

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Public Affairs Guide



NATIONAL "A" DIRECTORATE

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CHAPTER 1 | Public Affairs Overview

Introduction

Public affairs missions are one of the most essential functions of the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Continuous, effective communication with the public about the services and activities we offer must be a priority concern at all levels within the organization. We shall strive to position the Coast Guard Auxiliary brand to be synonymous with boating education. We must communicate effectively with both our internal member audience and the Coast Guard.

Public Affairs and Publications

At the flotilla, division, and district levels, appointed staff officer roles are designated for both public affairs (PA) and publications (PB). Via the Auxiliary Chain of Leadership and Management's (COL) parallel staffing concept, both of these positions ultimately report to the National Public Affairs "A" Directorate. For the purpose of this manual (and all other reference materials) Public Affairs Officer (PAO) shall mean PA or PB officers at every level of the Coast Guard Auxiliary organization. Coast Guard Auxiliary public affairs and publications programs may be referred to as AUXPA.

Goals

- 1) Communicating aims, purposes and activities of the Auxiliary to develop public understanding and appreciation of its role.
- 2) Encouraging recruitment and retention of members, and fostering their general welfare.
- 3) Assisting/augmenting Coast Guard public affairs programs.

Maximum Disclosure Policy

Coast Guard policy is that the public has a right to know. We provide maximum disclosure with minimum delay. If you did it or are responsible for it, then you can talk about it. The only exceptions include Freedom of Information Act exemptions including:

- 1) Items under investigation
- 2) Classified information
- 3) Operational security information
- 4) Privacy issues
- 5) Judicial proceedings
- 6) Proprietary information
- 7) Personal information

Public Affairs Officer (PAO) Training

Many Coast Guard Auxiliary PAO's accept their first public affairs positions without any formal training. A mentor-based training relationship with a seasoned PAO is encouraged for members at every level of the organization who desire to become involved in AUXPA activities. A wealth of learning resources for PAO's is available online via the "training" section of the AUXPA.org website.

In addition, the "A" Directorate offers the AUX-12 Marketing and Public Affairs C-School several times each calendar year for PAO's, publications officers, and elected leaders at the flotilla, division, and district levels. Members interested in attending the AUX-12 C-School must meet pre-defined requirements established by the Coast Guard and should apply for the school by submitting a Short Term Training Request form via their Flotilla Commander using the Auxiliary Chain of Leadership and Management.

Auxiliary Public Affairs Specialist | Certification

Any Auxiliary member may become certified as an Auxiliary Public Affairs Specialist (Levels 1, 2, and 3). The path to this certification is mentor-based and is outlined via the AUXPA PQS Guides posted within the "training" section of the AUXPA.org website. Members with questions regarding the AUXPA Specialist certification process are encouraged to contact the AUXPA Training Division. Members who are certified as an AUXPA Specialist are entitled to wear the AUXPA ribbon/medal while in uniform.

Public Affairs Officer (PAO) Duties

- 1) Develop programs to promote the Auxiliary flotilla, division and/or district.
- 2) Work with local media.
- 3) Develop articles for local and national Auxiliary publications.
- 4) Coordinate articles and programs within the Area of Responsibility (AOR).
- 5) Publicize public education and vessel examination activities.
- 6) Plan and conduct seminars, forums and boating safety talks.
- 7) Encourage active member participation events promoting safe boating.
- 8) Train unit members in public affairs.
- 9) Enlist assistance of members in the obtaining photographs of Auxiliary.
- 10) Be responsible for unit Web content.

Parallel Staff Responsibilities

The public affairs officer (PAO) will maintain liaison with the flotilla, division, district and national counterparts to insure effective flow of information.

Coordination

Public affairs officers should keep their counterparts informed of impending programs to minimize confusion to media and the public.

Records

Public affairs officers keep records and provide them to successors.

Tracking PA Contacts

PAO's should maintain a digital system for tracking contact names, email addresses, and addresses of radio, newspaper, TV contacts, and other key media personalities. This system should be easily transferred to the PAO's successor.

Archives

Maintain a file of articles, graphics, photographs and videos (labeled with VIRINs, as to date, activity, identities) as appropriate.

Media Channels

A wide variety of media channels are available for use by the Auxiliary PAO. They include print, broadcast, public appearances, static displays, web sites, social media and other emerging technologies.

Print: Daily and/or weekly newspaper, shopping guides, magazines, and house organs.

Broadcast: TV and radio (including Internet radio)

Public Appearances: Civic clubs, schools, community organizations, corporations and church groups utilize speakers. A good speaker, a good film or slide show presentation will present the Auxiliary program to a group of people with like interests in public service, and also provide important contacts.

Static Displays: This category includes posters, eye-catching bulletin boards and counter displays at boating safety booths and displays of materials and pamphlets at Vessel Safety Check stations. Various locations may be used, with permission, from the local supermarket to prominent displays, on reader boards, adjacent to a freeway, at a marina, yacht club, launch ramp & PA booth at a shopping mall or a boat show.

Web sites: Unit web pages are a prime means of communicating with the public and internally.

Social Media: Unit WIKI sites, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter can be effective for releasing news and for general communications.

CHAPTER 2 | Print Media

Print Media ranges from daily and weekly newspaper to shopping guides and house organs. Each vehicle addresses different public needs. Unfortunately, the ever-changing media landscape combined with the proliferation of new technologies is resulting in large-scale attrition within the print media industry. This is especially true at the local and regional levels.

Newspapers

Newspapers traditionally accept short news releases concerning upcoming events. Contact appropriate beat reporters and/or editor and secure a time frame for receiving, editing and publishing news releases and any other special format requirements. Develop good relationship with the reporters and editors to ensure future success.

Shopping Guides

These guides are published weekly or monthly. Make personal contact with editors. Know the time frames for receiving, editing and publishing news releases and any special format requirements.

House Organs

These include newsletters for employees, fraternal organizations, yacht clubs and marinas, church bulletins, local military installations and condominium organizations, providing an untapped audience. This may be a good source for publicizing PE programs and public lectures.

Types of Articles

A news release announces a past or future event or activity of the unit. It is short, concise and factual. A feature story is longer, more detailed and usually narrative and /or informative in nature. News releases suggest a story and invite the recipient to call for more information.

Media (Newspaper) Relations

Ideally, have someone introduce you to local newspaper staff to establish the initial relationship. If that's not possible, pay a visit, in uniform, to the local editor or beat reporter. Introduce yourself. "Face to face" beats mail or e-mail every time. Ask how they would like articles, photos and features submitted. Editors will be pleased to tell you the exact format they prefer and may have a printed guide sheet. After you have successfully established the media relationship, it is permissible to use e-mail for the bulk of your communications.

When to Use News Releases

A news release will generally be a one-page notice. An active unit should issue at least one news release per month. This should be the most frequent media contact for the PAO. The following is a list of suggested topics for articles about Auxiliary activities:

General:

- 1) Regular meetings
- 2) Election of officers, staff officer appointments, change of watch
- 3) Announcement of special topic/special speaker meetings
- 4) Report of special meeting with local officials
- 5) Presentation of certificates of appreciation to local figures
- 6) Announcement of new members
- 7) Announcement of advanced training courses

AIM Activities:

- 1) Program objectives
- 2) Application procedures and deadline dates
- 3) Results of AIM interviews

Vessel Safety Checks

- 1) Year's schedule, exam sites
- 2) Weekly, monthly results and repeat of exam sites
- 3) Unique boat or skipper exam
- 4) Chart updating activities
- 5) Year's objectives, public's role in notification
- 6) Notice of problem situations
- 7) Developments, results of public interest

Public Education Activities

- 1) Public education schedule
- 2) Particular class sessions

Operations and SAR Activities

- 1) Rules of the road
- 2) Radio procedures for contacting a patrol vessel

Special Events

- 1) National Safe Boating Week (NSBW)
- 2) Participation in civic festivals, parades
- 3) Boat shows or places where boating safety booth will be located
- 4) Auxiliary anniversaries
- 5) Visiting Auxiliarists or Coast Guard officers

Writing a News Release: To be "news," the story must meet various elements.

Timing

Announcements of coming events, such as PE courses, VSC sites, AIM interviews, or a public appearance, should be submitted early enough so that they appear in print well before the occurrence, especially if the public is invited. It's important to check with the editor of the print media you are using to know submission deadlines. Adhere to them.

Content

To be news, the release should offer something the public wants: self-improvement, personal safety, recreation, entertainment, or other information relevant to neighbors and friends.

Structure

A news release has a specific structure and is typically written in an inverted pyramid structure that places the most important information at the beginning of the news release. This allows a publication editor to easily shorten the copy as needed for space, without losing the most important points of the news release.

The opening paragraph is the most important. It must capture the reader's interest enough to keep reading, not just scanning headlines. The three main parts of the news release structure are:

- 1) **Lead:** This is the famous five "W's": "Who, What, When, Where, Why" and sometimes, "How." The lead works hard, compressing the highlights of the story into two or three sentences.
- 2) **Body:** This puts flesh on the skeleton, expanding the lead paragraph by filling out its statement of bare facts with pertinent details. The body should not exceed two paragraphs.
- 3) **Tag line:** Points of minor interest or of an entertaining nature may be used in this position. It might also include information about the purpose of the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary and state where further information may be found.

