR awards that have gone too long without recipients are the John R. Massman Awards and the Training Aids Award. The former is made to Divisions that demonstrate outstanding performance across the board. Several Divisions came extremely close for 2003 - the biggest stumbling block being the lack of one or two Flotillas that did not qualify for the Director's Administrative Award. There were over 40 Flotillas that earned the 2003 Director's Administrative Award - the most in several years. Just one or two more Flotillas that earned that award would have qualified their respective Divisions for the John R. Massman Award! With respect to the latter, Training Aids Award, there were a couple of neat training aids on display at the spring conference. Please make sure that the Auxiliarists who made and brought those training aids are duly nominated for next year's award - and encourage more members to bring additional training aids to the Fall Conference so as to be considered!

10 - 2004 VSC DECALS - GOTTA' USE THEM..NO KIDDING

Given the concern that has been voiced by many Auxiliarists about the presence of the State Farm insurance emblem at the bottom corner of this year's triangular VSC decals, it is equally necessary to point out that when all is said and done, those decals must be utilized to recognize recreational vessels that satisfactorily meet all established equipment requirements that VE's check. These decals shall not be altered, defaced or

modified in any way. An emblem in a corner will not detract from the high purpose that the decal itself essentially serves - we must all remember that. It is the plain duty and responsibility of all VE's to focus on the mission - not the complexion of the decal - in order to carry out this vital element of safety for the recreational boating public that we all serve. Let's make this a truly banner year for vessel safety in D5-NR!

11 - MORE FROM THE STORE...

The new D5-NR District Store Price List is now available online. For orders UP to \$50.00, there is a \$5.00 shipping charge. For orders over \$50.00, there is no shipping charge. This Price List is an interim list with more features to be added in the future. Currently, all orders must be sent via regular mail with the online ordering feature to be added at a later date.

The District Store may be accessed by clicking on "District Store" at the top of the D5-NR web site Home Page. To view the "Table of Contents", click on "Bookmarks" on the left side of the screen and then click on the title that you wish to view. To view the entire screen, click on the "X" next to "Options".

12 - MUTT'S - THEY'RE OUT THERE!!

At the recent D5-NR Spring Conference, it was pointed out that the region's Mobile Unit Training Teams (affectionately known as MUTT's) are ready, willing and able to assist Areas, Divisions and Flotillas with training, great instructors and advice in virtually every program. Unfortunately, they're running short on call-outs - in other words, they are not being called upon often and are under-utilized. There is a MUTT in each Area - East, Central and West. Their team leaders are Bob Layton (Division 6), Nick Matchica (Division 4) and Rodney Miller (Division 5), respectively. All MUTT's are listed in the 2005 D5-NR Directory. About the only thing that you need in order to get their services is a minimum number of students (which can be coordinated directly with the MUTT leader) and a place to train. There is more information about MUTT's in the D5-NR Policy Manual (Chapter 5). If you are ever in a bind for instructors, or would just like to "spice up" your training program with some true specialists, please consider the D5-NR Mutt's. Give them a call!!

13 - OUR STATE COUNTERPARTS - CALL ON THEM, TOO!!

Also at the recent D5-NR Spring Conference, Mr. John Simmons, Pennsylvania's Boating Law Administrator and a great friend of the Auxiliary, provided some valuable insight in his remarks to the District Board. He pointed out the great benefits to be gained by simply reaching out to our state counterparts more frequently and in almost any venue. Particularly, Flotillas should contact their local Waterways Conservation Officers in Pennsylvania, DNREC officers in Delaware, and Marine Police Unit officers in New Jersey in order to invite them to your meetings as guest speakers, or to your public outreach events, or to your fellowship gatherings, or to just about any of your activities. It is important to create opportunities to get familiar with them so that they can learn more about the Auxiliary and so that you can learn more about their missions. There is no better time than the present to start doing this. Many of these officers are quite new to their respective agencies. The quicker they get to know your missions and objectives as well as the more they get to know you as professionals and people, the better you will all be able to effectively serve your local boating public. Give them a call and let them get to know the great story of D5-NR - you will be glad that you did!!

