



U.S. Department of Homeland Security

# U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY 5th District Northern Region

## Recreational Boating Safety Tactical Plan

Developed by

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Richard C. Weiss, District Staff Officer-Public Education

Russell M. Galson, District Staff Officer-Program Visitation

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Version D5NR.RBS.14.1215

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# Fifth District Northern Region Recreational Boating Safety Tactical Plan

The national vision of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is “To meet America’s changing safety and security challenges through a balanced allocation of resources toward our recreational boating safety and maritime domain awareness missions.” Additionally, we need to maintain a balance of our core Recreational Boating Safety and Coast Guard missions with the emerging Homeland Security Initiatives.

The foundation of the Auxiliary’s Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) portion of that vision is the *Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program (2012-2016)*. This document identifies the mission of the National RBS Program: “to ensure the public has a safe, secure and enjoyable recreational boating experience by implementing programs that minimize the loss of life, personal injury and property damage while cooperating with environmental and national security efforts.”

*The Fifth District Northern Region (D5NR) Strategic Plan 2015-2019* “provides a basis for guiding and transforming the District toward meeting both the present needs and the emerging roles of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.” The *SWOT* (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis identifies the important strategic issues of the District and enabled us to identify the D5NR District Goals and Strategies necessary to advance the Auxiliary’s missions.

This document isolates the District strategies that pertain to Recreational Boating Safety and identifies actions that provide the next level of implementation detail to the following departments: Public Affairs (P A), Public Education (PE), Program Visitor (PV) and Vessel Examination (VE). The collective Staff Officers of each of these areas will be referenced as the *RBS Team*.

It is intended that these departments operate in an integrated fashion to achieve maximum effectiveness. It is also likely that other departments, such as Human Resources (HR), Surface Operations (OP), Member Training (MT) and Communications Services (CS), will also be needed to enhance RBS program effectiveness. This approach to program execution requires much more lead time, planning, collaboration and coordination than the more traditional independent approach. For many in the Auxiliary, this will not be “business as usual.” For Auxiliarists, the need to adapt to change will be paramount. In an integrated environment, all disciplines share the responsibility for the success of all disciplines. None stands alone. Each discipline contributes to the results of the other disciplines.

The goals in this document are an expression of a broad, measurable result or end stage to be achieved. These goals will utilize the *SMART* system: Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic and Time-Bound and be both *Developmental* (A goal that defines one or more Critical Success Factors) and *Performance* (A goal that assures accountability and should be limited to manageable criteria and results in measurable, qualitative and quantitative data) oriented.

The expectation is that the outcome of this plan will be observable, measurable results that provide evidence that the organization is moving toward its vision.

Please note the *Addendum Section* following this *RBS Tactical Plan*. During the development of this plan numerous critical issues were discussed and explored. Many of these concerns would fall under the category of “Threats” from various *SWOT* analyses. These *Overarching Challenges for the Auxiliary* are included to catalyze further discussion to improve success in all of our programs and to further assure that we will continue to be the leading Recreational Boating Safety service organization

# Common Objectives of The Recreational Boating Safety Team

## Communications

### *Objective(s) From District Strategy*

- We need to have more interaction among Flotillas, Divisions and Staff Officers throughout the District.
- *District SWOT Analysis Issue: Poor Communication and Reporting*

### *Developmental Objective*

- Each person within the District should send a timely report of pertinent activities to their FSO-IS. (It is recognized that time delays can limit the effectiveness of this as a management tool) Members in a leadership role shall send a monthly report to the person in the next position up the chain. This includes Staff Offices at all levels.

### *Performance Objective*

1. Communications are to follow standard Auxiliary procedures. E-mails that are sent through the Chain of Leadership and Management Communication, (COLM), shall be communicated to the next level in a timely manner.. We need to also encourage horizontal Staff communications at each level.
2. Every Auxiliarist shall ensure that their *AUXOFFICER* data is correct and report changes in a timely manner to their FSO-IS.
3. Each Auxiliarist shall use the correct form to report their activity and results in a timely manner to their FSO-IS. This information will update AUXDATA and AUXINFO so that progress toward fulfilling our missions can be tracked, problems identified and timely solutions are applied. (Massive time lags with members submitting correct forms to SO-IS Officers precludes using this as a management tool.)
4. Monthly reports up the chain are an essential duty for those accepting a leadership role. Anything that pertains to fulfilling our mission should be reported. This must include both the Chain of Leadership and Chain of Management (COLM), elected leaders and appointed Staff.

Minimum report content would include:

- *What did we intend or plan to do during the period*
  - *What did we actually do during the period*
  - *What will we do during the next period*
  - *Problems encountered / request for assistance*
  - *Notes of interest.*
5. The unit leader receiving the report should address problems and concerns if possible. If not possible, include the problem or concern on their report up the Chain to the next level.
  6. Anything that is considered creative, innovative or helpful to other units should be passed both up the Chain as well as down the Chain and laterally as well. This includes successes as well as failures.

# Leadership

## ***Objectives from District Strategy***

- Make leadership training available to all levels of Appointed Officers within the District.
- Create *functional* paths for the succession of quality leaders. Management Training should also offered to all appointed officers. Both are necessary to strengthen units at all levels

## ***Developmental Objective***

- Increase the viability of all programs through effective management, accountability and responsibility.

## ***Performance Objectives***

1. Management training should be an ongoing consistent routine and not a special event.
2. Leadership training should also be an ongoing routine.
3. Initiate mandatory annual leadership and management workshops for all staff officers at all levels.
4. Past officers should participate and mentor at these workshops.
5. Workshops should provide a platform for interaction and exchange of information.
6. Members that exhibit leadership qualities should be identified and mentored to further their individual development
7. Ensure that all leaders and members of RBS Team at all levels are knowledgeable in their respective disciplines and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and their effect on the boating public.
8. Reinforce the acceptance of an appointed office constitutes responsibility and accountability by that officer, to ensure the duties of their office are carried out in a consistent, timely and comprehensive manner.
9. Clarification of the plan, mission, vision and short and long term goals must be complete, concise and specific. A plan should be developed and updated yearly by each Unit level elected leader.
10. Division and Flotilla leaders should tailor the plan to local environments. Team Leaders implementing the plan must be effective communicators.
11. Implementation of a monitoring system to provide information as to the effectiveness of programs, processes and people.