Rewriting

The PAO is responsible only for submission of a release and may not be held responsible for rewrite by newspaper staff. A busy editor may select items that require the least amount of rewriting. The better the article conforms with newspaper writing structure, the less chance of rewrite errors.

Feature Stories

A feature story is a detailed narrative or information piece. Developing a feature takes careful preparation and some cooperation from the local editor. Most editors will welcome interesting and informative pieces. If you write well, you might be invited to contribute to a monthly column. Writing style, use of titles and abbreviations, editing and copy format will be the same as with news releases.

Local Relevance (Flavor)

A key to a good feature story is its local identity and/or local flavor. Readers identify with familiar names and activities in local areas with more interest than to accounts of unfamiliar people and places. Such articles are also more acceptable to media.

Suggested Subjects

Many recommended subjects for news release are also appropriate for features. Items relating to patrol and SAR activity, articles describing the Coast Guard Auxiliary mission, its programs and historical events are of interest to most.

Media Involvement/Active Media Participation

A great way to get a feature story inserted is to have a member of the newspaper staff do the actual writing. Is there a fishing derby about to be held? Invite the writer of the local sports column aboard your boat. Explain what the local unit will be doing in its safety and regatta patrols to be of service to the boaters. You have provided the press a front line position to cover the story. (Make sure the Sector Commander has approved. For more information consult the Operations Policy Manual.)

Bylines/Credit

Feature stories may carry an auxiliary member's byline. However, an editor may elect to use no byline or to insert a staff member's byline – don't be offended if this happens! The goal of your efforts should be to get the AUXPA information in the media. As a PAO or elected leader, you will be evaluated on the quantity and quality of information that is disseminated on your watch, not whether your name was attached to it.

Titles and Abbreviations

Use of correct military, civilian, and Coast Guard Auxiliary titles and abbreviations in news releases and feature articles is absolutely essential. A complete listing of Coast Guard Auxiliary titles and abbreviations appears in the Auxiliary Manual (AUXMAN),

COMDTINST M16790.1series. Consult the *Coast Guard PA Stylebook* and the *Associated Press (AP) Style Guide*. Please note that the *Coast Guard PA Stylebook* takes precedence over the *AP Stylebook*.

Note the following excerpt from the *Coast Guard PA Stylebook*:

“Use Coast Guard magazine style for Coast Guard enlisted members (rate/rank: BM3, YNC) and chief warrant officers (CWO; do not use grade) for internal documents. Use Associated Press style for officers and enlisted members on external releases. Apply the AP style for civilian officers with military titles: Chief of Police Capt. Aaron Stubing. Cadets: Cadet John Aaron.”

Auxiliary Title Usage

The abbreviation for Auxiliary is USCGAUX. References to anyone below Commodore is “Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr.”, followed by the name and then the elected or appointed officer designation. For example, “Mr. Jones, Flotilla Commander of Seaside Flotilla,” not “Commander Jones.” Past and present Commodores, however, may be referred to with the Auxiliary title “Commodore” or “COMO” preceding their names.

Using Acronyms

Use discretion in the use of acronyms. Once the first fully spelled title is used, such as “District Commodore (DCO) John Jones announced,” the article may continue with “said DCO Jones.” Use acronyms sparingly. An article full of unfamiliar ABCs will confuse and lose the non- Auxiliary reader. Minimize use of abbreviations and acronyms.

Coast Guard Auxiliary Officer Titles & Abbreviations:

NACO - National Commodore	Commodore John B. Smith,
NAVCO - Vice National Commodore:	Commodore Mary A Jones,
COS - Chief of Staff	Commodore John Smith,
NAVCO, A(E)(Atlantic, East)	Commodore Paul Henry,
NAVCO, A(W),(Atlantic, West)	Commodore Sharon Black
NAVCO, P, (Pacific)	Commodore Tom Smith
NIPCO - Immediate Past National Commodore	Commodore Mary A. Jones, NIPCO
DCO - District Commodore	Commodore John B. Smith
DCOS - District Chief of Staff	Mary A. Jones, DCOS-1N
IPDCO - Immediate Past District Commodore	
DDC - District Department Chief	Sam Jones, DDC-1S
DCAPT - District Captains	John B. Smith, DCAPT-1N
DCDR - Division Commanders	
DVCDR - Division Vice Commander	
ASC – Auxiliary Sector Coordinator	

Coast Guard Auxiliary Officer Titles & Abbreviations (Continued)

Flotilla Elected Officer Titles & Abbreviations (Use Arabic Numerals):

FC - Flotilla Commander	Mary A. Jones, FC 53
VFC – Vice Flotilla Commander	John Smith, VFC 15-9
FSO – Flotilla Staff Officer	John B. Goode, FSO-PE 6-11

AUXPA and Staff Officer Titles & Abbreviations (All Levels):

DIR-A	Director, Public Affairs	Mary A. Smith, DIR-A
DIR-Ad	Deputy Director, Public Affairs	John B. Smith, DIR-Ad
DVC	Division Chief	Mary A. Jones, DVC-AR
BC	Branch Chief	John B. Smith, BC-ATC
BA	Branch Assistant	James Washington, BA-ACNA
DSO	District Staff Officer	Mary A. Jones, DSO-PA ADSO
ADSO	Assistant District Staff Officer	John Smith, ADSO-PA
SO	Division Staff Officer	Mary Jones, SO-PA 5
FSO	Flotilla Staff Officer	John Smith, FSO-PA 5

Coast Guard Titles & Abbreviations (Titles always precede names):

Admiral:	Adm. John B. Smith, USCG
Vice Admiral :	Vice Adm. Mary A. Jones, USCG
Rear Admiral (upper half):	Rear Adm. John B. Smith, USCG
Rear Admiral (lower half):	Rear Adm. Mary Smith, USCG

Captain:	Capt. Mary A. Jones, USCG
Commander:	Cmdr. John B. Smith, USCG
Lieutenant Commander:	Lt. Cmdr. Mary A. Jones, USCG
Lieutenant:	Lt. John B. Smith, USCG
Lieutenant (Junior Grade):	Lt. j.g. Mary A. Jones, USCG
Ensign:	Ensign John B. Smith, USCG

Cadet:	Cadet John P. Jones, USCG
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Chief Warrant Officer:	CWO Mary A. Jones, USCG
Master Chief Petty Officer:	MCPO Alex Jones, USCG
Senior Chief Petty Officer:	SCPO Martha Brown, USCG
Chief Petty Officer:	CPO Jack Jones, USCG
Petty Officer:	PO Sally Light, USCG

Writing Styles

The best writing styles observes brevity, simplicity and strength.

Brevity

Know the subject and state only thoroughly checked facts,. Be impartial. Eliminate personal opinions unless they are direct quotes and the quote is identified. An “off the record” statement does not exist in a news release.

Simplicity

Complex writing is like static on the radio. The distraction causes the reader’s attention to wander and lose interest in the message. Use short words, sentences, and paragraphs. One sound writing formula recommends an average sentence of not more than 20 words. Use paragraphs averaging about seven lines. An article broken into a number of short paragraphs has more eye appeal. (This paragraph has seven sentences; the longest has 19 words.)

Strength

Use specific, rather than general statements, concrete action words instead of abstract or passive ones. Well chosen nouns and verbs need few modifiers. Rather than stating, “Persons desiring more information about the class may call,” use “For more information, call.”-. Be direct and to the point. Avoid personalizing in the article, such as “you should” or “you may call”.

Sincerity

Be original. Try new words and new approaches.

Self-Editing

It’s a rare author whose work is perfect with the first draft. Your article represents you, the Auxiliary and the Coast Guard. Spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors reflect a careless attitude.

Proofreading

Always reread material with great care. Check spelling, particularly names of people and places, titles, abbreviations and statistics. Check grammar and punctuation carefully.

Style

Look for the long, run-on sentences. Replace the extra “ands” and “buts” with periods. Strike out unnecessary words. Be concise. Use “if” instead of “in the event of”, “because” or “since” for “in view of” or “due to the fact that”. Replace “in the majority of instances”

with “usually.” Streamlining will shorten the article by at least 10%. The shorter the article the better chance it has of being printed. Minimize use of “the”.

Sexist Language

Articles, items, etc, shall avoid use of specified gender where the subject could be either. Use of he/she or his/her should be minimized.

News Release Format

Reference “Appendix A” and the *Coast Guard PA Stylebook* for the latest format to use when writing a news release.

Contact Person

Put the contact person’s name, organization, e-mail address and phone number in the top, right corner.

Release Date

The release date is placed in the top, right corner. When the release is given to more than one outlet, the release date must be the same.

Headlines

Create a title for the News Release that grabs attention. When published, the headline is the editor’s prerogative. The News Release title merely tells the editor what the copy is about.

Page Format

ALL MATERIAL MUST BE TYPED – NEVER HANDWRITTEN. Margins should be one inches on sides and bottom to provide space for an editor’s proofreading marks and corrections. Leave about two inches of space between your title and the beginning of your copy for the headline writer’s use. Use one side of the sheet only.

