



# Safety Lines

Issue Number 1

Spring 2016

## Auxiliary Assists with Mandatory Fishing Exams in Northern California

By Sue Fry, BA-PVF



**SAN FRANCISCO BAY**—Auxiliarists Sue Fry and Dale Fajardo review the safety equipment aboard a commercial fishing vessel Mar. 21, 2016. Sixteen Auxiliarists, active duty, reservists and a civilian employee from Vessel Traffic Service completed the semiannual training for Examiners Nov. 2, 2015, and were out on the docks the next day. Photo by Roger Bazeley, FSO-PA FL 17, D11N. Article on page 3. [Click to read...](#)

Newsletter of the  
Prevention Directorate  
USCG Auxiliary



Auxiliarists take  
Active Role in  
Container  
Inspections  
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Winter Comes to  
the Great Lakes...  
*and it is cold up  
there!*  
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Hawaii Auxiliary  
Assist in Marine  
Environmental  
Protection  
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## SAFETY LINES

Newsletter of the Prevention Directorate, USCG Auxiliary

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## Cover Story

## Auxiliary Assists with Mandatory Fishing Exams in Northern California.

By Sue Fry, BA-PVF

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY**—Late October 2015, Coast Guard Island in District 11 Northern Region (D11N) sent out a call requesting Auxiliary assistance in putting together kits to hand out to commercial fishing vessel operators fishing or crabbing on the California coast and contiguous bays. In the kits were placards, reflective tape, stability information, marine incident alcohol stipulations, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) brochures, Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circulars (NVIC) notices, and clarification of Mandatory Safety Exams for Commercial Fishing Vessels that went into effect on Oct. 16, 2015.

Sixteen Auxiliarists, active duty members, reservists and a civilian employee from Vessel Traffic Service reported for the semi-annual training for Examiners at Alameda Calif., Nov. 2, 2015, to complete initial or refresher training conducted by LCDR David Cripe, USCGR and Manny Ramirez, the civilian CFVE coordinator, two of the three D11N Primary Examiners.

The room was filled with fire extinguishers, charts, immersion suits and strobe lights, a life raft with release, life jackets and a variety of EPIRB's with hydrostatic releases. The exam check-off sheet was discussed line by line and questions asked and answered and a power point used to make items graphically clear.

At the end, teams for each of the eight harbors were assigned and materials for the fishermen including safety decals were released to each team leader.

Auxiliary Examiners spent the next three days at those eight harbors in a dockside surge to give safety exams to those who had appointments or who requested an exam with the Coast Guard Primary

Examiners. Exams are ongoing and many are re-dos to catch up on missing items on vessels. Because of the number of vessels along the coast, it was several weeks before all were cleared.

The new mandatory exam is good for five years, but the local command is still requiring a two-year safety decal to be completed so that paperwork, expired flares, hydrostatic devices, registrations for radios, EPIRBS and many of the other items can be checked for safety.

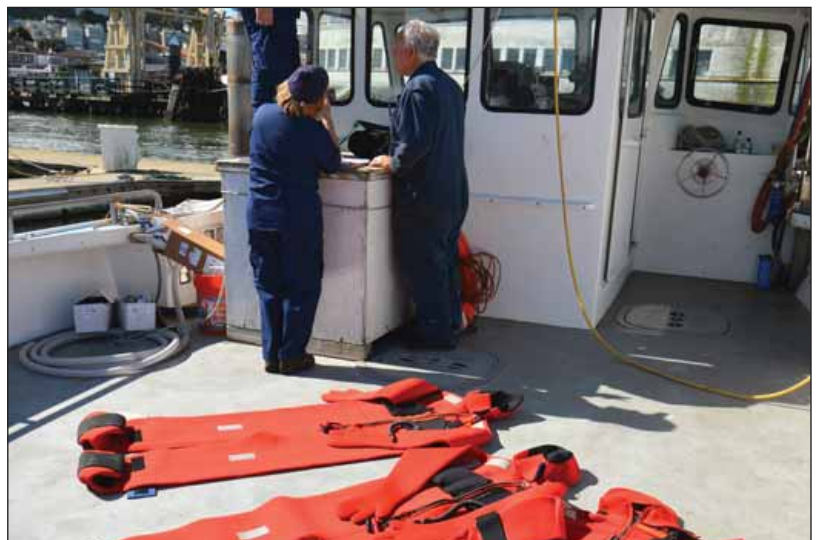


**Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination sticker.**

The news that crab season was delayed because of the algae bloom caused by the unusual warm waters and the finding of domoic acid in the meat of the crabs came as a huge blow to many of the fishermen. Those who fish other types of fish did so and put off crabbing until later, or maybe did not fish at all during the 2015 season.

Domoic acid (DA) is a kainic acid analog neurotoxin that causes amnesic shellfish poisoning (ASP). It is produced by algae and accumulates in shellfish, sardines, and anchovies. When sea lions, otters, cetaceans, humans etc., eat contaminated animals, poisoning may result. Ω

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY**—Auxiliarists Sue Fry conducts a mandatory Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination Mar. 21, 2016. The local Coast Guard command requires a two-year safety decal to be completed so that paperwork, expired flares, hydrostatic devices, radio registrations, EPIRBS and other safety equipment can be checked more frequently. Photos this page by Roger Bazeley, FSO-PA FL 17, D11N.





## Port and Facility Activities

### Port and Facility Activities Division:

#### *Who We Are and What We Do*

By Sue Fry, BA-BPF



**SEATTLE**—Personnel from a Marine Safety Office checks the ships and docks around the waterways of the 13th Coast Guard District for safety, and oil or fuel leakage into our waters. U.S. Coast Guard Photo

The Port and Facility Activities Division includes Port Facility Inspections, Marine Safety oriented activities such as marine observation (MOM) patrols, Container Inspections, support for the Regional Exam Centers and other special projects.

In addition to these missions and activities, the division makes sure that the laws governing hazardous materials and safe containers are observed by the shipping and handling industry as prescribed by the Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs).

Following the passage of the Federal Hazardous Materials Transportation Law and the International Safe Container Act of 1977, the Coast Guard became responsible for ensuring that hazardous materials were not being shipped illegally. Examples of requirements under the act include examining facilities for a Certificate of Adequacy,

observing and noting particulars about the required safety plan for the type of facility inspected, assuring that the facility has been annually reviewed and that proper personnel have been involved.