14 - AUX COXSWAIN VS. AUX BOAT FORCES INSIGNIA - THE TWAIN MEET...

The Auxiliary Coxswain insignia and the relatively new Auxiliary Boat Forces insignia (single-tone pewter) represent significantly different qualifications for an

Auxiliarist. Soooo, Auxiliarists who have earned both may now wear both. Effective immediately, Auxiliary coxswains who qualify for the Auxiliary Boat Forces insignia may wear both insignia as follows: one device shall be affixed above and centered over the ribbon bar while the other device shall be affixed and centered on the left pocket flap above the button. Either insignia may be worn in either position - it remains a personal decision as to which goes above the ribbons and which is affixed on the pocket flap. The Office of Boat Forces at CG Headquarters will amend the Coast Guard Boat Force Manual this summer to reflect this policy.

15 - TO TELL THE TRUTH, HERE'S A NOTE ABOUT TESTIMONY

With the recent integration of the Coast Guard into the Department of Homeland security (DHS), several existing policies with respect to the conduct of authorized Auxiliary activities previously approved by the Department of Transportation and routinely performed by Auxiliarists prior to the move into DHS are now under review by DHS. One such activity is the previously routine appearance of Auxiliarists in uniform presenting pre-approved testimony on behalf of boating safety-related legislation and/or regulations. Pending this review, Legislative Liaison Officer (LLO) activity specifically related to appearing in uniform before Federal, State or local legislative or rule-making bodies testifying on behalf of the Auxiliary and/or RBS has been suspended until further notice. It may be possible that given 6-8 weeks notice, proper pre-approval of testimony offered by Auxiliarists in uniform may be obtained, but that's a long shot. This should not affect a lot of regional Auxiliary activities, but you should be aware of it. Give us a call if you ever have any questionable circumstances.

16 - D5-NR CONFERENCES - SOME HOW-AND-WHY ABOUT THEM

As we drive past the third consecutive spring conference recently held at the Heritage Hills Golf and Conference Resort, it is important to let you know why that site has been subject of its own "three-peat" and why there is potential for even a fourth event at it next year.

When it comes to regional conferences, the best analogy that parallels the process is that of a gun crew - yep, a gun crew. The "spotters" are the regional Conference Coordinators. They literally scope out sites and recommend whether or not they should be subject to consideration based on a wide variety of factors ranging from location to cost to room quality. The "trainers" are the Executive Committee (EXCOM) who take the Conference Coordinators' recommendations under advisement and identify which prospective sites should be subject to bid. The actual "gunner" is the DIRAUX office that literally pulls the trigger on the government contracting process that ultimately determines the conference site (i.e. - we solicit bids from prospective sites, determine which one is most competitive, and ultimately work with our chain to award the conference contract).

Upon approval of the contract, our office can then apply its funds to the conference (the District also applies funds to help support other conference costs). We are authorized to fund two annual meetings of the District Board. This includes travel, lodging and meal expenses for all Board members and DSO's. In an ongoing effort to ensure that per-person costs either meet or are lower than established government rates for meals and lodging in the conference site area (ie - rates that are generally lower than costs that are incurred by individual tourist or business class guests), our office arranges blanket government contract services for District Board meetings. Coincidental with getting government rates for those Auxiliarists whom we fund, we also secure the same low meal, lodging and service rates for all other Auxiliarists who participate in the conference. This has tended to be a rather good benefit in that lower individual out-of-pocket costs have been gained for everyone who participates in a conference.