On subsequent pages type only the organization, last name of the writer and a two or three word condensation of the story title in the top, left corner, put the page number in the top, right corner.

Photographs

Good, dramatic story-telling photos are essential. Photos should be of the highest resolution possible (a minimum of 5 megapixels) and submitted digitally but not imbedded in the News Release itself. Use an “Editor’s Note” within the News Release to state that photos are available. If an editor wants a photo, the editor will contact you.

CHAPTER 3 | Broadcast Media

Broadcast media is historically the fastest, most direct, means of getting news to a mass public audience. Broadcast media traditionally includes television and radio media, although these media companies are now using the digital channel (Internet, World Wide Web, and Wifi) as another conduit to reach their audiences. Broadcast media typically airs 24/7, although most media organizations follow established “news cycles” for the dissemination of their content.

Broadcast vs. Print Media

Print media has suffered a loss of readership and advertising over the last decade as digital media has grown. This has created new opportunities for Broadcasters. The immediacy of programming like cable news and talk radio has resulted in a large segment of the population relying on broadcast as their primary news source. Local, weekly, and focused periodicals, however, still command a wide audience.

Need to Know

Local sporting shows, special features within a news program, documentaries and public service programs are useful vehicles. News departments are flooded with announcements and calls for news conferences and releases. Selections must be made in view of schedules and the total news picture for a particular day. In television, the staff is very busy from about one and a half hours before newscast to the time of the newscast.

DHS National Media Mandate

The Department of Homeland Security needs to be consulted concerning request from national media. Contact the nearest USCG District Office PA Department of your PADET. If Auxiliary members are contacted by a major network, the contact information must be referred to the DSO-PA. This procedure does not apply to local broadcast or local cable stations. However, if a local story is sent to the network by the local station, alert the Auxiliary COL to the best of your ability.

News Conferences

Whether or not to call a news conference depends upon the significance, timelines and degrees of public interest of a particular story. Whenever possible, a Media Advisory should be sent out well in advance to all media at the same time. The Media Advisory should include the WHO, WHAT, WHEN and WHERE, and when applicable, the WHY and HOW of the news conference and the subject that will be discussed. A map to the location of the news conference and access/parking information (such as at a Coast Guard base) is also very important to convey.

If advance notice is not possible, contact the Assignment Editor to convey the information. Depending on how busy the news crews are and how important the information is, an effort MAY be made to get a reporter and/or photojournalist to the event. If there are a number of news stories happening at the same time, priorities will be established by the News Director and the Assignment Editor regarding what gets covered.

Mornings are usually the best times for news conferences. (If a night time conference is preferred, make it early in the evening if you want coverage the same day.) Planning is the key to a good news conference. Thursdays and Fridays are busy days for media. Weekends are usually light on news. However, reduced staffing on weekends limits an outlet's availability to cover all events.

One or more media escorts should be on hand during the conference to assist the media. The correct spelling of all names used or participating in the news conference should be provided to the media. The spokesperson should ask about possible questions to provide. After the conference, the media escort should remain for questioning by the media.

Unless a news conference is of significant local interest, it will probably not be carried live – it will be recorded and edited into a story or “package” for the newscast. Nevertheless, start your news conference on time. The bulk of the comments offered should be different from the news release. Establish your key messages and use talking points designed to offer 5 to 10 second sound bites that broadcasters can incorporate into their newscast. This will give you the best chance of getting your message “on air.”

Public Service Department and PSA's

In the past, TV and radio stations provided millions of dollars worth of air time and facilities free of charge to non-profit organizations each year in the form of public service announcements (PSAs). Today, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) no longer requires media to air PSAs. However, many stations pride themselves on being alert to community needs. They may welcome your PSA but they decide on exactly what groups and functions they can effectively serve. Your message is competing with other PSAs and commercials. The larger the potentially interested group, the more likely the PSA is to be aired.

News Director

This position is ultimately responsible for the news product and performance of reporters, photographers and other staff members. The News Director determines which stories make the newscast. Complaints or disagreements with a reporter that cannot be resolved may be brought to the attention of the News Director.

Assignment Editor

Ask for the Assignment Desk when calling and direct your emails to same. The Assignment Editor makes many decisions on what will be covered, assigns crews to cover items and talks with “beat” reporters on ideas for stories.

Reporter

A reporter is the person with whom you have the most contact. If there is a reporter who covers your area on a regular basis, discuss the best way to keep in touch. Even if you’re in an area with a regular “beat” reporter, it’s advisable to also send your notification to the Assignment Desk because beat assignments change often.

Introduce Yourself

The ideal situation is to have someone introduce you to broadcast personnel, otherwise pay a visit, in uniform, to the local radio or TV station. Introduce yourself. Ask for an appointment to meet with the Station Manager to discuss the work of the Auxiliary in promoting boating safety.

Radio

Radio is the oldest and most familiar broadcasting medium. Publicity via radio may be in the form of the spot announcement, a mention in the rundown of events in a community calendar presented by radio personalities, or the participation of Auxiliary members in a broadcast interview.

Radio Spot Announcements

Radio (and TV) spots are usually from 10 to 60 seconds. Some radio stations have a public service or news department whose job it is to develop such announcements. Use their services whenever possible. Provide a clear, typed copy of the News Release. Ask the station manager for the preferred format.

Timing the Radio (and TV) Spot

A 10-second spot contains approximately 20 words. A 20-second spot contains approximately 50 words. A 30-second spot contains approximately 75 words. A 60-second spot contains approximately 150 words.

Deadlines

How far in advance is information needed? PSAs are needed two weeks in advance of airing. Public Affairs programs are needed two to four weeks in advance.

Preparing Public Service Announcements for TV

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) recommends that PSAs be 10, 15, 20, 30 or 60 seconds. Submit audio PSA's as MP3 files on a CD. TV spots should be submitted as .mov files on a CD. Have a title slate, followed by at least 15 seconds of "video black," included at the head of the PSA. If there is more than one "spot" per recording, each "spot" must include a title card followed by 15 seconds of "video black". Title cards must include the organization's title, producer and total running time (TRT). An example of a title card would look something like this:

"The USCG Auxiliary presents:
'Alcohol And Water Don't Mix' Part 2
National PA Department (800) 555-5555

TRT: 30

How to Prepare "Live Copy":

On a worksheet, list the key facts about your program or activity. List: WHO, WHAT, WHERE WHEN, HOW, and WHY, plus important names.

Prepare a draft of your message. Keep the sentences short, simple and conversational. Be actual, brief and factual.

Read your copy aloud. Time it carefully. Rewrite to eliminate any rough spots and stumbling words. Read aloud and time again.

Give phonetic pronunciation of unusual proper names, etc., when you are sure of them.

Radio Programs

A radio interview has advantages and disadvantages. It may vary from 15 minutes to an hour, depending on the forum. It's important that questions and the material are reviewed ahead of time. You must be well prepared with a wealth of material and practice speaking extemporaneously.

Preliminary Participation

Develop an “Auxiliary Fact Sheet.” This is valuable time spent and may be the basis for every area of publicity in which you are involved. It may be the “skeleton” around which you may build an article, a radio interview, a TV program or a speech to the Rotary Club. Include the following:

1. WHO we, the Auxiliary, are (Auxiliary history). WHO you, the local unit, are.
2. WHAT our role is in recreational boating safety and public education.
3. WHAT our role is in vessel examinations.
4. WHAT our role is in patrol, regatta and SAR assistance to the Coast Guard. WHAT our role is in chart updating and aids to navigation.
5. WHAT our role is in Academy recruitment and other recruitment assistance programs (AIM).
6. HOW the Auxiliary has helped in lowering boating fatality statistics.

Developing the Program Content

Armed with your fact sheet, you and the interviewer can review areas to discuss and to what depth, given your time limitations. It may be wise to work out together a set of questions that you will be asked, so as not to be surprised with something you cannot answer. A good approach is to start with a general overview and then concentrate on one specific area. Remember that the interviewer can ask you anything.

Consider

PE, when your major intent is to publicize the start of a new course.
When boating season starts in your area.
VSCs, anytime, and just before National Safe Boating Week.
AIM, when your unit is concentrating on that program.

Dress Rehearsal

Once the questions have been developed; take time before the interview to practice your responses. You may even want to have some cue cards so you don't forget important facts or any statistics. The best scenario is to get someone to “talk” you through the interview.

When developing a radio interview, take the time of day into consideration. A heavy discourse on marine engines may not be of much interest to the busy housewife. She may be more interested in safety precautions and emergency procedures. However, an evening program when high school students are at home is the best time to encourage juniors to apply for the local AIM program.

Television

Television has the broadest audience of any vehicle other than social media.

TV Spots

A TV spot can be a short, filmed presentation of 10 to 15 seconds. Excellent spots have been prepared by the National PA Staff and the National Safe Boating Council. These spots have been distributed to TV stations throughout the nation.

TV Programs

Many stations have a public service program which concentrates on local area people, organizations and events. Contact the station to discuss a possible interview. Local cable television providers are especially good outlets for local outreach projects.

Preparation

As with the radio program, preliminary planning is vital. The "Auxiliary Fact Sheet" is just as important.

Developing Program Content

Using the fact sheet, review with interviewer areas to discuss and to what depth. If you plan to use any demonstration materials, know where they will be placed.