Containers are examined for structural standards, maintenance, proper markings, labeling and placarding. This department also checks on the compatibility of packaged hazardous materials during transit and checking the Dangerous Goods Lists. Hazardous containers are usually marked and grouped together in the port making them easier to locate during inspections. Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) standards must also be observed and followed by the inspectors.

Some hazardous materials require designated facilities and specific, controlled handling. Examples include a designated waterfront facility for a particular type of hazard such as the handling of oil, or bulk products, chemical products or explosives. Liquefied natural gas or liquefied hazardous gas also require specific facilities and handling. Other facilities like Marine Pollution Reception (MARPOL) facilities which may receive products from ships regularly must have certain equipment to make transfer and disposal safe.

Other types of facilities are freight bulk, passenger and ferry facilities, cruise ship terminals and barge fleeting facilities. Each of these types of facilities must have security protocols, conduct security drills and exercises, and must have proper signage to inform incoming public and workers of the level of security in place for that day.

Container and facility inspections generally follow the Performance Qualification Standard (PQS) that a Coast Guard Inspector or an Assistant Auxiliary Inspector would learn, and an Auxiliarist would be required to know before becoming a member of an Inspection Team. Ω

## Prevention Outreach

### The Prevention Outreach Division

By COMO Mary Larsen, DVC-PW

Under the heading of Outreach, the Division oversees two programs: America's Waterway Watch and Sea Partners.

**America's Waterway Watch (AWW)** is the program administered by the Coast Guard that enlists the public's assistance, asking anyone who sees something suspicious on the nation's waterways to notify the authorities by calling 877-24WATCH. In addition to suspicious activity the public is asked to report any hazard, such as an oil spill, to authorities. To aid in this effort an AWW application has been added to the Coast Guard downloadable application which allows access to a range of topics. This allows the public to reach the National Response Center directly and file a detailed report. Under the AWW portion of Outreach we act as liaison with the Coast Guard and serve as an interface with the public.

The Branch Chief of the Division, Barry Berg, provides updates on the materials available to the membership and helps maintain the web page.

**Sea Partners** is the Coast Guard program with the goal of "Saving the People from the Sea; and the Sea from the People", although it might be more accurate to refer to saving all the nation's waters from the "people," as the intent of our program is to make the public aware that all debris and/or hazardous materials tossed into any of our waters should be considered as marine debris.

Auxiliarists working with the Sea Partners program

use a wide range of materials for all age groups but much of it is intended for young people. We are trying to educate the next generation on the proper disposal of anything that does not belong in the water. The program has a mascot, Sammy the Sea Otter, who is very popular with a young audience.

The Branch Chief for this program is Toni Borman. Ω



The Sea Partners program uses a wide range of materials for all age groups but much of it is intended for young people.



## Commercial Vessel Activities

### Commercial Vessel Activities Division

By George Peek DVC-PV

The Commercial Vessel Activities Division is responsible for oversight of Auxiliary programs and qualifications concerning all types of commercial vessels. Three areas comprise the majority of Auxiliary support to the Coast Guard's regulatory compliance of commercial vessels: Uninspected Passenger Vessels (UPV), Uninspected Towing Vessels (UTV), and Commercial Fishing Vessels (CFV). There are additional areas of support including inspection of K-boats, T-boats, cargo vessels and Port State Control. All commercial vessel support opportunities depend on Coast Guard needs and proximity to appropriate training environments. All commercial vessel activities require certification and local Sector designation.

The Auxiliary provides the primary support for the UPV program throughout the country. All vessels carrying passengers for hire in navigable waters are subject to the Small Passenger Vessel Act of 1993. Vessels carrying six or fewer passengers are not required to be inspected by the Coast Guard but may request a voluntary examination and receive a decal. The exam provides assurance to passengers that the vessel meets all Federal requirements. Uninspected does not mean unregulated. UPVs may consist of charter fishing boats, airboats, eco-tour vessels, bass boats, parasail vessels, or any other boating activity that has paying passengers. Opportunities for Auxiliarists to become certified as a UPV examiner exist in all areas of the country with navigable waters, but especially in areas where there are concentrations of recreational and tourist activities.

The Auxiliary provides approximately 25 percent of the Commercial Fishing Vessel examinations performed throughout the country, significantly augmenting the Coast Guard's CFV examination program. As of Oct. 15, 2015, all commercial fishing vessels that go beyond three miles from shore must have an examination performed every two years. Given the volume of commercial fishing vessels, primarily along the coasts, there are numerous opportunities for Auxiliarists to become certified CFV Examiners.

Auxiliarists generally work directly with the local Coast Guard Sector Commercial Vessel Coordinator, who

assist personnel in becoming certified and in assigning vessels to be examined.

The UTV program is smaller than both UPV and CFV programs and is currently awaiting promulgation of Subchapter M of CFR 46 to determine the role of Auxiliarists in the inspection of commercial towing vessels. It is anticipated that some opportunity for Auxiliarists to assist with UTV inspections will continue under the new rules.

All commercial vessel certifications require the completion of a Performance Qualification Standard (PQS), completion of required background courses, and significant on-the-job training (OJT). Many of the certifications require an oral board (a type of final exam), and all require approval by the local Coast Guard Sector Commander. Commercial vessel certification is Sector specific; it is not a national qualification. Usually there is no problem obtaining designation as an examiner if one moves to another Sector, but it will require both Sector Commanders to agree to the change. The local Sector may also impose additional rules and currency maintenance requirements that mirror the active duty requirements.

Overall, there are numerous opportunities available to Auxiliarists who are committed to supporting the Coast Guard through active participation in one or more of the commercial vessel programs. The place to begin is with the Prevention Directorate website, <http://www.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=p-dept>, which contains a brief overview of the UPV, UTV and CFV programs, as well as all of the PQSs for Auxiliary support of the Marine Safety programs. Your local flotilla, division, and district Marine Safety staff officers can direct you to Auxiliarists who are active in the commercial vessel program, and who can provide more detail on the certification process and the subsequent tasks you would perform. The Coast Guard needs Auxiliary support in all commercial vessel activities. Ω





## Communications and Education

### Communications and Education Division

Deborah Johnson, DVC-PO

The Communications and Education Division is responsible for the timely and accurate communication of Prevention information to all Marine Safety and Navigations Systems Staff Officers and members through a variety of media. Additionally, we maintain training materials and the Marine Safety insignia program resources.