### **Objectives from District Strategy:**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Staff officers need training in program management.

### **Developmental Objective**

- E-Learning, PowerPoint Modules and the *USCGA Performance Improvement Guide* are available for use as training tools. All Leadership training must incorporate effective management training to include Leadership Responsibilities, Team Leadership, Facilitative Leadership, Meeting Management, Organizational Performance and training on systems that use a variety of decision-making processes. These tools can be found on the National Website at:
  - Program Management
  - <http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=T-DEPT&category=value-added-training>
  - Human relations page—Resource Toolkit
  - <http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=H-DEPT&category=resource-toolkit>
  - Public Affairs
  - <http://www.training.auxpa.org/>
  - Participating Visitor / Vessel Examiner
  - <http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=V-DEPT>
  - Auxiliary Member Job Aids
  - <http://www.cgaux.org/members/>

### **Performance Objective**

1. Attendance at District Departmental Appointed Officer Training seminars should be mandatory.
2. Create meaningful work environments that challenge our best thinking and eliminate objections, artificial barriers and wastes energy or serve no useful purpose.
3. Reward participation with recognition and fellowship.

## **Human Resources**

### **Objectives from District Strategy**

- Survey each District Area and its Flotillas to ascertain their strengths and weaknesses for recruiting new members. The ADSO-HRs can survey SO-HRs and compile a list of successful practices to accomplish this.
- Share best recruiting practices with those Flotillas in need of improved recruiting. All members need to be recruiting when participating in events with public contact.
- Develop recruiting programs to meet specific needs of area Flotillas and RBS Programs. Utilize National and other recruiting tools as part of this effort. Employ new concepts and marketing approaches to augment traditional methods.

### **Developmental Objective**

- Prior to 1 January each year, the RBS Team will create a comprehensive recruiting plan for the Upcoming year.

### **Performance Objective**

1. Each FSO must monitor their qualified members' activity to make sure currency requirements are being met and certified members do not enter REYR/REWK. This may reduce the need for some recruiting. Members wishing to cease their participation in any specific operation should be documented and removed from the program and the annual REYR/REWK list.



2. FSOs should assess the recruiting needs of each RBS discipline, including numbers of new recruits, physical abilities, special experience and/or expertise, etc. SOs would assist their respective FSOs where needed.
3. Create a list of appropriate activities that provides exposure to desirable candidates. The Member Involvement Plan covers this.

For each activity:

- *Event dates should be grouped to coordinate with Public Education courses (BQ new members) and Member Training (to get certified).*
  - *An appropriate location and time should be identified.*
  - *Create a plan to promote the event to the target market.*
  - *Identify personnel required.*
  - *Identify equipment/materials needed and the party responsible for delivery.*
  - *Tasks that need to be accomplished.*
4. Communicate this plan to the Division Staff Officers of the RBS Team for their critique and to:
    - a. Determine if a joint activity with several Flotillas might increase results.
    - b. Pass best practices from strong Flotillas to weak Flotillas.
    - c. Change this plan when warranted especially when new opportunities are discovered.
  5. At the conclusion of each activity, an evaluation report should be submitted by the mission leader to the Vice Flotilla Commander for use by future RBS Teams.
  6. Monthly reports up the chain should include information on upcoming events and results from activities held since the last report.

***Objectives from District Strategy:***

- Provide targeted member recruiting activities to attract mission-specific participation within the District.

***Developmental Objective***

- Recruit new member to maintain the strength and missions of the Auxiliary and continued existence of the Auxiliary.

***Performance Objectives***

1. Each RBS discipline is an opportunity to enhance our human resources.
2. Public Education classes provide a captive audience and should be used as a platform to recruit new members.
3. Develop *Recruiting Teams* to include individuals from the RBS programs who will attend Public Education classes to inform students of the opportunities available in the Auxiliary and actively *engage* those who indicate an interest in membership.
4. A copy of the *Auxiliary Manual* and the *Member Retention and Recruiting Guide* along with brochures outlining the Auxiliary's missions should be available for discussion with perspective members.
5. Members should interact with students to foster interest becoming an Auxiliarist.

***Objectives from District Strategy:***

- Aid in the integration and retention of new members by establishing mentoring guidelines.

***Developmental Objective***

- Retention of current members for continued mission support and mentoring of new members.

***Performance Objectives***

1. Membership retention is critical to the continued success of the organization.
  
2. There are as many reasons for joining the Auxiliary as there are Auxiliarists. Each of us had thoughts, ideas and specific goals when we joined. It is extremely important the individual's expectations are realized or are on the horizon. Through a best practices approach, continued quality training and mentoring, these realizations can be attained. We need to recruit skill sets as well as new members.
  
3. REYR is of great concern and must be continually addressed. Staff Officers in each discipline should work with HR and IS officers to identify the cause and seek remediation of this problem on a member-by-member basis. This needs to include new requirements as they evolve.

# National Safe Boating Week

## **Objectives from District Strategy:**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* National Safe Boating Week (NSBW) Activities are scheduled too early in the boating season for our District. The D5NR pushed start date of program back by one week to better address local boating conditions.

The D5NR NSBW PLAN as developed by ADSO-PA Boating Safety Programs should be implemented by all D5NR units for National Safe Boating Week Activities.

## **Developmental Objective**

- Coordinate with Flotilla and Division leadership, the RBS Program Managers, as well as the Operations Department to establish the revised 5NR NSBW dates (Memorial Day weekend through the first weekend in June). Work with Dealers, Marinas and Yacht Clubs to firmly establish the adjusted dates for NSBW in our District.

## **Performance Objective**

1. Insure all areas are participating in NSBW activities. Planning for NSBW events should occur in the first quarter of the year and should be a joint effort between all RBS departments. Flotilla leadership should schedule such planning as an annual occurrence each by the end of the first quarter.
2. Each Unit shall designate a NSBW Committee, consisting of the unit RBS Team and the Operations Officer. This Team shall be lead by the Vice Unit Commander. This Committee will be responsible for planning and tracking the Unit's NSBW activities.