Appearance

Uniforms must be perfect and your personal presence exemplary. The Operational Dress Uniform (ODU) is recommended for any media appearances. It is the working uniform of the Coast Guard and probably the most identifiable Coast Guard uniform to the general public. One of your goals is to have the audience identify you as a member of the Coast Guard.

Before any public appearance, check your uniform carefully. Be sure it's the correct one for the time of the year in your area and is neat and clean. Be sure insignia are correct and properly positioned. Men should be careful not to load pants pockets with bulging materials, such as fat wallets. Women should not wear dangling earrings, nor extremely high heels with ankle straps. These are decidedly "out of uniform." (If in doubt, check with the Auxiliary Manual and/or the Coast Guard Uniform Manual.)

Bearing

All the things you learned about presence before a class or lecturing help on television. Television cameras don't miss a thing and they are unforgiving.

Things to Watch

If you are sitting, sit upright – DO NOT SLOUCH! Watch how your interviewer is sitting. It may be beneficial to sit on the edge of the seat so as to project a better posture. Try not to clutch the chair arm, clasp and unclasp hands, rub your nose, or pull your ear lobe. These nervous habits are distracting. The audience will begin to concentrate on your actions, not your words.

Sit calmly. Cross your legs at your ankles rather than crossing your knees, particularly ladies in skirts.

If standing, try not to jingle the change in your pocket. If you aren't comfortable with your hands at your side, clasp them loosely behind your back. Avoid the "fig leaf" position and try not to wrinkle your jacket with your hands in your pockets.

Using Visual Aids

"Show and Tell" can be an important part of a TV program. Check the condition of any visual aids used. Poster lettering should be large and clear. (Check with the camera person.) Don't use it if it isn't clear. Life jackets should be clean and in good condition.

Additional Media Involvement

If you develop a good working relationship with the TV station, you may wish to consider an on-scene taping or inviting the announcer and crew to an especially newsworthy event. Or you might tape a short segment aboard a vessel, to be shown during the interview.

The Community Calendar

The community calendar is short. A simple listing of the WHO is doing WHAT, WHERE, WHY and WHEN all for which is probably there will be time. Check with the station. Get an outline of exactly how to write your item.

CHAPTER 4 | Public Appearances

Speakers' Bureau

Speakers' bureaus provide an excellent means of informing the public about the Auxiliary and its programs. Civic clubs, schools, community organizations, large corporations and church groups all utilize speakers for their meetings.

Participants

Good speakers are vital in presenting the Coast Guard Auxiliary program to groups. Auxiliarists who have the time, interest and ability to speak in a public forum can be a valuable resource.

Training

Members who have had speaking experience, teachers, salespeople and others who work with the public, are good resources for the Speakers' Bureau. A workshop should be organized on how to give a lecture and how to discuss key points about the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Lecture Delivery

The following tips may be useful:

1. Develop key messages of what you want to say.
2. State your key messages in your own, familiar words. Know their meanings, application and pronunciations. Look words up in the dictionary if you are unsure.
3. Avoid slang and colloquial expressions.
4. Personal anecdotes added sparingly will provide human interest and help keep your audience's attention.
5. Don't read from a script; your credibility suffers.
6. An outline on a PowerPoint presentation or 3x5 cards will help keep the presentation organized.
7. Speak clearly and at a moderate pace.
8. Don't fill in pauses with "ahs" and "ums."
9. Keep eye contact with your audience by finding two or three friendly faces.
10. Move your attention between them. Or select two or three spots at the back of the room at which to look.

Visual Aids

Visual aids are great attention holders if large and clear enough to be seen by the entire audience. If you are using posters or displaying safety equipment, be sure they are clearly visible to all. PowerPoint slides and films should be used judiciously. Be sure they're set up and working before you begin the lecture.

Developing an Audience

Developing a good list of potential groups for whom the Auxiliary and its safe boating message will be of interest is key to presenting a strong public appearance program.

Potential Sources

A copy of the local chamber of commerce directory is a good starting place to identify groups. A perusal of the yellow pages listing may also yield some good ideas. Look under "Clubs", "Associations", "Fraternal Organizations", "Youth Centers", "Yacht Clubs", "Public Service Organizations", "Military" (active and veteran groups). You'll be surprised at how many groups there are with an untapped audience for your boating safety message as well as prospective students for PE programs and members.

Initial Contacts

Develop a letter addressed to the program chairperson for each of the contact groups. Describe the Auxiliary's public service work in boating safety and the availability of an Auxiliary speaker to address their meetings. Also note that you are working on a speaking engagement calendar and would like to include them. If you can obtain the name of the organization's chairperson or presiding officer, your letter may be personalized, adding to its effectiveness. Be sure to include an address and phone number for contact.

Follow Up

Most organizations will reply in two to three weeks. Be sure to add the name of the person who contacts you so future mailings will be personalized. For organizations that do not reply in three to four weeks, a second letter, repeating your availability, would be appropriate. Don't push, but mention that your speaking calendar is filling rapidly.

More Suggested Subjects

Much of the material already described in previous chapters is appropriate for a speaking engagement. Recruiting, America's Waterway Watch and general RBS issues

are our mainstays. Consider your 5 audience when developing material. The following are selected subjects for general and specific groups:

Uniform

When you give a lecture, appearance is critical. Appropriate uniform is mandatory. You are an official representative of the Coast Guard when in uniform. The Operational Dress Uniform (ODU) is appropriate for any public appearance and is the Coast Guard uniform most readily identifiable to the general public.

Preparation

Be prepared, whether the talk is about safe boating or about the Auxiliary's functions. You'll be asked questions; so know your facts. Don't present personal opinions as official Coast Guard position. Have brochure or information cards available for people who want to join the Auxiliary.

Maintaining Records

Once a Speakers' Bureau is in operation, it is important to develop a record-keeping system to keep track of requests as well as speakers.

Lecturers

A file should be maintained of the Auxiliarists who make up your speakers' bureau. In addition to names, home and e-mail addresses, phone and fax numbers information should include times available, areas of expertise, groups before which they have appeared, the dates and subjects.

Speaker Request Form

Use the National Speakers Bureau forms available at: <http://auxpa.org/outreach/downloads.php> to keep track of the organizations who request speakers. This should contain general information such as location, meeting dates and times, age or characteristics of the audience, audience size, previous presentations, the subjects and the speakers. This way, you may vary the topics and the speakers for groups who make frequent requests. The form should also include room for comments by the speakers

Materials

Keep on file copies of Navigator, Coast Guard Magazine, yearly boating statistic publications and other sources of material concerned with boating safety, SAR events, boat handling and other related subject matter which may be used by the speakers. See www.auxpa.org for sample speeches.

CHAPTER 5 | Static Displays

Types of Static Displays

The word “static” means fixed or standing, according to Webster. Thus, any display to be read or observed comes under this heading. There are several kinds of static displays that may be developed by an Auxiliary unit. The following are most common:

Posters

Perhaps the most familiar visual display is the ready-made version for publicizing VSC stations and PE classes (ANSC stock no. 3504 and 3502, respectively).

Bulletin Boards

A bulletin board may use prepared posters or those of your own making, photos of local activities and people, printed material and attached objects. Legibility from a distance and security of material are concerns. Bulletin boards may be hung on a wall, be placed on an easel or have their own built-in display stand.

Much depends upon the size and the area where the bulletin board is exhibited. “Secure” bulletin boards (behind glass) such as those at a marina or in schools, are good because some kind of control is exercised over what is shown there. If you plan to use an open type display, you will need to monitor it constantly as graffiti can be a problem.

Counter Displays

Counter displays of pamphlets is ideal for marinas, sporting goods stores or other businesses where counter space is available. A counter-top or revolving wire display for books makes a good display case.

Vessel Safety Check (VSC) Station Display

A portable display of VSC pamphlets and posters is most effective at a VSC station at a boating launch ramp. It may attract the passers-by as well as the boaters waiting in line to launch their boats. Portability and weather resistance are important considerations.

Pamphlets, banners and signs will enhance the VSC station. Visit the National Safe Boating Council’s website at www.safeboatingcampaign.com for materials for National Safe Boating Week.

Window Display

If you can gain access to a store or bank window, you have an ideal spot for a dramatic display. Different arrangements can be made using printed materials, safety equipment and aids to navigation displays. Charts and piloting equipment may be used too. Be sure to set up and take down promptly at the store's request.

Boating Safety Exhibits

These set ups require the presence of an Auxiliarist. They're particularly effective at a boat show. Pamphlets are a must as well as posters for RBS, Recruiting and America's Waterway Watch.

Audience

The effectiveness of a static display depends upon the audience. Where you place your display will determine both who and how many people will see it.

General Exposure

Places frequented by the general public offer the best exposure for a Coast Guard Auxiliary message. Window displays are excellent.

Development of Static Displays

Each of the displays mentioned above may be developed to fit a particular unit's needs. Many materials are available from ANSC. Other units have members who offer their creative talents. The following are some suggestions:

Posters

The Auxiliary-prepared poster has room for time, date, location and a personal contact person for the event being publicized. Check the local stationery, business products, or arts and crafts stores for materials to make compelling posters.