We also maintain grant support information including grant opportunities published as MS/MEP Resources and Grant Writing Tips found on the website under 'Resources.'

The Prevention Web pages are created and maintained for the members and Staff Officers to use as a resource for reference material, training resources, program information, Marine Safety Alerts, C-School information, and other categories of particular relevance to Prevention programs.

We are resuming quarterly publication of the Prevention Directorate newsletter, "Safety Lines," and want to encourage all District Staff Officers to contribute an article highlighting their District activities for each issue. Our newsletter editor, Dorothy Riley, is an award-winning publisher/editor who has revitalized and updated our newsletter format to reflect our current training and missions. Each edition will also feature articles from the Prevention Directorate Divisions as well as periodic articles from the Director and Deputy Director of Prevention. The newsletter will be published to our website as soon as it is approved and notices will be sent out to all Staff Officers and members when it becomes available.

All members and Prevention Staff Officers are urged to visit the Prevention Directorate website on a regular basis to maintain their program knowledge, learn about what other districts are doing, and learn new information as it becomes available. As always, the Prevention Directorate Staff welcomes questions and comments which should initially be directed to this division through the Marine Safety chain. The key to a rewarding, productive program is timely communication of accurate information. Ω

### *From the Editor*

We are excited to resume publication of "Safety Lines" with an all-new layout and design. Our newsletter should highlight every division and every mission within the Prevention Directorate so we encourage every Division Chief to solicit submissions from their staff.

We recommend that you take advantage of this medium to announce what is new or different, program changes and updates and interesting events and missions from all of our districts. This is your opportunity to applaud program successes and member's efforts.

What we need from you:

1. **Announcements and articles of interest.** Articles do not need to be lengthy. Often one or two simple paragraphs suffice to express a concept or inform readers about a program change or an activity.
2. Don't worry about grammar and punctuation. We will edit all submissions. **Do mention the participating members by name.** This applauds their contributions and encourages other members to participate.

3. **Recurring columns from each division.** We have amassed a great deal of information that we should share with our members.

4. **Photographs** are always welcome! Photos should be high-resolution and forwarded as attachments, not embedded in an email or text document. Be sure to tell us WHO is depicted, WHEN the photo was taken, WHERE it was taken, and the activity or event depicted (WHAT/WHY). Also, always include the name of the photographer or cite the source of the photograph.

The submission deadline for our next issue is May 15, 2016. Please forward all submissions to Deborah Johnson, DVC-PO or Dottie Riley, BC-POT.

We hope you are as excited about the new "Safety Lines" as we are and look forward to your articles and photographs. Tell everyone about the significant contributions your members make to the Coast Guard and to the Auxiliary. Ω

Dorothy Joan Riley, BC-POT



## Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspectors: Expansion of Port Increases Need for Inspectors

By Susan Polans, Flotilla 21 Casco Bay, D1NR

**PORTLAND, Me.**—A cargo shipping belonging to Eimskip departs from Portland Harbor. Eimskip provides regular transatlantic service between Portland and Europe that has more than doubled the number of containers in Portland over just a few years. Photo by Corey Templeton. Permission to print granted by the photographer.

**PORTLAND, Me.**—Several Auxiliarists from Division 2, District 1 Northern Region recently became qualified as Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspectors (AUX-EC). They include Susan Polans, ADSO-MS, Flotilla 21 Casco Bay; Alex Lachiatto, District Captain, SNNR; Gordon Nash, Flotilla 25 Boothbay Harbor; Wolf -Dieter Dehne, Gene Grossi, John Lopez and Peter Fagley, all from Flotilla 28 Portsmouth.

A need for inspectors arose when EIMSKIP, an Icelandic shipping company, moved their headquarters to the International Marine Terminal in Portland. The number of containers at the terminal more than doubled from 3,381 in 2013 to more than 7,000 in 2015. Most of the containers are from Europe with some from Iceland as well.

Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspectors adhere to a strict protocol when inspecting containers. After a container ship arrives in Portland at the terminal, the Coast Guard selects several random containers for inspection and places these in a separate area away from the ship. To gain access to the terminal, the Auxiliarist must show proper identification and have the required personal protection equipment (PPE) such as hard hats, gloves, eye protection and reflective

safety vests.

The Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspector first looks at the placards on the container and using the shipping papers, confirms that they have been correctly marked according to their country of origin. They then walk around the container to note any possible leakage of materials. The Inspector will also check closely for any structural damage that the container may have incurred during shipment. If any deficiencies are found, the Yard Manager and Customs are notified.

Caution is used when opening the container doors. A safety strap is attached across the container's doors prior to opening the container. The right hand door is then opened six to seven inches and a gas meter is placed inside to determine the presence of gas and if the concentration of gas present is hazardous. Once they verify that the gas level inside the container is not hazardous, the USCG Inspector will then stand at the left hand door and look in to confirm that the cargo in the container has not shifted during transit which could cause a safety hazard when opening both doors fully. After the container doors

*Continued on page 9*



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have been opened fully, the container is allowed to “air out” to eliminate any possibility of sickening the Inspectors. Once these precautions have been completed, the USCG Inspector will enter the container approximately three feet or up to the first line of dunnage.

The above is just a brief description of the protocol followed when a container is inspected. Auxiliarists acting as Assistant Container Inspectors may not enter confined spaces or perform any law enforcement activity required during a container inspection.

To obtain the qualification of Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspector, an Auxiliarist must learn about the shipping regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) as well as the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) codes, Department of Transportation charts and the Emergency Response Guidebook.

Our Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspection team extends a special thank you to MST 1 Michael Vinson and Thomas Gentile, CIV for the time they spent conducting the training that enabled Auxiliary members from the Portland area to become qualified.

This not an easy qualification, but with the increasing traffic of containers arriving at the International Marine Terminal in Portland, there is a definite need

for qualified Auxiliary Assistants to help out with the increased work load. This is just one of the many interesting and exciting opportunities available to Auxiliarists in the Marine Safety area.

For further information on Marine Safety opportunities within your area, speak with your flotilla or division Marine Safety Staff Officer. Ω



**PORTLAND, Me.— Susan Polans, Alex Lachiatto and Gordon Nash, Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspectors, check the International Marine Dangerous Goods (IMDG) code book for compliance Aug. 7, 2015. Photo by Mr. Gentile, Port Security Specialist.**

## Marine Safety: District 1 Southern Region, Sector Long Island Sound

By Denis Morrissey, DSO-MS D1SR

Over the past few years, the Marine Safety group in 1SR has begun a renewed focus on its direct augmentation missions. These missions are unique in the Auxiliary. The training for these missions is only available if the local Sector has a need to support the particular mission. In addition, the training is very demanding, and once completed, the trainee is expected to contribute to that mission.