# Technology

## **Objectives from District Strategy:**

- Educate and train members in the advantageous use of computers to keep them better informed and maintain the Chain of Communication.

## **Developmental Objective**

- Develop a more efficient, well informed member through computer/communications technology.

## **Performance Objectives**

1. Ongoing training in the use of computers and new technologies afford members the opportunity to access Auxiliary online resources to obtain personal status information, answers questions related to Auxiliary matters and maintain a more effective "Chain of Communication."
2. Training classes should be scheduled on District, Division and Flotilla levels permitting members the option of accessing the training best suited for their time allotment.
3. A "Buddy System" should be implemented whereby those members, reluctant in their acceptance of computer technology, are assigned a 'buddy' who will forward information to them via non-digital modes of communication. All members should become computer literate.
4. Utilize telecommunications technologies such as teleconferences, online video conferences, *Skype*, online meeting services (e.g., *Go to Meeting*, *Live Conference*, *Campfire*, *Adobe Connect*) to more effectively communicate to our members while using their volunteer time as efficiently as possible.
5. Become *THE* leading online resource for our constituents on Recreational Boating Safety information through the effective implementation of Social Media (*Twitter*, RSS feeds, blogs, podcasts, *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *Wikis*, etc.).

# Public Education Objectives

## Leadership

### *Objectives from District Strategy*

- Make leadership training available to all levels of members involved in Public Education (PE) within District 5NR.
- Plan for the succession of quality Public Education leaders.
- Increase mentoring of PE Team Leaders
- Alignment of D5NR Public Education Objectives and USCG Core values

### *Developmental Objective*

- Increase the viability of the Public Education program through effective management, accountability and responsibility based on outcomes assessments.

### *Performance Objectives*

1. Management should be consistent and not a special event
2. Initiate annual mandatory leadership workshops for PE officers at all levels.
3. More experienced (including past) officers should participate and mentor at these workshops.
4. Implement *Instructor Workshops* to provide a platform for interaction and exchange of information and best or innovative practices.
5. Members expressing an interest in the PE program and those that exhibit leadership qualities should be identified and mentored to further their individual development.
6. Make certain that all Instructors are knowledgeable in their respective disciplines, and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and their effect on the boating public.
7. Reinforce that acceptance of an office constitutes responsibility and accountability by that officer, to ensure the duties of their office are carried out in a consistent, timely and professional manner.
8. Plans, missions, vision and short and long term goals must be clear, concise and specific.
9. Courses such as *Paddlesports America* and the "Alternate PE Courses" which include: *Suddenly In Command*, Piloting, Weather, Fishing, etc. should be targeted to more specific and as yet untouched groups of boaters further expanding the scope of boater education.
10. Managers should tailor each plan to local environments and Team Leaders who implement the plan must be effective communicators.
11. Implementation of a monitoring system to provide information as to the effectiveness of programs, processes and people.
12. More exposure and role for paddle sports clinics as well as PCO public contact opportunities.

## Human Resources

### ***Objectives from District Strategy:***

- Aid in the integration and retention of new members by establishing mentoring guidelines.

### ***Developmental Objective***

- Retention for continued mission support and mentoring of new members

### ***Performance Objectives***

1. Membership retention is critical to the continued success of the organization.
2. There are as many reasons for joining the Auxiliary as there are Auxiliarists. Each of us had thoughts, ideas and specific goals when we joined. It is extremely important the individual's expectations have been realized or are on the horizon. Through a best practices approach, continued quality training and mentoring, these realizations can be attained.
3. REYR is of great concern within the PE program and must be continually addressed. PE officers should work with HR and IS officers to identify the cause and seek remediation of this problem on a member-by-member basis.
4. Maintain effective credentialing processed for PE qualified instructors providing state mandated boater safety training. State SLOs continue to be integrated into D5NR appropriate related PE activities.

## Readiness

### ***Objectives from District Strategy:***

- Provide public education/safety programs and activities sufficient to meet the needs and expectations of the boating public.

### ***Developmental Objective***

- Provide additional education by defining the needs and expectations of the boating public and increase their awareness of the Auxiliary mission. It is necessary for us to be responsive to the changing needs of the boating public.

### ***Performance Objectives***

1. Those in the PE program should participate in other RBS affairs involving public interaction To gain insight into the needs of the public boater.
2. Reassess the PE program to determine if it meets the needs of the boating public within their specific geographic area.
3. Develop and integrate additional courses into the curriculum to meet these needs.
4. Courses such as *Paddlesports America* and the "Alternate PE Courses" which include *Suddenly In Command*, Piloting, Weather, Fishing, etc. should be targeted to a more diversified and as of yet, untouched groups of boaters.
5. Develop a presentation to increase public awareness of the Auxiliary's role with regard to Coast Guard support, Homeland Security, Maritime Security, Marine Safety, and *America's Waterway Watch*.
6. Continue recruitment to ensure instructor availability and quality training to develop instructors proficient in the discipline.

7. Using the core strengths of the Auxiliary, develop a plan specific to your Division/Flotillas needs, and periodically review it with the following considerations:
- *Are the goals realistic, attainable?*
  - *Have the goals and mission been clearly and specifically stated?*
  - *Is there team composition?*
  - *Has the team developed commitment and accountability?*
  - *Has the individual developed commitment and accountability?*
  - *Has there been constant communication?*
  - *Has proper direction and support been provided?*

## **Computers/Communication**

### ***Objectives from District Strategy:***

- Educate and train public education team members in the advantageous use of computers to keep them better informed, trained and better maintain the Chain of Communication.

### ***Developmental Objective***

- Develop a more efficient, well informed public education program member utilizing computer technologies.

### ***Performance Objectives***

1. Make certain that all PE program members are familiar with the Auxiliary online resources available to support their specific missions.
2. Provide hands-on training to have all PE instructors be familiar and comfortable with the advantages of online courses and testing for both the public and for professional development.
3. Utilize the "Buddy System" to have members more conversant in new technologies share information by traditional means (print-outs) with assigned members who do not have the same abilities.