Special Events

Posters for special events, such as boat shows or public appearances need to be developed personally.

Maintenance

All displays will require some maintenance. Check the condition of displays for signs of wear before they are exhibited.

General Maintenance

Remove and replace posters which have faded or are smudged or outdated. Life jackets or cushions should not be faded or shabby. Labels should be clean and clear. No rusty buckles or loose straps.

Preventive Maintenance

A coat of clear polyurethane on painted surfaces can preserve and maintain them for a long time. Likewise, a little lubrication to metal joints or hinges can prolong their life, ease their operation and enhance their appearance.

Portable Sandwich Board

This is the double board hinged at the top, with an adjustable brace on one or both sides to give it some stability. A poster may be affixed to it.

CHAPTER 6 | Photography

Introduction:

To many people, photography is a hobby. To others, it is a profession. Some may use photography as a vehicle for expressing artistic ideas and concepts. No matter how it is used, photography can be a strong means of communication.

The growth in digital technology has essentially revolutionized the photography industry in the 21st Century. High quality digital cameras are now available across a wide variety of applications and devices.

Uses:

Photography is a medium used to record events and convey messages, ideas and opinions. Every photograph is a report, as seen through the eyes of the photographer. How well it reflects what was actually seen depends on how well it was conceived and executed, and more important, how it is understood.

Magazines and newspapers are always on the lookout for good human interest and action photos. Traditional “grip and grin” photos are rarely worth the space allotted to them. Learning what makes a good composition is essential in creating newsworthy- and sometimes prize winning- photograph.

How A Camera Works

See Auxiliary Introduction to Photography Course at: <http://www.training.auxpa.org/e-learning.shtml>

A camera is essentially a light-tight enclosure with a lens at one end and a fitting to accept a light-sensitive film or plate on the opposite end. The photograph is taken by allowing light to pass through the lens to form an impression on the light-sensitive material.

Basic Controls

Learning to operate a camera effectively requires your understanding of the function and use of focus, exposure, light and photo content.

Controlling Focus

In all but the simplest and cheapest of cameras, provision is made for adjusting the relationship of the lens to the film so that objects at differing distances may be focused in turn.

Controlling Exposure

Light is prevented from reaching the film by a shutter, whose mechanism is to allow the operator to select an exposure of a specific duration.

Controlling Light

The amount of light reaching the sensor during a given exposure is controlled by a diaphragm, the size of which is usually variable and may be set by the operator.

Finally, the camera is equipped with a viewfinder, by which one may center upon the subject to be recorded.

Selecting a Camera

There is no “best” camera for everyone. Consider the following:

- 1) Nature of the photography for which it will be used.
- 2) Accessories available for that particular camera which you feel are necessary and that you will use.
- 3) Budget for a camera.

When buying a camera ask the dealer to discuss and demonstrate features of each brand and model you are considering. Be sure the dealer knows what your needs are. If you are an amateur, say so. Ask for complete explanations of each camera feature.

Once you have made your selection, be sure to read the accompanying manual carefully and follow its directions. “Making friends” with the camera will help you get the most use and enjoyment from your purchase.

Handling the Camera

If you're a beginner, it's important to get as comfortable as possible with the camera. Only in this way will you be able to get the clear, sharp pictures you desire. Understanding what happens when you take a picture is important in deciding other matters concerning film, lighting and distances.

Natural or available light is the easiest to work with since you won't have to fuss with calculating distance between a light source and the subject. This may be used both outdoors and indoors.

Using a Flash

Most cameras will accommodate a flash unit which is synchronized to operate as you press the shutter button “Fill flash is an effective use of the flash unit when you wish to eliminate dark shadows in a daylight photo

ISO Speeds

Image sensitivity is known as ISO *speed*. The higher the rating number, the more sensitive to light.

Exposure Variables

Exposure controls regulate the amount of light that reaches the film. Exposure will affect the lightness and darkness of photos and the amount of detail and tone quality. The term indicates the particular combination of shutter speed and diaphragm opening used in regulating the amount of light to reach the film. If the sensor receives too much light, the photo will be overexposed. Conversely, if not enough light is used, the result is underexposure.

Lens Opening

The lens opening or aperture size is indicated by a number called an “f-stop”. The larger the number, the smaller the lens opening. Each full lens opening change doubles or halves the light allowed. The lens opening may be compared to the human eye. When it is dusky or dark, we open our eyes wide to take in as much light as possible. When we go outside in bright sunlight, however, we “squint” our eyes to adjust to the increased brightness .

Shutter Speed

Each change in shutter speed doubles or halves exposure time. Faster speed can freeze motion, 1/250 second or faster. The combination of aperture or diaphragm size and exposure speed determines the amount of exposure. If a large aperture is used, the shutter speed may be faster. A small diaphragm setting will use a slower shutter speed.

Metering Methods (Camera Modes)

There are four ways for metering the combination of f-stop and shutter speed, depending upon the sophistication of the camera you’re using. They are: Programmed Mode, Aperture-Preferred Mode, Shutter-Preferred Mode, and Manual Mode.

Programmed Mode

This is the best mode to use for snapshots or when you need to get a proper exposure in a limited amount of time. The camera selects both f-stop and shutter speed automatically. This is typical of the “point and shoot” cameras. Many cameras will fire the built in flash if the lighting is poor enough to warrant it when in this mode.

Aperture-Preferred Mode

You select the f-stop (aperture) and the camera selects the appropriate shutter speed. This is the mode used by most professional photographers because it

allows them to “drop the background” and change the image exposure with minimal effort.

Shutter-Preferred Mode

The camera selects the f-stop when you select the shutter speed.

Metered Manual: The user sets the aperture and the shutter speed giving the photographer maximum creative flexibility for shooting the image.

Exposure Guidelines

Control exposure as precisely as possible. Measure the light intensity by the highlights on the subject. Overexposure will bleach out the picture.

When in “doubt,” overexpose. Measure intensity of light by the shadows on the subject. If you are unsure of what setting to select, walk up to the subject, and if possible, measure the light reflected off the surface, then back away, using that exposure. Your camera manual will provide details for how to do this.

Depth of Field

Depth of field is defined as the distance between the nearest and the farthest point of acceptable sharpness in the scene to be photographed. It may be considered the area in front of the camera within which all subjects or objects appear in acceptable focus. Most interchangeable lenses have depth of field scales marked on the lens barrel. Using this scale will add another creative dimension to your picture taking.

Factors That Influence Depth of Field

- 1) Focal Length of Lens:** A wide angle (short focal length) lens of 21 to 35 mm offers more depth of field. A telephoto (long focal length) lens of 100 mm or longer offers a shorter depth of field.
- 2) Diaphragm or Lens Opening:** The larger the opening the shorter the depth of field. The smaller the opening the greater the depth of field.
- 3) Camera-to-Subject Distance:** The longer the distance to the subject, the more the depth of field. The closer the distance, the shorter the depth of field.

Using Shallow Depth of Field

This section isolates the subject from the background. It is ideal for portraits and close-ups, floral pictures or a specific piece of equipment. Use the largest lens opening practical, the longest focal length of lens and the closest distance possible.

Maximum Depth of Field

Select this when detail is critical at several distances, such as large meetings, regattas or a scenic landscape setting. This is also the setting to use when you don't have time to focus each shot, such as sports events or candid shots. Use the shorter or wide angle lens, a smaller aperture setting. If your camera is so equipped, depress the field preview button for sharpness verification.

Composition

Why are some pictures more appealing than others? Most good pictures are not the result of a fortunate accident. They are carefully composed in a pleasing arrangement of line and mass. With a few basic guidelines to follow, you may make the most of any situation and be ready when good picture opportunities present themselves.

Bringing Out the Subject

Move in close to increase subject size. Try to fill the frame of the viewfinder.

Move subject away from a wall at least three feet. This will eliminate strong shadows and distractions from a busy wall design.

Watch for flagpoles, plants, other elbows, structural beams that may appear as an unexpected part of the subject's body. Change camera angle to eliminate these distractions.

Limit the number of people in a photograph: three to four at most. Group pictures are best taken with the specific camera and film for that activity.

Generally, a group picture will be unsatisfactory. Try to simulate some action or natural activity. The posed "grip and grin" shot may be necessary at times. Avoid it if possible.

When taking a series of award presentation shots, change your angle from time to time. Try to have the participants look at each other or at the presentation. Think "photo journalism" as you set up a picture. How would National Geographic or Smithsonian magazine show this particular scene or shot?

Overextending the Camera

Don't shoot from the back of the room. Built-in flash won't carry far enough if the subject is more than 20 feet away. Limiting the depth of field to important subject matter will allow you to step in closer.

Height versus Width

While the usual way to hold the camera is horizontally, don't be tied to this mode. When the composition is taller than wide, hold the camera vertically. This can also help to eliminate outside distractions.

Suggested Picture Taking Events

Everything and anything.

Writing the Caption or Cut Line

No matter how good the photo, it will still require at least some explanatory text. This is referred to as the caption or cut line. Reference the *Coast Guard PA Stylebook* for the latest format to use when writing a photo caption or cut line.

Captions have four basic functions:

- 1) To explain the action.
- 2) To identify the subjects.
- 3) To provide background information for the photograph.
- 4) To provide credit to the photographer.