In Sector Long Island Sound, the focus is on Uninspected Passenger Vessel Examiner (AUX-UPV), Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiner (CFVE), and Uninspected Towing Vessel Examiner (UTVE). The CFVE and the UTVE are the only Active Duty qualifications available to Auxiliarists.

Several members are actively involved in training for these missions with Sector Long Island Sound in both Long Island and Connecticut. This training

includes the detailed study of the regulations that control these activities as well as participation with Active Duty personnel in actual examinations on commercial vessels. Ω



## From Our Districts

### District 5 Northern Region

Laurie Huselton, DSO-MS

District 5 Northern Region is relatively small and includes parts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. Incorporated in the region are mountains, lakes, wetlands and coastline, and each of these areas presents a unique set of concerns and challenges.

The members in the eastern and central parts of the region have the opportunity to work closely with the United States Coast Guard in support of the Marine Safety/Marine Environmental Protection (MS/MEP) missions and there is more exposure to organized MS/MEP related events. The Western areas of the region

are not afforded the same opportunities. The challenge then becomes to have all the members in the MS/MEP programs feel they are on the same team and that all of the missions accomplished are important.

One of the ways we will be working toward a more united team is to focus on common goals. We will be focusing on the education of our members - more of

a grassroots effort to explain to the membership the MS/MEP missions. We will be working to achieve a more widespread coverage of America's Waterway Watch. All areas are important no matter where members live. If we focus on common goals, we can meet these goals as a team, a united team, TEAM COAST GUARD. Ω



### District 5 Southern Region

By David Gruber, DSO-MS

I am pleased to report that during 2015, Fifth Southern District approved the completion of the Auxiliary Prevention Outreach Specialist (AUX-MEES) qualification by eight members, four members completed the Auxiliary Administrative and Management Specialist (AUX-MSAM) qualification, and four earned Marine Safety Training Ribbons. During this time, our District recorded 3,646 hours in Marine Safety (MS) with over 1,147 of those hours recorded as MS training. An additional 1,872 hours were entered for MS as 99C MS support hours. These accomplishments were enthusiastically implemented largely because of an outstanding staff of Assistant Staff Officers (ADSO)-MS. This group includes Jessica Allard, Sector Baltimore; Mark Babcock, Sector Hampton Roads; Vern Scott, Sector North Carolina, and Allen Fredd, ADSO-MS for Commercial Vessels.

Without a doubt, the "Best Practice" has been the implementation and use of the "Go To Training/Meeting" platform! This platform has enabled "face to face" meetings amongst all levels of MS staff and the membership at large. With just one year since its initiation, this platform has increased participation in Good Mate, Introduction to Marine Safety and Envi-

ronmental Protection (IMSEP), as well as AUX-MEES PQS and AUX-MSAM PQS courses. Furthermore, the platform has generated additional interest in various other Marine Safety qualifications including Uninspected Passenger Vessel Examinations, Commercial Fishing Vessel Examinations, Port Facility Inspections and Container Inspections.

Plans are underway for 2016. We already held an "all hands" MS meeting to discuss our objectives for this year. Numerous AUX-MEES and AUX-MSAM training sessions are planned throughout all three of our Sectors. We hope to utilize the "Go To" platform to teach the Good Mate and Introduction to Marine Environmental Protection courses. An overview of the Marine Safety programs will be presented at our District meeting in Richmond. MS staff is focused on getting the MS word out to the leadership this year and to overcome a former breakdown in the chain of communications. Finally, we are calling on those participating in MS activities to more faithfully record their MS hours on the appropriate Forms 7030 and/or 7029 (99C). Ω

*Image: Fifth Southern patch speaks to the pride all members have in their regions and missions.*





## From Our Districts

### District 7

William McCarn, ADSO-MS

### Sector St. Petersburg Offers Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Investigator Training.

With the expansion of the Panama Canal, like other seaports along the Gulf of Mexico, the Port of Tampa is preparing for an influx of cargo vessels. Between a greater number of cargo vessels in the region and the peninsula's vulnerability to pollution by storms or spills from offshore oil rigs, Sector St. Petersburg Incident Management Division invited Coast Guard Auxiliarists to participate in a three-day training event for Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Investigator. The training was conducted Sept. 22-24, 2015, at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Training Center in St. Petersburg. This was the first time that Sector St. Petersburg offered this training.

The training, conducted by LT Simpson, LTJG Daws, MSTC Morgan, MST2 Garza, MST3 Bast, MST3 Crawford and MST3 Haan, USCG, Sector St. Petersburg, consisted of two days of classroom training and one day of field training. Seventeen Auxiliarists from throughout District 7 participated.

The classroom portion of the training included a PowerPoint presentation that presented the basics of pollution investigation, environmental law, safety, oil spill sampling procedures, evidence collection and oil removal equipment and procedures. Field exercises included documentation, Notice of Federal Interest (NOFI) and witness statements, tailgate safety briefs, public affairs interviews and oil sampling procedures. A contractor provided a demonstration of an oil skimmer, one of many types of pollution containment and removal equipment available to help clean up after an incident.

As a result of this training, attendees are motivated to complete their training and obtain the Letter of Designation (LOD) as an Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Investigator. Five current Auxiliary Pollution Investigators will also be designated as "Verifying Officers" to expedite signing off Performance Qualification Standard (PQS). Oral Boards are conducted by the Coast Guard. The goal is to have other Sectors aware of this training program and implement it nationwide. Ω



**Top: ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.—A private contractor demonstrates an oil skimmer to Auxiliarists attending the three-day training for Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Investigator Sept. 22-24, 2015.**

**Lower photo: An instructor from Sector St. Petersburg Incident Management Division shows trainees how to collect samples. Photos provided by Pat McCarn**

*Pat McCarn, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Officer, Flotilla 9-10 D7, provided photographs and information for this article.*



## From Our Districts

### District 8 Coastal Region

John Edel, DSO-MS

District 8 Coastal (8C) encompasses a large diverse area that supports four Sectors and five Marine Safety Units from Florida to Texas and supports inner lakes as far west as New Mexico and north to Oklahoma. Each Sector supports a variety of activities; however, this article will focus on Division 6 West-Southeast because Sector Houston is trying a different concept.