**Addendum to the Fifth District Northern Region  
Recreational Boating Safety Tactical Plan**

## **Overarching Challenges for the Auxiliary**

**Editor's Note:** While these points fall outside the focus area of a Recreational Boating Safety Tactical Plan, failure to incorporate them in open discussion would ignore significant challenges currently facing the Auxiliary. Our ability to perform our current Recreational Boating Safety missions, indeed all of our missions, is influenced greatly by these factors. During the process of developing the *D5NR RBS Tactical Plan* these challenges were constant influences in the direction and execution of every goal and objective.

**Objective from District Strategy:**

- **SWOT Analysis Issue:** Staff Officers appointed to fill a position rather than filling an appointment with a contributing/qualified member.

**Developmental Objective**

- Elected Officers must consider all appointments carefully; only qualified, committed candidates should be awarded appointed offices. No person should ever be assigned just to fill a position. All appointments should be only made toward qualified candidates. Training and mentoring must be provided to assure that an Appointed Officer can carry out assigned duties with wisdom and efficiency.

**Performance Goal**

1. This topic must be addressed in Elected Officer Training. There are several points to consider before making an appointment including the willingness and interest of an individual to serve in a position. The *Auxiliary Manual* and *5NR Policy Manual* should be enhanced to provide Staff Office appointment guidelines in greater detail to afford Commanders more information on this issue.
2. Individual Appointed Officer performance needs to be reviewed carefully before reappointment. At least once each quarter the responsible program manager will review performance, needs, challenges, interest level and concerns of every Staff Officer reporting to that program manager.

**Objectives from District Strategy:**

- **SWOT Analysis Issue:** Only a few members do most program work—the common premise that 80% of the work is done by 20% of the membership (80/20). This may be actually closer to 90/10.

**Developmental Objectives**

- Most people want to contribute to their full capability. Some are restricted by boundaries and conditions.
- Create Synergy—people feel ownership in things they help create. Plan activities for the whole group to involve more people.
- Create a committee to research and report findings and suggestions on 80/20 participation issues.
- Create clear understandings of business purposes and needs for all planned activities which defines everyone's particular function and how it is relative to the mission, Flotilla and Division.

**Performance Objectives**

1. Create meaningful work environments that challenge our best thinking and eliminate objections, artificial barriers and wastes energy or serve no useful purpose.
2. Reward participation with recognition and fellowship.
3. Survey/chart membership activity to measure widening of membership participation.

**Objectives from District Strategy:**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Burnout of volunteers—mission creep challenges.

**Justification:**

- Work overload and heavy scheduling can lead to burnout. Meetings, constant weekend missions, special events, travel and time away from family eventually have a cumulative effect where a member begins to feel stressed to the degree that they conclude they cannot continue.
- Auxiliary business must never come at the expense of Family Life.
- Some adjustments can and should be made to balance Auxiliary time against other work and family commitments.
- All leaders and members must take time to evaluate where a good balance exists and follow that plan.
- No member should ever feel alone in an assignment. Support and guidance must be available in all aspects of Auxiliary mission tasks.

**Developmental Objectives**

- All leaders must monitor the operational health of the staff and duty assignment. A volunteer organization has a duty to balance the workload of its members. Members must balance the time and energy they offer against family and other work life demands. We must use care when considering a mission with regard to the physical, mental and economic stresses that too much responsibility can add to our schedules.
- Openly discuss the issue within horizontal programs and in Flotilla, and Division settings. Create awareness and plan a burnout prevention strategy.
- All Flotillas and Divisions, and Program Officers must be instructed on awareness and prevention.

**Performance Objectives**

1. All planning must take into consideration the staff assigned to the task to assure correct balance. Members want to do a good job but this can come at the cost of getting too deeply involved. When our efforts are not rewarding and fun, then it becomes less welcome and a source for dissatisfactions, complaints and poor performance. Evaluations by team leaders must occur at fixed intervals to reduce and or eliminate burnout and mission creep.
2. Activities planning must be considerate as to not create barriers, constraints, or goals that may increase the burden on membership to the degree those stressors develop which could lead to program failures.
3. Leaders must openly welcome the membership to register concerns where “burnout” may be an issue.

**Objectives from District Strategy**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Aging membership and capabilities to perform certain tasks.

**Developmental Objective**

- Every Flotilla should have a copy of the *Auxiliary Manual* and *Member Retention and Recruiting Guide* publications. Open discussions need to be held to address the Safety and Quality Service of our membership. This is a highly sensitive issue and proper consideration must be used to maintain a meaningful and respectful discussion. Importance must be given to our age and capabilities to properly evaluate the impact to the organization. Prompt action is required and must be dealt with urgency and importance whenever serious concerns arise. Care must be given to instill in each of us an awareness of the relationship between quality and safety, the performance of our jobs and our relative effectiveness.



***Performance Objectives***

1. Operations leaders and elected officers should review age-related issues semi-annually or when changes occur in a member's performance status or when qualifications are changed or updated.
2. Members unable to perform certain tasks need to evaluate their current experience and consider the ideal options for improvement. Barriers that prevent a member from moving forward in a mission can be overcome in some circumstances if appropriate solutions are identified.
3. Mentoring younger qualified members must be an ongoing mission and a career path for our more experienced members.

**Objectives from District Strategy**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Personal expenses rising (fuel costs, printing and uniforms).

**Developmental Objective**

- Costs are necessary to support our missions but the control aspect must be addressed. Utilizing car pools, clothing lockers, free or shared printing are all good starting points to partially control rising costs.

**Performance Objectives**

1. Look into all spending and make changes where appropriate.
2. Consider all options to spending or defer spending when appropriate.
3. Look for funding or reimbursement where appropriate.

**Objective from District Strategy**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Resistance to change by some members.

**Justification:**

- Often this occurs because members are not informed in advance on why the change is important or what the business case for the change is. They may have other higher priorities or may not agree that a change is needed if the current program is working well. Members may question how much additional work the proposed change may require.