It is the responsibility of the photographer to get all photo caption information.

Photo captions all follow the same basic formula. Keep captions to no more than two concise sentences while including the relevant information.

A. They will start with the dateline. The dateline is where the imagery was gathered.

- 1) If it is a stand-alone city it will be all caps followed by a dash. Example:
BOSTON –
- 2) All other cities are written in all caps followed by a comma and the name of the state abbreviation, abbreviated in AP style, or country. Example: PANAMA CITY, Fla. – or GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba –
- 3) If photo is taken at sea, then the name of the body of water will be all caps.
Example: ATLANTIC OCEAN

B. The first sentence of the caption will describe what the photo shows in present tense and state the who, what, when, where, how and why.

C. The second sentence gives a brief background on the event or what makes the photo significant.

D. The final sentence will be U.S. Coast Guard photo by (name). All images without a name will be credited U.S. Coast Guard photo.

Proper Photo Caption Examples:

SANDY HOOK, N.J. – Peggy Gentile reacts as her son, Master Chief Petty Officer Thomas Gentile, an aviation maintenance technician, presents her with a Coast Guard Certificate of Appreciation and a bouquet of flowers at his joint retirement ceremony here, July 17, 2009. Gentile and his wife, Chief Warrant Officer Cecilia Gentile, retired after serving a combined total of more than 40 years on active duty. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Barbara Patton.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad W. Allen takes a photo of Coast Guard historical documents with his camera phone during a private showing at the National Archives, July 9, 2009. Allen and a small group of Coast Guard Headquarters staff were allowed to view several different logs and documents from various periods of the Coast Guard's history. U.S. Coast Guard Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Kip Wadlow.

EASTERN PACIFIC OCEAN – A bale of cocaine interdicted by the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf is checked into evidence, July 9, 2009. The bale was seized during the cutter's disruption of a major drug smuggling operation where two go-fast smuggling boats were pursued and interdicted. The drug bust was the first for the year-old cutter. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Anderson.

Be sure to consider the following:

- 1) **Brevity:** Keep the caption short and to the point. When there is an accompanying story, just identify the people, briefly describe the action and identify the photographer. Don't repeat information contained in the story.
- 2) **Metadata:** Include captions in Metadata.

VIRIN Numbers

Give each image a Coast Guard VIRIN number for identification: A VIRIN is a numerical filename system where the first six numbers are the year, month and day. For example, 050622 is June 22, 2005. These numbers are followed by a dash "-" and then the service indicator letter "G" for Coast Guard. Next are the last four numbers of the photographer's member identification number and the first letter of the photographer's last name. This is followed by a dash and then the photographer's daily sequence number. The daily sequence number pertains to the number of photos the photographer took that day. For instance, the fourth photo would be "004." Make sure the file format extension is on the end of the filename.

The final VIRIN should look like the following:

061114-G-0000B-001.jpg (The first digital photo of a set taken by Coast Guard Auxiliary member #1220000, Barnes, on November 14, 2006)

All Auxiliary and USCG photography is digital. **Transmit Photos electronically.**

Costs

While there an investment is needed for a camera and accessories capable of producing pictures for public affairs, once the initial equipment is obtained, the reproduction costs are minimal. There is no film to buy. No processing costs. No wait.

Digital cameras have a light sensitive data recording device that stores the photo in many dots of data.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary uses .jpg format exclusively.

CHAPTER 7 | National Safe Boating Week

National Safe Boating Week, sponsored by the National Safe Boating Council, Inc., is the annual national media event that launches the recreational boating season in the United States (and Canada.) It not only starts the traditional boating season, but introduces a year-long media campaign to provide boaters with more information about safe boating.

During this week, members of the Council, including the Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, State Boating Law Administrators, Army Corps of Engineers, American Red Cross and other groups provide extensive media coverage local exhibits and special programs . The slogan currently in use for the campaign is “Boat Smart from the Start. Wear Your Life Jacket!”

History

On 4 June 1958, Public Law 85-455 authorized President Dwight David Eisenhower to proclaim the week including July 4th as “National Safe Boating Week.” The date has since been changed to the seven day period prior to Memorial Day weekend, the start of the traditional boating season.

The campaign is produced under a grant from the Aquatic Resource Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Education

In spite of mandatory public education classes in some states, we are still barely scratching the surface of the active and semi-active boating public. Of particular importance is reaching those who do not think of themselves as “boaters”- fishermen, water skiers, hunters and personal water craft operators. They participate in a sport which coincidentally places them in a boat. They know little or nothing about required safety equipment or its operation, safety procedures in a small boat nor what to do in emergency situations. They seldom take boating safety classes and they don’t read boating magazines. They must be reached through media with which they are familiar- the daily newspaper, outdoor magazines, radio, television, the Internet, and through programs sponsored by the sporting organizations in which they’re involved. National Safe Boating Week may be an educational mission for this increasing group of largely uninformed boaters.

Public Education Promotion

Use National Safe Boating Week as an opportunity to acquaint the public with the content of the PE classes as well as encourage attendance. Incorporating a display of PE materials-(texts, charts, visual aids, etc.) as part of the program may help prospective students visualize the course content and its application to their own needs as boaters. Although statistics tell us the occasional boater is the most difficult to engage in a 6-13 week boating course, this is exactly the boater who is most likely to have a boating accident. That is the message most important to stress during National Safe Boating Week programs. It is most important that we provide awareness of the dangers of small boat instability, and encourage the individual boater to learn how to cope with safety concerns.

Recognition

There are many who know nothing of the Auxiliary nor its missions of public education and assistance to boaters in distress. Few are aware of the personal training expected of Auxiliary members in preparing for assistance in boating emergency situations, education courses and vessel examinations. In our voluntary position of assistance and not as law-enforcement people, National Safe Boating Week may enhance the image of the Coast Guard Auxiliary as a prepared, knowledgeable friend of the boater. There are important reasons for Auxiliarists to be actively involved in National Safe Boating Week:

- 1) To provide awareness and information about boating safety.
- 2) To encourage in-depth boating safety education.
- 3) To be visible in our role as volunteers in the cause of safe boating.

Duties And Responsibilities of The National Safe Boating Week Chairperson

In keeping with the Auxiliary Manual, the NSBW Chairperson is expected to: Assume responsibility for the preparation and conduct of the NSBW program for the unit. Present a suggested program to the unit for their approval at least three months prior to the date set for NSBW. Act as a catalyst for energizing the entire unit's participation in the various facets of the program. Maintain a record of unit activities, active participants and sponsors for the unit's NSBW program. Upon completion of the unit's NSBW program:

- 1) Ensure members make appropriate time reports.
- 2) Report activities to division/district NSBW Chair.
- 3) Provide visible recognition to those non-Auxiliary individuals and groups who assisted your unit in the operation of its NSBW program.

Developing A Program

Establish a committee in January to “brainstorm” ideas for your program. You want to offer the recreational boater important safety information, encourage new and innovative programs and locate appropriate sites for the best audience potential. Who should be on this committee? Keep it manageable, five or six people. Use experienced members and new ones, too. You are looking for new ideas, so encourage members who are creative. “Brainstorming” can be fun. Think up many ideas and choose those that are feasible.

Consider locations and facilities for your projects.

Consider outside participants- marine dealers, newspaper photographers, local TV personalities, Coast Guard personnel, local officials, the Sea Scouts, a local EMT unit, representatives from a local fire station, or the local yacht club commodore.

Select the ideas with the greatest potential for a successful NSBW program.

Presenting the Program

Involve members of your committee in assisting with the presentation. Keep them involved. Visuals are helpful. PowerPoints are handy for outlining the program, the site, activities, guests and necessary preparations.

Involving the Unit

There are many tasks to be completed. Have your committee make the phone calls, personal contacts, items to be constructed, letters to be written, etc. Now is the time for people to sign up for how they will participate. Prepare a list of materials the Materials Officer may order from the Auxiliary National Supply Center (ANSC), including pamphlets, posters, etc.

Maintaining Records

The NSBW Chair should keep a record of all activities, including all the initial ideas (for reference), a list of activities to be done, specific guests and their names, addresses and phone numbers.

Develop a time line for the completion of each items on your activities list to avoid a flurry of last minute activities.

Assign one or two members to be responsible for getting a photo record of all the activities.

Ask another member to collect publicity materials- newspaper and magazine clippings. Keep a list of all to whom certificates of appreciation should be presented.

Image is Very important

Always appear in proper uniform, with the correct insignia placed in the prescribed positions. Wear your uniform proudly. A sloppy or unkempt appearance is detrimental to you and the organization you represent. If you don't have all the appropriate uniform parts, don't improvise.

Proclamations

A sure way to publicize NSBW in your community is to obtain a National Safe Boating Proclamation from your mayor or local dignitary. Use your State Liaison Officer to get a proclamation from the Governor.

Contact your dignitary's office in March. Explain the importance of our organization for the recreational boaters of your community in saving lives and property, in examining vessels for safety and in teaching public education safe boating classes.

Request a date prior to NSBW when you and the members of your flotillas may appear at the city council meeting, for example, to receive the proclamation for your flotilla. If your city has more than one flotilla, make it a joint appearance.