The Houston Ship Channel is 52-miles long and hosts more than 60 ships and 340 barge movements each day. Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) provided statistics indicating an annual increase of nearly 10% since 2004, and, as the Panama Canal nears completion, there is a high potential of additional increases in vessel size and traffic. The deepening and widening of the Houston Ship Channel brought larger ships to the waterway. With a projected depth of 45 feet and width of 530 feet, the channel can accommodate the "Suezmax" tanker, which carries up to 40% more cargo than any ship permitted within the channel's previous dimensions. Expansions are ongoing for Texas City and Galveston channels providing additional safe anchorage areas and making the shipping lanes deeper.

In addition to these commercial shipping vessels transiting through the area, the region is home to the nation's third largest marina with over 7,000 recreational boat slips. There is a robust fishing and shellfish industry. Kemah and other seaside communities boast exceptional dining and other recreational opportunities resulting in over 4 million visitors each year. The Galveston Bay Complex has many offshore gas platforms with underwater gas lines running from platform to platform and from platform to shore. The railroad commission keeps track of gas line location.

Due to reduction in force and funding, Sector Houston has many areas that are trying to utilize the Auxiliary to augment the U.S. Coast Guard by providing additional support for data entry into the new MISLE system and providing search and rescue capabilities during weekends

for both air and surface operations. Crews are expected to respond to a search and rescue (SAR) incident within 30 minutes.

Training and operations for SARs mirrors the Coast Guard's to avoid unnecessary mistakes. To ensure that the Auxiliary is getting the same training as the Coast Guard, crews are intermixed.

Surface crew and coxswains are required to attend Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Awareness (HAZWOPER) training and Auxiliary facilities are equipped with the necessary safety gear. New chemicals and hazards are periodically introduced in the training, therefore, awareness training must be attended annually. AUXDATA does not support tracking HAZWOPER Awareness training so tracking is accomplished through local record keeping. Auxiliary Learning Management System (AUX-LMS) has a HAZWOPER Awareness class but course completion does not transfer into the Auxiliary training record.

We will be training additional members for Private Aids to Navigation observation and reporting. Dredging lines have lighting requirements and are considered private aids. There have been accidents in the area involving recreational boaters hitting dredge lines, in some cases, resulting in a fatality. More people need to observe dredging line lighting and report discrepancies. The Auxiliary should provide more support in this area to make recreational boating safer and prevent

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**NATCHEZ, Miss. (May 19, 2004)**—The crew of the USCGC GREENBRIER is responsible for maintaining aids to navigation along the inland waterways between Baton Rouge and Natchez. USCG photo by PA3 Jonathan McCool

unnecessary grounding incidents and other accidents due to inadequate marking and lack of boating safety education.

Along the outskirts of the Galveston complex are many homes, businesses and marsh areas that support the ecosystem. The area adjacent to them is at risk when an oil spill from a collision occurs or when a major storm devastates the area. When either of these happens, time is a major factor. We have to access these areas before irreversible damage occurs. For this reason, the Captain of the Port (COTP) has requested that we train members of other Divisions to support Division 6 with shallow water craft (PWCs). Integrating with the Incident Command process is a major task that we are currently working on by getting more members trained and certified. Ω

**VENICE, La.—Workers rake up debris and vacuum displaced oil that has accumulated in the marshlands of Blind Bay July 13, 2010. Auxiliary members are taught to recognize and report hazardous materials. Cleanup of hazardous material is not part of the awareness training. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Polly Bennett.**



**NEW ORLEANS (Jan. 20, 2016)—A red nun buoy lies on the levee bank of the Mississippi River, a casualty of the high water on the river. District 8 Coastal Region plans to train additional members for Private Aids to Navigation observation and reporting. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Lora Ratliff**





## From Our Districts

### District 8 Eastern Region

William Siler, DSO-MS D8E

District 8 Eastern Region covers all or part of ten different States from Pennsylvania to Alabama. We have 4500 miles of navigable waterways that fall under Federal jurisdiction. The district has five Active Duty Coast Guard Marine Safety Units (MSUs), all under Sector Ohio Valley.

The Eighth Eastern Region is unique in that Auxiliary Marine Safety opportunities are limited. A member is fortunate if they live close to a MSU that is receptive to offers of Auxiliary support. It is not unusual for members to travel great distances (100 miles one way) at their own expense to support Coast Guard MS missions. Paducah, Kentucky; Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, have several eager and qualified Auxiliarists who provide support. Marine Safety activities involve examination of uninspected tow boats and uninspected passenger vessels.

Auxiliary support is valuable in our large inland river system. Often an Auxiliarist may be the only Coast Guard presence in these areas.



**LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Under gray skies, various riverboats are docked for the Centennial Festival of Riverboats, Oct. 14, 2014. The Centennial Festival of Riverboats is a festival held to celebrate the history of Ohio River boats. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Carlos Vega.**

The member often has specific local knowledge accumulated by living in the area for many years and sometimes know local law enforcement and emergency management personnel on a personal basis. These “locals” are a valuable asset in providing area familiarization and introductions for Activity Duty Coast Guard personnel. Ω

## Expand Your Knowledge: Learn More About Marine Safety and Marine Environmental Protection

### Good Mate

This course was developed by the Ocean Conservancy and is designed to encourage ocean and waterway conservation by boaters.

### Introduction to Marine Safety and Environmental Protection

This course is designed to provide an extensive background in the history, policies, laws and regulations pertaining to the Marine Safety and Environmental Protection missions. It is the Auxiliary equivalent of the 12-week Coast Guard Marine Science Technician A-School.

This course counts as 2 points toward the AUXOP device.

<http://classroom2.cgaux.org/moodle/course/index.php?categoryid=17>

(You must log in to access these courses.)

Information on Auxiliary Administrative and Management Specialist (AUX-MSAM) qualifications and Auxiliary Prevention Outreach Specialist (AUX-MEES) (formerly Marine Environmental Education Specialist) is located on the Prevention Directorate website at:

<http://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=P-DEPT&category=ms-pgs>





## From Our Districts

### District 8 Western Rivers

***“...And miles to go before I sleep...”***

By Barry S. Berg, DSO-MS

District 8 Western Rivers is geographically a large district. Our 12 Divisions cover the heartland of the country and are essentially located on the Mississippi River and its tributaries. Only the Ohio River and its tributaries are not in our area of responsibility. The Mississippi River drains three-quarters of the fresh water of the United States. All of that water flows through Sector Lower Mississippi in the southern portion of our district.