**Developmental Objective**

- All changes must be carefully planned and communicated. Guidance, ground rules, training and continuing good management must be key elements of any successful change.

**Performance Objectives**

1. Notify membership with clear deadlines in advance of proposed modifications to any operation, forms, or business plan. Clearly identify importance of change and show how such improvements are necessary and will benefit the organization, the members or the mission. Survey the membership at the time of introduction of the needed change and then again a quarter later determine a comparative acceptance level of the change.

**Objectives from District Strategy**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Need to improve both leadership skills and “nuts and bolts” knowledge, particularly at the Flotilla level.

**Developmental Objective**

- Utilize Local Knowledge and Auxiliary training publications along with mentoring from officers being relieved.
- Require all incoming elected FC and VFC to attend District sponsored training annually.
- Prepare workshops to focus on Flotilla Group Leadership and Organizational Performance and Problem Solving and What to Work On. Address Nuts and Bolts Issues. Allow the FC to offer specific examples of elements to discuss.

**Performance Objectives**

1. Division Commanders need to host meetings with the FC and VFC to communicate information from EXCOM meetings and must provide guidance to Flotilla leaders.
2. This could be accomplished at a breakout at Division meetings.
3. Division Commanders and Vice Commanders should set a schedule to attend and evaluate Flotilla meetings and provide guidance.
4. Members of EXCOM should attend Flotilla meetings in addition to Division meetings.

**Objective from District Strategy:**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Auxiliarists bypass the Chain of Leadership. Trust Issues

**Developmental Objective**

- Retraining on correct procedures must occur at all levels of the organization.

**Performance Objectives**

1. Appointed leaders must comply with *Auxiliary Manual* procedures. All contacts made that bypass the Chain of Communication need to be returned to the correct level for resolution. Immediate contact with the member should be made in a courteous fashion but must reinforce the correct Auxiliary Policy procedures. COLM exists for Staff as well as elected leadership.

2. After any occurrence of a breakdown, an immediate response must be communicated to insure all members are complying with Auxiliary policies.

**Objectives from District Strategy**

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Member training lacking at meetings, and overemphasis on reports and rigid meeting structure, results in boring meetings.

**Developmental Objectives**

- Revise business meeting agenda; limit individual mission reports to 4 minutes or less.
- Break the meeting into groups to address specific issues, goals, plans, etc.
- Use facilitators to guide and keep things on track.

**Performance Objectives**

1. Flotilla and Division meetings have different dynamics. Revise formats of both types of meetings so each will be more productive, interesting and complement the other.
2. Meetings provide an opportunity to educate and keep members informed.
3. Member training should be an integral part of the agenda at each meeting.
4. Focus on the missions, member satisfaction; create initiatives which will motivate those individuals identified as inactive and provide continued support and encouragement to those who are active.
5. Invest the time to introduce the concept of performance improvement and some training to develop facilitators, team leaders, subject experts, etc.
6. Many Flotillas have two meetings a month—one meeting for business and one meeting for training. Where this is not possible, a plan to schedule training topics at every meeting should be implemented.
7. Vice Commanders should meet quarterly with Appointed Staffs Officers to review goals and mission progress.

***Objectives from District Strategy:***

- *SWOT Analysis Issue:* Reluctance of some older members to purchase and use computers.

***Justification***

1. In the 2009 National Survey, 4894 members responded. Only 22 members said they did not own or know how to use a computer. Although this ratio may actually be higher, the number of older members without computer is probably under 5 % of our total membership.

***Developmental Objective***

- Provide alternative methods for members without computers to complete tasks and fill communication voids.

***Performance Objectives***

1. Use the Web Watcher to fill gaps in communications.
2. Provide Training starting with the most basic information.
3. Identify alternate routes to complete tasks without the need for computers, e.g., paper testing, oral examinations.

# Recreational Boating Safety Program Visitation Objectives

## Communications & Reporting

### *Objectives from District Strategy*

**Issue:** Poor Communication of the Recreational Boating Safety Program (RBSVP) mission. Reporting of RBSVP activities and communications within the department needs to improve.

**Justification:** Effective communications have been a long-term problem within the Auxiliary. The Recreational Boating Safety Program mission needs be clearly communicated to all constituents. In addition, a vital part of our program success relies on timely notices and reporting of RBSVP activities.

### *Developmental Objectives*

- The Recreational Boating Safety Visitation Program missions need to be incorporated into the orientation of every member of the Auxiliary.
- All Flotilla and Division Program Visitor (PV) Officers will report monthly on activities, training, new qualifications, special events and items of importance.

### *Performance Objectives*

1. Every PV Officer will have a well-practiced verbal presentation ready to explain what the Recreational Boating Safety Visitation Program mission is for sharing with the public, potential Program Partners and the Auxiliary Membership.
2. All appointed PV Officers will submit a monthly report of Flotilla, Division and District activities through the Chain of Leadership. The ADSO-PV and SO-PV will take responsibility to monitor reporting and follow up when necessary.

## Training & Implementation

### *Objectives from District Strategy*

**Issue:** Recreational Boating Safety Visitation Program Training and Program Implementation.

**Justification:** Not enough members are trained to execute RBSVP missions

### *Developmental Objective*

- A review of the units inactive in the Recreational Boating Safety Visitation Program shows that several Flotillas and some Divisions do not have a Recreational Boating Safety-Program Visitor Officer (PV Officer). This represents an opportunity for the RBSVP to greatly improve. Many of the goals for 2015 through 2019 will work in concert to address this void. Our challenge is to create a stronger program. It will be the expectation of each Flotilla Commander and PV Officer to develop a plan to address this weakness. All members in the PV program will have access to Annual RBSVP Workshops.

### *Performance Objective*

Division and Flotilla Commanders shall review unit goals and work with ADSO-PV and SO-PV to build up the program beginning in 2015. Train new program leaders where necessary. Sponsor RBSVP Workshops and offer Qualification Training opportunities. Involve all RBS departments to create synergy and awareness to overcome internal weaknesses

## Staffing

### **Objectives from District Strategy**

**Issue:** Recreational Boating Safety Visitation Program Staffing.

**Justification:** Currently several Flotillas and Divisions do not have appointed Program Visitor Officers (SO-PV, FSO-PV. The absence of a qualified representative in any of our operating areas represents a critical internal weakness. (The U.S. Power Squadron is now participating in the PV program.)