Adapt the sample NSBW proclamation form (in your campaign kit) to fit your own community. Along with the sample proclamation, include a cover letter, slanted to the needs of your community's boaters: boating safety classes, vessel examinations, life jackets worn when aboard, especially for children.

Contact media in advance.

Wear your uniform at the presentation and your biggest smile.

Shopping Mall Displays

Shopping Malls offer excellent opportunities for major displays and demonstrations. A visit with the promotions manager at the mall well in advance of the May activity is suggested. Most events are booked up to 90 days in advance and never less than 30 days.

Items to Consider

Displays promoting VSCs and PE classes give the public an opportunity to ask questions directly of you, the expert.

A boat on a trailer, “dressed” to show VSC required equipment as well as signs and flags used when on patrol are good safety lessons.

A damaged or burned vessel

A display of training aids used during PE classes, such as ATON and marlinspike examples, radio frequency usage charts and local area charts with specific danger spots identified.

Ask the local Coast Guard unit if they’d be willing to participate as watch standers as well as recruiters at your PA or VSC booth. What a great way to plug the AIM/RAP programs!

Bill Stuffers

A bill stuffer is a message, usually addressing a single subject printed on paper the same size as the envelope in which a monthly statement is mailed. Marina owners, marine supply stores and yacht clubs may be willing, on a one-time basis, to include your flyer concerning the NSBW activity you are planning. Remember, one subject only! An involved letter-style message will hit the circular file. Keep it short and plan it carefully to say clearly what is happening and make it as eye-appealing as possible.

Store Displays

Stores that sell marine supplies, the local sporting goods store, even the department store that carries marine merchandise, may be willing to allow you to set up a boating safety display. You may only need to provide posters and pamphlets. The store owner might arrange the appropriate safety equipment in a display of federally required safety items for different sizes of vessels. This promotes the boating safety message and our VSC program and also shows the availability of the necessary merchandise to the consumer. We must not appear to endorse the store or the specific brands used. All literature must clearly note that this is an activity of public service by the Auxiliary and the National Safe Boating program.

Public Appearances

Business clubs and civic organizations like to feature speakers at their meetings. The program chairperson is often hard pressed to find a variety of good and interesting speakers. Ask the best speakers in your flotilla or division who are knowledgeable

about the Auxiliary to offer their services to the chairperson. This idea may be used all year but is particularly appropriate as part of NSBW.

One-Lesson Boating Courses

Major businesses are always on the lookout for ways to improve their relationship with their employees. Large companies, in particular, are interested in providing training which leads to better safety practices for their employees. They reason that the more aware and safety conscious the employees, the lower the company's absenteeism (and need of extended medical leave and/or payments due to preventable accidents). The one-lesson course is ideal for this situation. Large companies may offer seminars for an entire department or release time before or after lunch to accommodate training sessions.

A one lesson course may also be incorporated into the shopping mall display. Malls often have moderately sized conference rooms available or the display booth could be expanded to include a curtained-off area. Keep the lesson short- no more than 30 minutes, and address only one topic. (People have come to the mall primarily to shop.) If you make the lesson interesting, with proper aids, up-to-date materials and take-home materials, you'll hold the audience's attention for the entire lesson and possibly motivate them to attend a full length PE course. (Have sign-up sheets available.) A series of four or five of these sessions might be presented in a single day at a busy mall.

Window Displays

An Auxiliary display in the store window of a local merchant may take advantage of this very visible avenue of publicity. Get the exact dimensions of the area allocated to your use.

Make a layout and be sure the store approves of your idea before you begin.

This is a visual concept, so take time to analyze the message you have in mind. Whether it be promoting VSCs, PE or the Marine Dealer program, keep to one point or theme.

Develop a display that will attract and hold the passer's by attention long enough to read what you have to say. Strong color schemes, unusual photos, catchy phrases used as headlines or banners may do the trick. The most effective display will have a central eye-catcher, with smaller items branching off. Bringing the observer's eye back to your central message is key to an effective display.

Lighting should also be considered. Will your display continue to be lit when the store is dark? You may need to use strategically placed battery-operated spots.

If you want the public to contact you for further information, write your phone number large enough to be read at a distance.

Be sure to set up and take down your window display promptly at the store's request. They are providing you an important service by giving up their own advertising. Treat it with respect and they will ask you back.

Arrange for publicity, including photos for local media.

Demonstrations

Many boating safety topics may be presented using demonstrations at various sites—launch ramps, marinas, parking lots, etc. Two of the most effective demos are fire fighting aboard a boat and the wearing life jackets. These need a great deal of publicity including newspapers, radio announcements, and posters. They may need clearance with local authorities, especially the local fire department. Demonstrations of knot tying, proper mooring techniques, man-overboard drills and towing procedures are other suggested NSBW activities.

Waterway Clean-Up Promotions

A very popular and community-minded event is a weekend waterway cleanup on a lake, river, ocean or creek. There are always those unconcerned boaters who dump garbage overboard. We are constantly made aware of the harmful environmental and visual effect of non-degradable wastes such as plastics, vinyl and polypropylene.

Take the lead and offer local government officials the services of your flotilla to organize a clean-up campaign. Provide disposal bags to boaters, requesting them to collect their garbage and anything they see floating or on the banks and beaches they visit. At dockside provide them with a place to dump that trash.

A contest might be held: "Who has brought back the most bags of waterway waste?" An incentive would be prizes donated by local marinas or marine suppliers. Pre-planning as well as local government and media support will make this a very effective NSBW event.

The Quickie Quiz

Create a handout card that has six questions on safe boating. Place the answers on the back, with the message that if just one question was missed, the quiz taker just might have been in a life-threatening situation, and perhaps it's time to take a Coast Guard Auxiliary boating safety class. Include times and locations of current classes plus a contact number.

Quiz questions should not be tricky, but specific enough to require appropriate safety knowledge. Cards may be handed out at displays, launch ramps, marinas and at demonstrations, while giving VSCs or by boat dealers at their show rooms.

Local Recognition for NSBW Assistance

Plan to follow your NSBW project with a recognition celebration, inviting all those who provided outside assistance. This includes government officials, marina operators, local TV stations that filmed on-the-water demos, and newspaper editors who printed those articles. This allows the entire unit to express its thanks and makes the Auxiliary highly visible to the media.

The celebration may be as elaborate as a full banquet, or a flotilla-sponsored buffet. It may be as simple as an awards ceremony, followed by refreshments. The elaborate affair may include music donated by a local band or a speaker to keynote the event. The less formal event might feature an address by a local Coast Guard officer or the chief of police in charge of marine activities. Uniforms are a must, especially. If Coast Guard staff are invited, be sure to check with the senior officer for the proper uniform of the day, so that all wear the same uniform.

Letters of appreciation should be sent in a timely manner and include an invitation to your recognition event. Certificates of appreciation are more impressive when framed. The blue Auxiliary presentation folders are nice, but there's no way to hang them on the wall. An attractively framed certificate or a plaque will find a place in the recipient's office; an ever-present reminder of the Auxiliary presence and the cause of safe boating.

As members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, our active participation in National Safe Boating Week and the year-long campaign, point out our role as promoters of safe boating. May the material in this guide be of assistance to you, the Public Affairs Officers. Pass the message to the recreational boater everywhere: "Safe Boating is No Accident."

CHAPTER 8 | Elected Officers and Public Affairs

The bottom line is that “public affairs” is an elected officer’s task. Today and in the future, media will be wherever we are, and those same media will be the link with the American people.

Introduction

Elected officers (EO) are accustomed to taking on leadership roles. He/she is expected to provide leadership to maintain and improve the unit, develop and supervise projects, and manage a myriad of associated tasks.

One function of leadership lies in the area of public affairs. Much of what an EO learns about public affairs comes from on-the-job training with the public affairs officer (PAO). Additionally, much of what the EO learns about dealing with media comes from perceptions, or misperceptions, accumulated from years of watching television or reading newspapers.

The purpose of this article is to give elected officers a description of what to do to personally affect positive public affairs programs, what to expect from public affairs officers, and to detail the needs of media. It is important for the EO to recognize the public affairs program belongs to him/her. He/she is ultimately the most credible and knowledgeable center for information about the unit. Of course, as with all staff functions, he relies on the expertise provided by others to supervise and improve the public affairs program. It is useful to understand how to determine the relative abilities of PAO. Finally, understanding the roles and needs of media is also important in developing an effective public affairs program. The media and its wide and varied formats provide the conduit to the America people and, in many instances, our leaders. Knowing the institution is imperative.

The EO’s Role

EO’s should visit with local newspaper editors and television and radio station managers shortly after being elected. "Determine who the dominant personality in the business is. You cannot be guided by titles. There are more titles than offices in the newspaper industry. The same can be said for the various forms of electronic media including television, radio, and on-line services.

No one is more important in telling the Auxiliary’s story than the EO. By visiting the key media, the new EO can eliminate barriers with editors and publishers. The EO will not be a faceless "government official," but instead he will become a person local personalities feel is interested in their community.