With approximately 1200 Auxiliarists spread over 16 States, we are probably the largest geographic district in the United States- if you don't count the distance between Guam and Hawaii in District 14. The terrain, consisting of mostly the Great Plains, ends at the Rocky Mountains in the West and includes three of the four major continental divides. Most of the fresh water in this country flows through our rivers and ends up in the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes or Hudson Bay. The area is populated with forests and lakes, and the population spends a great deal of time in outdoor recreation which makes the area environmentally important.

Unlike most other districts, we do not have deep water shipping and ports in any part of our district. Agricultural products, raw materials, and fresh water flow out of our region, and goods flow in by rail and barge.

District 8WR comprises 13 Coast Guard Units, two sectors, four Marine Safety Detachments (MSDs), ten cutters, and one Aids to Navigation Team. While the railroad traffic isn't in the jurisdiction of the United States Coast Guard, it runs along the edges of the rivers, and when a derailment occurs, it usually ends up putting product into the rivers, including highly explosive Bakken crude oil. Citizens do not think of any connection to the oceans even though everything in the rivers flows into the Exclusive Economic Zone of the U.S. The biggest question at Public Affairs events is, “What is the Coast Guard doing in (add state



name here)?” When we explain about the major rivers and their flows, they usually respond with new awareness and, “Oh, Yeah.”

Of the 24 Marine Safety Performance Qualification Standards (PQSS), very few are available here. The principal PQSS and augmentation deal mostly with Environmental Outreach. The Marine Safety Training Ribbon, Auxiliary Administrative and Management Specialist (AUX-MSAM) and Auxiliary Prevention Outreach Specialist

(AUX-MEES) are realistically the only qualifications most District 8WR members can earn. This tends to be very discouraging for participation in the Marine Safety Program within the district, yet with our focus on environmental awareness, most members are very positive about delivering these messages.

Our problem is that there are not enough qualified people to act as Verification Officers (VOs) and mentors in the district. For example, nearly half of the divisions have no one qualified in AUX-MSAM, but the territory is so big and the 14 qualified individuals are located in pockets. What to do ... what to do? How do we get these VOs distributed throughout the district where the normal one-on-one Marine Safety training produces well-qualified individuals?

After all, the stewardship of the Marine Safety Program in this district will be in the hands of those we

*Continued on page 16*

*Continued from page 15*

qualify. Someday, the health of the program will depend, in part, on their training.

District 5 Southern annually conducts what they now call their X-Train and in a compressed week-end, they can get most or all of a qualification completed. Why can't we do that? Well at our 2016 D-Train to be held in

April in Peoria, Illinois, we will find out if we can too. Working with John Guyer, District Staff Officer-Mem-

ber Training 8WR, and Carl Koonsman, District Directorate Chief-Prevention, we will be holding a marathon event.

This AUX-MSAM training will feature a four-hour class session and then assignment of a VO/mentor. Many of the 14 qualified members will be present at D-Train. The classroom session will cover the material in the first four sections of the qualification, and the candidate(s) will meet with their assigned VO after class and throughout the weekend as time permits.

At the end of D-Train, the VOs will keep their assigned candidate's workbooks. What can't be done at D-Train will continue via phone, email, Skype or webinar. The VO will continue to sign off tasks in the candidate's book and prepare them with a mock oral board. When the candidate is ready, an oral board will be scheduled by webinar or conference call, and when the candidate passes, the VO will sign off the last remaining items and send the PQS to the District Staff Officer-Marine Safety. After a brief check of the paperwork and a conversation with the VO, the paperwork goes to Director of Auxiliary with a request to enclose the Marine Safety Training Ribbon application with the Letter of Designation (LOD) when sent back to the member's flotilla for the award.

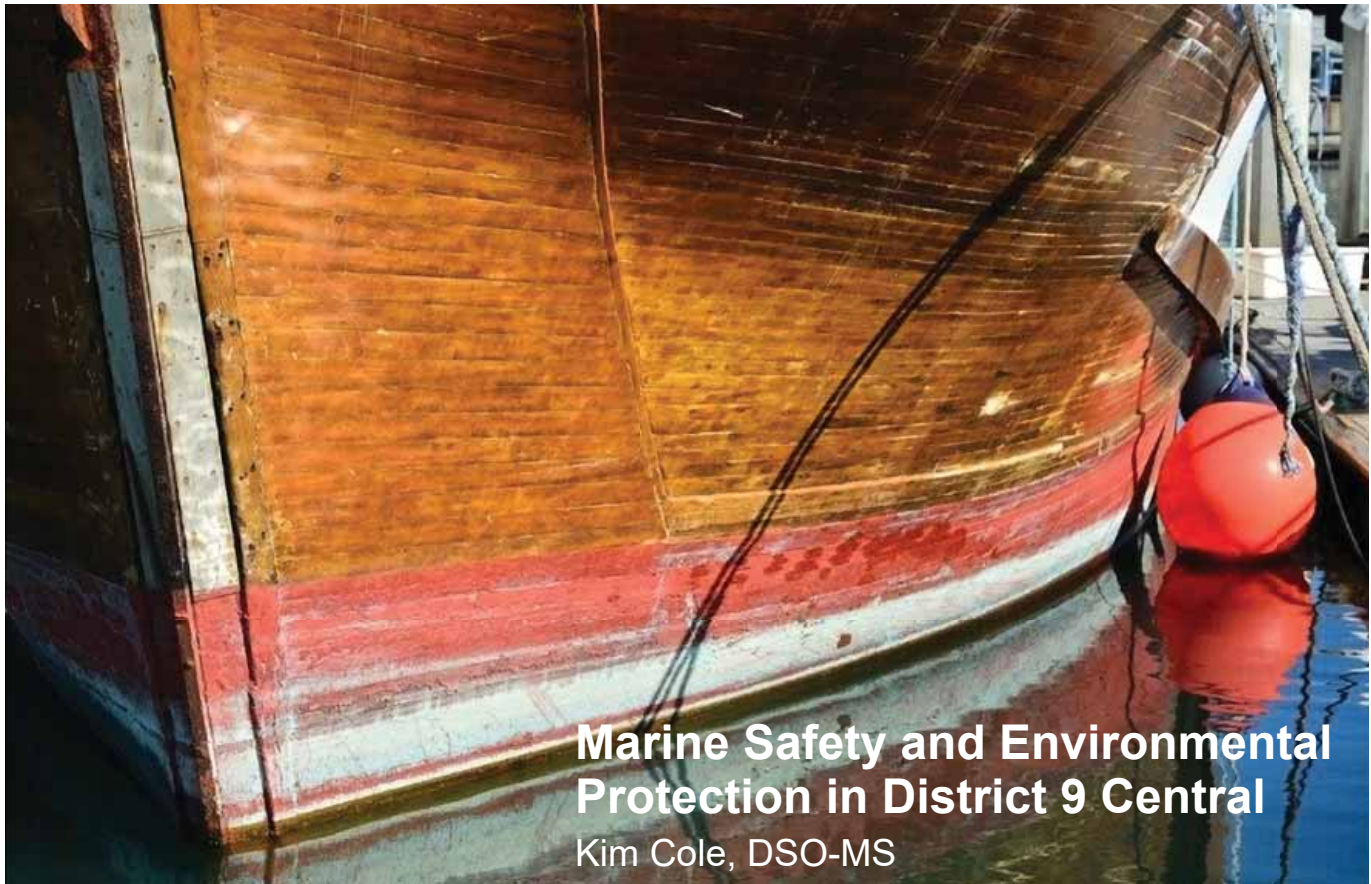
If this sounds a lot like the exact same process one follows with the Active Duty for the other 22 Marine Safety PQSs you are right! People move, things