### **Developmental Objectives**

- Identify Flotillas and Divisions without PV Officers and contact Commanders to gather feedback on why these conditions exist; then correct the issues.
- Offer assistance to Flotillas and Divisions to establish a PV program within the AOR.
- Encourage training and workshops to educate the entire membership about the Visitor Program.

### **Performance Objectives**

1. Have an *active*, qualified ADSO-PV in each of the District's Areas.
2. Fill all appointed RBSVP officer positions with qualified, contributing officers.

## Program Growth

### **Objectives from District Strategy**

**Issue:** Recreational Safety Visitation Program Constraints.

**Justification:** The District has experienced a decline in the number of Qualified Visits in two of the past 10 years. This may have been related to economic issues such as rising fuel prices. Other issues may be fluctuating numbers in qualified Visitors.

### **Developmental Objective**

- Identifying and responding to gaps in our program should naturally result in an increase of qualified Program Visits.

### **Performance Objective**

1. Since 1991, the goal of the District PV Department has been to increase the number of qualified Program Visitors by 5% each year. The District began with 95 Program Visitors eleven years ago and has built to the current 195 qualified Program Visitors. The goal is to continue adding to the total number of Program Visitors by at least 5% through 2015 to 2019.

## Increased Productivity

### **Objectives from District Strategy**

**Issue:** Increased Productivity and Continuous Improvement

**Justification:** 2013 Program Visits totaled 5,972. A 5% increase would mean 297 more Visits in 2015 and maintain this average going forward through 2019. This goal would be reached if each qualified member completed *just 2 extra Visits and new qualified member growth remained at 5 %*. In 2013 we experienced a production decline. This was attributed to economic conditions, increased Auxiliary support missions in other areas.

### **Developmental Objective**

- Revise the national list of marine dealers to add new dealers and remove or change information that may be outdated to yield an accurate database for our areas of operation (AOR).
- Encourage Divisions to maintain a list of dealerships in the local AOR to insure coverage.

### **Performance Objective**

1. Each Program Visitor should increase their number of Visits by *at least 2 per year*.

# Vessel Examination Program Objectives

## Recruiting—Retention

### *Objectives from District Strategy*

- Develop recruiting programs to meet specific program needs of Flotillas. Use National and other recruiting tools as part of this effort. Use new concepts and marketing approaches.

### *Justification:*

- In 2013, only 25% of the Flotillas in D5NR met the national standard of 33% of Flotilla membership certified as a Vessel Examiner (VE) and 19% are between 25% and 32.9%.
- Only 12% of all D5NR Flotillas have averaged 1 new VE per year during the 3-year period from 2011 through 2013.

### *Developmental Objective*

- By the end of 2017, 50% of the Flotillas in D5NR will have at least 33% of Flotilla membership certified as a VE and the remaining 50% of the Flotillas in D5NR will have at least 25% of Flotilla membership qualified as a VE.

### *Performance Objectives*

1. Each Flotilla with fewer than 33% of their membership certified as a VE shall create and implement a coordinated, proactive recruiting-retention plan that involves numerous disciplines including, but not limited to, human resources, public affairs, public education, member training and communications services. Coordination involves identifying, promoting and implementing appropriate recruiting activities, assistance in completing membership requirements, member training and mentorship to get certified.
2. Specific skills and/or experiences should be considered when formulating the targeted recruiting-retention plan. Examples include leadership skills, paddle craft experience, personal water craft experience, etc.
3. Each FSO-VE will report their recruiting-retention plan, the schedule for activities, and results to their SO-VE in their monthly written report. The SO-VE will review Flotilla recruiting plans in an attempt to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the plans by combining the efforts of several Flotillas when possible.
4. The SO-VE will survey the recruiting-retention practices and results of Division Flotillas and introduce best recruiting practices to those Flotillas in need of improved recruiting-retention.

# Training

## *Objectives from District Strategy*

- Provide member training to ensure availability of quality Vessel Examiners (as well as Instructors, Public Affairs Officers and Program Visitors).

## *Justification:*

- Quality training is necessary to uncover the unsafe conditions that create injuries and cost lives.
- Quality training provides the confidence necessary for Vessel Examiners to do examinations in on any given craft and in large numbers.
- Quality training enables Vessel Examiners to enjoy their work and take pride in their results.

## *Developmental Objective*

- Training should be an ongoing process that includes both mentoring and classroom training involving both new and existing Vessel Examiners.

## *Performance Objectives*

1. Recruiting programs should include classroom training targeted to the certification requirements.
2. Prior to every boating season, every certified VE shall have access to a classroom workshop to ensure that their skills and knowledge are current.
3. A Vessel Safety Check schedule (discussed under Service Delivery) should be created to fulfill both productivity and training needs. As an example: a Vessel Examiner experienced in examining personal water craft should be paired with a VE lacking this experience. By scheduling experienced VEs first, the training goal will be easier to achieve.



# Service Delivery

## **Objectives from District Strategy**

- Emphasize unit goals for number of Vessel Safety Checks and Program Visits to RBS partners: marinas, sporting goods stores, boating stores, etc.

## **Justification:**

- The total number of vessels examined nationally by the Auxiliary represents less than 1% of total boats. Most current Data from the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) there were 12.2 million recreational boats registered in the United States.
- In 2013, 67% of the VSC production in D5NR was performed by just 25% of the Flotillas.
- Only 49 out of 556 VEs in D5NR produced 50% of the total Vessel Safety Checks in 2013.
- 72% of the certified VEs in D5NR performed fewer than 15 VSCs in 2013.
- According to the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), nearly 95% of mechanically-propelled boats registered in 2012 were less than 26 feet in length. This segment increases significantly when unpowered boats are included.
- Approximately 83% of all deaths and 86% of all injuries involve vessels less than 26 feet in length, but only 53% of total vessel safety checks were performed on vessels less than 26 feet in length in 2012.