The EO should consider conducting the following public affairs activities early in his/her term:

- 1) **Invite key media people to a meeting or a patrol.** Whatever you do, make him feel he always will be welcome and that you will endeavor to help him in any way possible."
- 2) **Provide a short (a minute or less) taped "hello"** speech for local radio stations. Provide a comparable video product for television outlets. Write an editorial for the local paper briefly listing your goals and objectives for the flotilla/division/district.
- 3) **EO should attend routine community relations meetings**, such as business-military affairs committee assemblies in the local area, and get to know key figures.

Command messages are central points to be made when encountering media. Although command messages are usually related to a certain situation, the EO must begin early in considering what messages he/she wants the public to understand. While it is clear media ultimately decides what to publish or broadcast, it is equally important to know that what he/she relates to media, either personally or through a PAO, is very likely to be in final published or broadcast products. It is critical that the EO articulates key points (usually three to five main points with supporting information) to the PAO as the PAO plans for media relations.

The Functions of the Public Affairs Officer

The PAO is the key staff officer responsible for providing information to the public for the unit. As a practical matter, for most issues the PAO is the EO spokesman and, as such, must be well prepared for the position. There are several aspects to being a PAO that a new EO can quickly use to assess the level of capabilities of his PAO.

- 1) The PAO should be thoroughly familiar with all facets of the flotilla/division/district as well as neighboring units. The PAO should be able to give a full briefing that relates your unit's missions, capabilities, training methods, facilities, on-going projects, historical summary, and philosophy.
- 2) The PAO must understand the Coast Guard Public Affairs Manual, the Auxiliary PA Guide, and the Auxiliary Manual as well as National, District, Division, and Flotilla directives.
- 3) Determine if the PAO's standard operating procedures (SOP) adequately cover the spectrum of public affairs to include media relations, community relations, and command information. SOPs should cover procedures for the release of information, a community relations event plan, and contacts related to production of command information items.
- 4) Ask the PAO to give you examples of articles that appeared in the local paper for the past six months? Do the articles cover the unit's missions well?

- 5) Has the PAO completed AUX-12? Has the PAO qualified as a PA1, 2, or 3?
- 6) What is the status of the speaker's bureau? Are speakers regularly used at local events?
- 7) What if any special projects or efforts are underway that might be of interest to the media in the unit? Does the PAO regularly send information to new media outlets? Is there a clear plan to attract different media sources?
- 8) Is public affairs guidance (PAG) given on a routine basis for Coast Guard-wide activities? What are the requirements for clearance of PA events beyond regulatory guidelines? Who are the PAO's at the higher levels within the organization?

It is vital to articulate that the function of the PAO is important to the unit's ability to accomplish its mission. By ensuring the PAO ability to accomplish his myriad of tasks, the EO will gain full credibility with the community and media and enhance the stature of the Auxiliary and Coast Guard.

Understanding Media

Media are diverse serving a vast array of outlets. Most publishers and broadcasters impose high standards of ethical conduct and want only truth in print or airing. It is useful to separate trashy tabloids, aimed at sensation from major dailies who aggressively seek accurate stories. Tabloids rely on rumor, eavesdropping, questionable informants, and, on some occasions, outright fabrication to sell papers.

Major dailies and networks, conversely, depend on reliable sources, a check or confirmation of the sources, official records, and independent experts for stories.

When using so-called "reliable but anonymous" sources, the credibility of the company is on the line -- not something the major outlets view lightly.

But, one may ask, is it not important for the major outlets to also sell ad space or airtime? The answer is yes, of course, which is why reporters are so assertive in gathering information. More often than not, two primary factors lead to the holding of the media in low esteem:

- 1) **A personal dislike** of article content. For example, a straight news article covering the resignation of a favorite politician will often be viewed as negative or slanted reporting by loyal followers.
- 2) **A lack of understanding** of what journalists consider to be news. Most news outlets use the following elements to determine newsworthiness: **Immediacy, proximity, consequence, conflict, oddity, sex appeal, emotion, prominence, suspense, and progress.** The more factors present, the more likely the story will run. Using these elements, one can understand why the O.J. Simpson trial

captivated the media (and the public). The trial was live (IMMEDIATE). Simpson (a PROMINENT athlete), was on trial for his life (CONSEQUENCE, SUSPENSE, CONFLICT). One could also say the case was unusual because of the stature of Simpson (ODDITY). Many will dispute the true "newsworthiness" of such a trial, but the massive numbers of daily viewers demonstrated why news organizations cover particular events with such vigor.

In their eagerness to cover stories, journalists sometimes make mistakes. Many mistakes often result from incomplete information. It is up to the Elected Officers and Public Affairs Officers to educate members of the media while addressing their needs in the appropriate format.

Conclusion

Public Affairs has a significant role in the Auxiliary. Public Affairs is an EO's program and requires the EO's personal attention. The commander relies on his principle staff officer for public affairs, the PAO. The PAO must demonstrate competencies across the spectrum of topics including media and community relations, and unit information. The PAO needs to exercise diligence and innovation to tell the unit and Coast Guard's story. Both the EO and PAO must understand needs of media. EO's and PAO's can ensure the needs of media and the Coast Guard is met by providing accurate, timely, and useful information.

Leader's Media Tips:

- 1) **Develop your Key Message(s).** What information do you want the general public to know? Craft your statements around these key messages.
- 2) **Think clearly about what may be printed or aired the next day.** Although some in media are loose with contextual use of quotes, rarely do the more established outlets use outright fabrication.
- 3) **Speak about what you know.** If you don't know the answer, simply say "I don't know." That answer rarely appears in print.
- 4) **Inject command messages.** In addition to answering completely and honestly, if you have a reservoir of command message facts, use them. (The underlying theme here is: the interviewer chooses the questions -- you choose the answer.)
- 5) **Questions won't be there.** Just as with electronic media, questions will not appear in the article. Don't worry about tailoring your answer for the interviewer's benefit.
- 6) **Think first,** Stop and think before answering. Correct answers are more important than deadlines.

Negative Backflow

If the interviewer uses a negative catch-phrase, such as "sex scandal," do NOT use the word or phrase as part of your answer.

Example: "What are you doing about the Coast Guard's sex scandal?"

Bad answer: "The sex scandal investigations are ongoing."

Better answer: "We are committed to investigating this matter and will take appropriate actions as necessary."

Everything counts. Don't forget: **YOU ARE ON THE RECORD.** Your conversation may be friendly but this is a business meeting -- stick to business.

Consistency, Just as you will use and reuse common themes, the interviewers often ask the same questions in different ways -- stay consistent.

Know the question, If you don't understand the question, make the interviewer rephrase. Know the question you are answering.

"No Comment" looks like you are hiding something. DO NOT say "no comment." If necessary, defer to the escorting PAO. PAOs can often assist in providing background materials.

Stay in your lane. If you are not the Secretary of Homeland Security or the designated spokesman, steer clear of answering for the Secretary. Talk about your area of expertise. If you did it or you are responsible for it, you can talk about it.

APPENDIX A | News Release Template



Date: August 26, 2010
Contact: Name
Public Affairs Officer
Phone Number
Email
<http://cgaux.org>

News Release (Times New Roman, 36 pt.)

Headline: Times New Roman, 14 pt., Bold, Centered

DATETIME – Datelines for news releases are where the basic information for the release was gathered. Datelines are followed by a space, a dash, and a space. The Coast Guard Auxiliary (who) is doing something/did something (what), somewhere, day of week if it is within six days (not today/yesterday), why and how if known or not obvious. These elements are to be only one sentence that comprises your lead and does not exceed 35 words. Do not use names of people in the lead unless they are of prominence.

The text of the release will be Times New Roman 12pt. The second graph of the release expands on the who, what, where, when, how, and why of the lead and/or completes the impersonal who captured in the lead.

Copy in releases shall comply with the most recent edition of the Coast Guard and AP Stylebooks. As such, cutter civilian vessel names are never all caps and are not italicized. Abbreviations such as T/S, M/V, or F/V are not acceptable.

Acronyms and abbreviations are not placed in parentheses following the first reference, they are simply used on second and subsequent references as determined by the stylebooks.

Follow AP Stylebook for military units when naming specific units. Examples: 17th Coast Guard District, 8th Coast Guard District, Coast Guard Station Cape Hatteras, N.C.

Between the last line of your release and the tag line at the bottom must appear the end sign, ###, which tells copyeditors that nothing else follows. The end symbol, ###, shall be centered.

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APPENDIX B | Suggested References

Public Affairs

Coast Guard Public Affairs Manual	http://www.auxpa.org/downloads/PAGUIDE.pdf
Coast Guard Auxiliary Public Affairs	http://auxpa.org
Public Relations Society of America	http://www.prsa.org/
National Information Officers Assoc.	http://www.nioa.org/site/

News Writing

Coast Guard Stylebook	
Coast Guard Magazine Style Guide	http://www.uscg.mil/mag/style.asp
Associated Press (AP) Stylebook	http://www.apstylebook.com/
Merriam-Webster	http://www.merriam-webster.com/
CGAUX NAVIGATOR Stylebook	http://auxpa.org/resources/

Photography

USCG Visual Imagery Gallery	http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php
USCG Historic Photography	http://www.uscg.mil/history/CG_Photo_Index.asp
Photography Training	http://www.kelbytraining.com/

Imagery and Logos

Style Usage Guide	http://www.style.auxpa.org/
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