As with everything, there is usually some bad that goes along with some good. The

simple fact of the matter is that different geographic areas throughout D5-NR do not share the same government meal and lodging rates. As extreme examples, the area with the highest government meal and lodging rate in D5-NR is Ocean City, NJ during summer months when the allowable rate is about \$260 (it comes down to about \$125 in winter months). Other places like Hershey, PA, Wilmington, DE, Cape May, NJ, Atlantic City, NJ, and Philadelphia and Montgomery County, PA, are also about \$160 or well above that level. Contrast these areas with the allowable rates in places like Lancaster, PA (\$110 during summer months) or York, PA (\$85 year-round, the lowest possible government rate) and you can see why these areas are very attractive in terms of costs. There is also the concern for holding these events at the highest quality locations that our funds can buy. But there is usually also some trade-off to that, too. In the case of the Heritage Hills Golf and Conference Resort, principal trade-off's are its location in south-central Pennsylvania and its 100-room capacity that normally requires an alternative off-site location.

By holding conferences in lower cost areas, savings of several thousands of dollars in Coast Guard and District funds per event can be easily achieved than by holding them in higher cost areas. That adds up to a lot of money that is, in turn, spent on other regional needs (usually equipment or administrative support). Additionally, for many individual Auxiliarists who participate in the conferences, the lower costs make for significantly lower out-of-pocket expenses while getting good meals, service and training venues. Further, it is not uncommon for many organizations and agencies to find that their conferences overwhelm the capacity of the primary conference site. Off-site alternative hotels are often necessary to accommodate the lodging needs of many conference attendees, so the Heritage Hills scenario is actually not an anomaly in the world of conference coordinating - and that establishment has been extremely accommodating in terms of shuttle transportation arrangements.

Taking all of this into consideration, the importance of keeping conference costs as low as possible with high quality service for the benefit of membership has been the D5-NR Executive Committee's primary consideration in the conduct of regional conferences. Trade-off's have been dealt with as best possible like arranging frequent shuttle service between the Heritage Hills hotel and off-site hotel. All things considered, this approach has seemed to work well in that the numbers of conference participants has been consistently high the past few years, with this most recent spring conference being the largest in about 10 years. We will collectively try to continue to keep regional conferences informative, relevant and affordable for everyone in D5-NR.

17 - CHANGES TO IMPORTANT POINTS OF CONTACT IN OUR REGION

Please note the following changes to 2004 Points of Contact for our region:

ALO-USCGC CLEAT & DSO-MA	Marty Abelkop 130 Curtis Lane, Moorestown, NJ 08057 Phone: 856-642-2050 E-Mail: martin.abelkop@totalsolutions-nj.com
ADSO-CS Electronic Comms	Robert Tully 238 Propert Drive, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006 Phone: 215-947-8667 E-Mail: rgtully@yahoo.com
ADSO-MS Sea Partners	Marc Benner 165 W. Maple Grove Road, Denver, PA 17517 Phone: 717-445-9432
ADSO-MT Div 7 & 16	Kenneth Kendall 9308 Mark Drive, Beach Haven Park, NJ 08008 Phone: 609-492-2530 E-Mail: lbi42@comcast.net

18 - DIRAUX STAFF DUTIES

Our staff's administrative duties are listed below. Please continue to use the following contact list:

CWO4 Joe Hartline jhartline@dirauxphiladelphia.uscg.mil 215-271-4934
-Training
-Injury/Mishap Reporting

Elizabeth Kain ekain@dirauxphiladelphia.uscg.mil 215-271-4937
-Qualifications
-AUXDATA

SK2 Henry Mc Guigan hmcguigan@dirauxphiladelphia.uscg.mil 215-271-4858
-Test Requesting
-Travel Reimbursements
-Property Management

YN3 Scott Stein sstein@dirauxphiladelphia.uscg.mil 215-271-4933
-Enrollments/Disenrollments
-Initial Qualifications

BCQP Coordinator, Lee Crossman lcrossman@dirauxphiladelphia.uscg.mil 215-271-4936
-All questions regarding qualification status in the Boat Crew Program

Please remind members to use their chain of leadership and communication.

Respectfully,

S.J. MINUTOLO
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard
Director of Auxiliary, D5-NR