**OMAHA, Neb., April 2015— Four years after floods devastated the western rivers region, a tug pushes barges filled with rocks down the Missouri River. The rocks are to be placed along the banks of the Missouri and Platte Rivers to help protect from erosion during floods and spring run-offs. Photo by Dottie Riley, BC-POT**

change, and if the members can eventually work with the Active Duty on a USCG Auxiliary Assistant PQS, the Uninspected Towing Vessel, or the Uninspected Passenger Vessel PQS, the experience should be exactly the same. That way there are no rude awakenings or shocks. Then there is AUX-MEES with the same problem ... What to do ... What to... do? Ω





## Marine Safety and Environmental Protection in District 9 Central

Kim Cole, DSO-MS

Through the efforts of our members, District 9 Central now has a well-trained team available to work with the Prevention Department. At the Marine Safety Unit in Duluth (Sector Sault Sainte Marie) we have several members that perform Uninspected Passenger Vessel (UPV) examinations and several Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Responders. Due to our member's efforts, we are able to provide our services to the many Uninspected Passenger Vessels in the area and are striving to increase our numbers to provide even more exams to the public.

At Sector Detroit's Marine Safety Unit in Toledo, we now have a team that will be hitting the ground running with the 2016 boating season. There are two members who hold the UPV qualification and many more that are working toward achieving it. We have over 1200 UPVs in just the Marblehead area, so the team will have their hands full. We plan to have a training at Sector Detroit soon to help increase the numbers even more. For those who are unaware, in Michigan the Auxiliary may not offer UPV exams to the public, so those who are qualified and in training are willing to travel (at their own cost) to areas in Ohio and Duluth where their services can be utilized.

Also in the Sector Detroit Marine Safety Unit in Toledo, we have two members that hold the Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Responder qualification. We have completed additional training at Sector Detroit and

have five additional members that will soon achieve that qualification as well. We have a four-member team who work on an "on call" basis with the Pollution Responders at Sector Detroit. These members work during assigned times (their choice of the timing) and are ready to respond upon receiving a call from Sector when an event occurs.

We also have members that have or are working toward the Commercial Fishing Vessel Examination qualification, Auxiliary Uninspected Towing Vessel Examiner, Port State Control Dispatcher, Waterways Management Representative and Assistant Facility Inspector qualifications. All are qualifications that are wanted and needed in each sector's Marine Safety Unit. While most areas have had these types of teams in place for a few years now, we in the 9th Central area have only been able to offer these types of services to the Coast Guard in recent years. We hope to continue to increase the numbers of our teams to provide added personnel to the different Sectors and Marine Safety Units as needed. We now have three members that have the permanent Marine Safety Insignia, and several who hold the conditional qualification. Ω

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**The colorful world of the commercial fishing industry is evidenced in the photo above by Roger Bazeley, FSO-PA FL 17, D11N**



## From Our Districts

### District 9 Eastern Region

By Richard Evans, DSO-MS

I am always sad when our St. Lawrence River turns to ice. Winter can be a slow time. I spent my winter vacation having a great time and unintentionally found some new ideas and examples to bring home. My wife Mary and I, went into the remote reaches of the Everglades in the middle of February 2016 (Mary was a really good sport). I found exceptional examples of Marine Safety policies put into practice. The Everglades have become a pristine and closely guarded wilderness. The private sector has been a major force in steering governmental policy to protect this environment. This was a wake-up call for me. I need to examine these ideas further. The field of Marine Safety is one of the most important pursuits in the USCG Auxiliary and proves to be an assortment of elusive yet great opportunities for all of us. We need to know all we can about our environment.

People who join the USCG Auxiliary are generally good collaborators seeking the chance to accomplish something with others. The most satisfying elements of participation provide us feelings of accomplishment and friendship. The challenge of present practices is that the "stand and present" model of teaching (like standing in classroom) is swiftly becoming a thing of the past. Courses are going online. How can we keep pace? Perhaps we can focus our collaboration on communicating with the public through more use of setting examples, teaching where content is needed, and demonstrating skills.

As this new year, 2016 begins, I find Auxiliarists strongly committed to follow through with USCGAUX programs such as Focused Lens and America's Waterways Watch. Unfortunately, these initiatives can go dormant in the winter. Seasonal Maritime Observation Missions performed on water and land provide a great opportunity for Auxiliary collaboration. Don't forget that members involved in Program Visits, Public Affairs, Public Education, Vessel Examination and Air Observers (to name a few) are key partners in Marine Safety. We can meet the public through Vessel Safety Checks, boating and sportsman's shows (public visitation), etc. These mission areas go hand in hand as significant functions which the Coast Guard Auxiliary can perform in support of our colleagues on the Gold Side, the environmental community and the general public.

The Coast Guard has never hesitated to give us their full cooperation in support of our efforts. Serving as eyes and ears along the shoreline and on the water, and most importantly, ambassadors to all, supports Marine Safety. Our strength in performing the tasks ahead is in our energy level and ability to reach out to others. I look forward to an energetic, busy and progressive year.