## **Developmental Objective**

- Each Flotilla with fewer than 15 vessel safety checks per vessel examiner in the previous year shall initiate an assertive plan to *meet or exceed* 15 VSCs per VE in the upcoming year.
- Each Flotilla with at least 15 VSCs per VE but fewer than 20 VSCs per VE in the previous year shall initiate an assertive plan to *meet or exceed* 20 VSCs per VE in the upcoming year.
- Each Flotilla with 20 VSCs or more VSCs per VE in the previous year shall initiate an assertive plan to *meet or exceed* their previous year's total.

## **Performance Objectives**

1. At the beginning of each year, each Vessel Examiner will be asked to commit to a personal productivity goal that fits into the following schedule:
  - a. Each Vessel Examiner with fewer than 15 vessel safety checks in the previous year shall perform *at least* 15 VSCs in the upcoming year.
  - b. Each Vessel Examiner with at least 15 VSCs, but fewer than 20 VSCs in the previous year shall perform *20 or more* VSCs in the upcoming year.
  - c. Each Vessel Examiner with 20 or more VSCs in the previous year shall *meet or exceed* their previous year's total.
2. After meeting with each VE individually to determine convenient dates, times and locations, each FSO-VE will create a *Flotilla schedule* for Vessel Safety Checks. This schedule should be sufficient to meet each individual VE's productivity goal. The resulting schedule will be shared with the Flotilla Staff Officers of numerous disciplines including, but not limited to human resources, public affairs, public education, program visitors, and communications. The intent of this integration is that each discipline will promote this schedule to the boating public and enhance VE productivity.
3. *At least 70% of each Flotilla's VSCs should be performed on vessels less than 26 feet* in length (high focus vessels). This may require special training for VEs who are unfamiliar with certain types of vessels such as personal watercraft, paddle craft, etc. When creating the VSC schedule, care should be taken to include sufficient locations that are frequented by vessels less than 26 feet in length.
4. Promote *SafetySeal.net* to the public as a way of spreading safe boating information as well as Vessel Safety Checks. This promotion should be coordinated with human resources, public affairs, public education, program visitors, and communications services.
5. Conduct Vessel Safety Check event(s) during National Safe Boating Week.

## Public Affairs Objectives

### Overview from National Public Affairs (“A”) Department

As a part of the Member Services Directorate, the Public Affairs Department exists for one purpose—to serve the needs of our customers—the public, the other departments, the United States Coast Guard and all of our members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. The goal is to raise the public’s awareness of who we are, what we do, and how we do it. We will accomplish this by increasing our efforts in community outreach and external public affairs, all the while keeping our members informed of the critical information they need to succeed in their own program areas.

#### Goals

- Increase our participation in Community Outreach Activities: By becoming more involved at different levels in our communities, the Auxiliary will be in a better position to recruit additional members, as well as retaining existing members, while simultaneously providing added value to the community. We will do this through our presence at many large public venues, Mascot Program, our Color Guard and Music Programs, our Auxiliary History Program, and by reaching out to larger organizations, such as AARP, AAA, Boy Scouts and Veterans groups.
- Proactively work with other Departments. We will continue to reach out and work with other departments. As the other components of the RBS Team develop their programs, Public Affairs will provide the communications support to external constituents such as the public and governmental concerns as well as our internal constituents—our members and the Coast Guard Active Duty.
- Continue to aggressively tell the Auxiliary story to the external media. By utilizing our social media resources and strategically targeting our new information releases to the right markets and mediums, we hope to increase our overall media exposure. By using Social Media tools such as Facebook, Live Blogs and Twitter Feeds we have increased vastly the number of Press Releases that get picked up and used across the country. We plan to work closely with the Districts and PAOs in the field to identify additional story opportunities and generate news release in a timely fashion.
- Continue to provide necessary critical support functions (graphic design, media releases, writing, photography, collateral support materials and web services) and timely internal communications to keep our membership informed.

## Recruiting

#### Objectives from National Strategy

- Develop recruiting programs to meet specific Public Affairs (PA) needs of each District Area. Reaching out specifically to students and professionals in the marketing, public relations and promotional fields will add experienced Public Affairs Officers (PAO) to the District PA Team.

#### Justification:

- In 2008, virtually none of our Public Affairs Officers had met Coast Guard Personal Qualifications Standards (PQS) for holding such an important position – specifically, a Public Affairs Specialist Rating (PA Specialist 1, 2 or 3).
- Approximately 35% of our appointed PA officers have no formal public affairs training.
- Multiple units within the District have either no Public Affairs Officer or worse, only “placeholders.”

#### Developmental Objective

- All of our Public Affairs Officer (PAO) positions will be filled with dedicated, committed members, either trained (PA Specialist Rating) or actively participating in meeting this qualification.

### ***Performance Objectives***

1. By the end of 2015 each Flotilla with open or non-performing RBS Team Appointed Officers will develop a proactive *recruiting plan* that involves numerous disciplines including, but not limited to, human resources, public affairs, public education, member training and communications. Coordination involves identifying, promoting and implementing appropriate recruiting activities, assistance in completing membership requirements, member training and mentorship to become certified.
2. Specific skills and/or experience levels should be considered when formulating the targeted recruiting plan. Examples include: leadership skills, communications arts skills, writing, public speaking, etc.
3. Each FSO-PA will report on their Flotilla's recruiting plan, the schedule for activities and results to their SO-PA in their monthly written report. When appropriate, the SO-PA will review Flotilla recruiting plans in an attempt to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the plans by combining the efforts of several Flotillas when possible.
4. The SO-PA will survey the recruiting practices and results of Division Flotillas and broadcast best recruiting practices to those Flotillas in need of improved recruiting.

## **Training**

### ***Objectives***

- Provide Public Affairs Specialist member training to ensure availability of qualified Public Affairs Officers *at all levels. Mandate Minimum levels of training.*
- *Beginning in January, 2015, every appointed Public Affairs Officer must meet a qualification standard. New PAOs will be required to complete a mandatory training program called the PA Apprentice.*
- *PAOs who have completed AUX-12 Public Affairs C-School or who have earned a Public Affairs Specialist designation are not subject to the PA Apprentice program.*

### **RATIONALE**

Elected leaders must often fill Public Affairs positions with untrained people. This is especially true at the flotilla level. An Auxiliary boat or aircraft would not set out on a mission with an unqualified crew. Yet in Public Affairs, this is often the case. The new PA Apprentice program will directly address this problem.

For a public affairs newcomer, telling the story of their unit's missions and activities can be quite a challenge. The job is demanding. It calls for *brand management*, where journalism and marketing combine to build a powerful brand identity and create a positive public image.

The PAO must be competent in written and photo communication for print, the web and broadcast media and be comfortable meeting the public through special events using static displays and exhibits. It's also essential to have sound knowledge of Coast Guard public affairs policy, proper uniform wear, ethics, the Freedom of Information Act and standards for release of information.

## AN ENTRY-LEVEL QUALIFICATION

- Training is necessary to accurately convey to our constituents our history, our missions and our value to our wide range of clients.
- Training is necessary to accurately deliver information during emergency or stressful incidents and provide our PAOs with the confidence to do their jobs with a competency that reflects well upon the proud traditions of the Coast Guard and our missions.
- Training enables our Public Affairs Specialists to augment Coast Guard Public Affairs missions during times of emergency or disaster.

### ***Developmental Objective***

- Training must be an ongoing process of personal development that includes online coursework, peer review, mentoring, workshops and classroom training involving both new and seasoned Public Affairs Officers.

### ***Performance Objective***

1. Recruiting programs must include formal training targeted to achieving the PA Specialist rating.
2. National implementation will begin January 1, 2015

Apprentice candidates should begin AUX-20, *Introduction to Auxiliary Public Affairs*, within one week following date of appointment as a PA officer. They must finish AUX-20 and all Apprentice PQS requirements no later than six months after staff appointment. So by next summer, PA officers at all levels should be qualified.

The process to earn an Apprentice qualification is not overly difficult. Chapter quizzes and final exam for AUX-20 are the only tests required. An outline of all requirements and the PQS workbook (sign-off pages) can be found at [training.auxpa.org](http://training.auxpa.org)

Certification consists of a designation letter, a Certificate of Achievement and a qualification entry in AUXDATA. No ribbon is awarded—the red-and-white PA ribbon is authorized only to those who earn a Public Affairs Specialist I, II or III designation.

Once Apprentice qualification is earned, a minimum of 16 hours of PA activities is required each year to maintain currency.

3. Public Affairs is an ever-developing field with new technologies and media having greater and greater impact on our ability to successfully deliver our messages – especially in communicating effectively with our younger clients. Learning new skills is a constant part of the mission and the ability to embrace change as a natural course of events is critical to our continued success. Sharing this information in a collegial manner with the rest of the RBS Team is imperative.
4. By the end of 2015, at least 25% of our District Public Affairs Officers should be PA Specialists.
5. By the end of 2015, the District will sponsor a Public Affairs (AUX-12) Course.
6. Failure is part of every successful endeavor—only by analyzing our results honestly can we progress to higher levels. We need to share the information of our failures along with our successes to ensure that we have a valid learning environment.

# Service Delivery

## *Objectives*

- Increase the amount of “Client Representation” for the other departments in the Auxiliary and consequently, report all Public Affairs mission activity accurately while better serving our entire customer base.
- District SWOT Analysis Issue: Lack of coordinated public affairs programming at Flotillas and Divisions.

## *Justification:*

- The total number of Public Affairs mission hours reported last year exceeded those of Public Education, yet the total amount of inter department support remains low.
- Every issue of every internal Auxiliary publication goes wanting for additional articles, photos and information. There is a need to improve coordination between PA and PB functions.
- The majority of our members do not know the history of the Auxiliary, nor can they even report that on average the Auxiliary saves a life every day.
- Recreational Boating Safety was mandated by Congress to be the specific duty of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, yet we continuously struggle to keep members from falling into REYR for their Vessel Examiner, Instructor, Public Affairs and Program Visitor qualifications.
- The nation’s college students are aggressively looking for volunteer service to add to their resumes and yet the average age of our members continues to move upward.
- By some estimates, a significant of the time that should go on mission reports for Public Affairs simply fails to get reported. (If that was corrected the revised number for Public Affairs would exceed the combined air and surface operations hours per annum!)

## *Developmental Objectives*

- Each Flotilla should develop a Public Affairs Plan for each year.
- Every PAO should engage the other RBS Team members by simply asking what their departments are doing... at the very least at every monthly meeting. Formal unit RBS Committees will fix this.
- Every outreach event (boating safety booth, public appearances) should be executed by trained, knowledgeable individuals.
- Increase the number and scope of public outreach events. In 2014, PA was in front of a total audience of over 1 Million people.

## *Performance Objectives*

1. At the beginning of each year, every PAO will commit to one major and three minor “projects” or assignments for the year (one each quarter).
2. At least 50% of the projects should be cooperative in nature with another department (promoting Public Education Courses, Vessel Examination Days – Participating Visitor Recognition).
3. Every PAO should submit at least one article per month to either an internal or external media source.
4. Every PAO should become familiar with some form of social media: *Twitter*, *Facebook*, blogging, *YouTube*, *Wikis*, RSS feeds and then *share what they have learned with at least one other RBS Team member. Social Media training content is available on CD.*
5. Incorporate time into Flotilla meeting agendas to design and implement strategic and tactical frameworks where every department supports the efforts of the other RBS departments. This should be an RBS Committee function.
6. Every PAO should make it a personal goal to increase the total reported PA mission hours for their Flotilla by at least 50 per cent over the preceding year.
7. Every PAO should make it a personal goal to make certain that every accomplishment of every member is celebrated, from acceptance as a member to retirement.

8. Bring the District's Speakers Bureau fully online with the widest variety of topics available. Although this is not currently part of the *District Program we should strive to offer our membership every opportunity to develop informative and interesting meetings.*
9. Incorporate the *Core Values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty* in all that we do.