**Above: EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK- February 2016—Richard Evans, District Staff Officer-Marine Safety 9ER and his wife, Mary, escape the icy northern waters to explore the Everglades in South Florida. Photo provided by Richard Evans**

**Below: CLEVELAND, Oh.—Crew members aboard Coast Guard Cutter NEAH BAY work to free the anchor chain of ice buildup on the cutter's bow during training on Lake Erie, Jan. 13, 2016.**



**Temperatures this low are more than reason enough to escape to the Everglades! U.S. Coast Guard photo by Seaman James Becker**

## From Our Districts

### District 9 Western Region

Mike Lesko, DSO-MS

District 9 Western Region encompasses the four states surrounding Lake Michigan: Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan. The district falls under the area of responsibility of Sector Lake Michigan located in Milwaukee and its three outlying support areas in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin; Chicago, Illinois; and Grand Haven, Michigan.

Our biggest mission for the Coast Guard is conducting Uninspected Passenger Vessel (UPV) exam-

inations on Lake Michigan and on some of the inland federal waterways such as Lake Winnebago and the Mississippi River. With over 700 charter vessels located on the lake, it is a constant battle to get and keep trained examiners involved in the program.

A new mission area that we will try to implement in our district is to have at least one Auxiliarist trained as an Assistant Pollution Investigator (AUX-ED) for each harbor located on Lake Michigan. The Coast Guard is interested in the idea, and Sector Lake Michigan personnel have agreed to come up with a training program to start this spring. By getting one individual qualified at each harbor, we can cut down on the time and money the Coast Guard expends responding to a suspected incident. Ω

### *Why members of District 9 Western Region do not venture out on the water in January...*

**LAKE ST. CLAIR, Mich.**  
—The U.S. Coast Guard Cutters MACKINAW and NEAH BAY break track lines for commercial vessels in Lake St. Clair, Jan. 12, 2010. Both cutters are underway in support of Operation Coal Shovel, which encompasses southern Lake Huron, Detroit/St. Clair River systems, lakes Erie and Ontario, including the St. Lawrence Seaway. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Ensign Guillermo Colom





## From Our Districts

### District 11 Northern Region: Support for the Regional Exam Center

By Sue Fry, DSO-MS

When asked to write about Marine Safety in District 11 North, there were so many ways that our members have been involved with the Active Duty and local mariners that it was hard to choose the best stories to relate. To help decide, I looked at the 2015 calendar to see how our schedule started out last year in support of the varied missions of the Coast Guard in Marine Safety.

Right off, in the first week of January, three or four members left the Oakland, California Regional Exam Center (REC) and from their homes around the San Francisco Bay Area to travel to the California State University Maritime Academy, or "Cal Maritime," in Vallejo, California.

Located on the shores of the Carquinez Strait Northeast of San Francisco Bay is Cal Maritime is the training vessel GOLDEN BEAR. Used by the students for experiencing various aspects of shipboard activity, the ship is in use during three of the four summer months at the Academy for voyages of various lengths giving students a good feel for life at sea.

The Auxiliary members arrived at around 6:30 a.m. to prepare the Examination Room, which in this case was the Gymnasium. Approximately 150 Senior Cadets took the seven required tests over a three-and-a-half-day period in order to earn their Third Mate Coast Guard Licenses. Students were divided into two groups: Engineers and Deck. Each group had their own set of tests.

These students spent three and a half years preparing for a career at sea or in a related marine field, so they were quite eager and a bit more than apprehensive about getting down to business.

Each student had his or her own desk assigned with ID, a test booklet, answer sheet, scratch paper and calculator. Books, papers, electronic devices, backpacks and extraneous materials were left in a secure room outside the gym. ID's were checked at the entrance and the students entered at 7:50 a.m.

Instructions were given for filling out the answer sheets, how to pose a challenge to a question if necessary, and all of their questions were answered. Usually, a representative from the REC or the Coordinator of Testing at Cal Maritime gives these last minute bits of information.

References to be used were located on bookcases for each group, both Engineer or Deck. Code of Federal Regulations (CFRs), charts, graphs, navigation rules and other required information were free to use on an as needed basis during the testing.

As each test was finished, morning and afternoon, the Auxiliary proctors checked each test for completeness of individual information, scored the test and posted the results with the Coordinator at the Academy who released them to the individual students.

Those that failed one or more of the tests were scheduled to come into the Regional Exam Center in late March or early April to retake the necessary tests and hopefully pass

and graduate in June.

On the final day, everyone listened for the ringing of the bell in the Courtyard. Students must pass every test in order to ring that Bell. There is usually much shouting and back slapping as individual students learn that they successfully passed their last test and step up to the bell to grasp the ringer firmly and give it a mighty swing.

Sadly, 2015 was the last year that Auxiliarists proctored tests for the Coast Guard's Oakland REC and at the California Maritime Academy. They performed this service for the Coast Guard for more than eight years. Ω



**The TS GOLDEN BEAR is the training ship of the California Maritime Academy (CMA), a campus of the California University.**  
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Generic license.



## From Our Districts

### District 11 South: Dedicated Service in a Diverse Region

Jan Stenstrom, DSO-MS



**LOS ANGELES, Calif.—**The Port of Los Angeles with its passenger cruise terminals, cargo vessels, container yards and foreign and domestic vessels of all kinds is the largest sea port within the U.S. USCG photo by PA3 Louis Hebert

District 11 South is divided into two Sectors, Los Angeles/Long Beach (LA/LB) and San Diego (SD). This exceptionally geographically diverse area is comprised of the coastal Pacific Ocean and the inland lakes and rivers of California, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada. This includes some of the busiest recreational boating waters in the desert region reservoirs of the mighty Colorado River System.

The diversity of these waterways presents a unique challenge in serving the missions of Marine Safety. Auxiliary members are qualified in 16 Marine Safety/ Marine Environmental Protection activities. The use of these members to augment the Coast Guard missions is dependent upon the needs of the Coast Guard as determined by the Commanding Officer.

Sector LA/LB, with five coastal and one inland division, has in its area of responsibility the Port of Los Angeles which has the largest container traffic volume

in the country, and Long Beach, a close second. Additionally, there are a number of recreational boating activities in this area which offer multiple opportunities for Marine Safety and Marine Environmental Protection missions.

The Sector has 12 Auxiliarists who actively augment the Prevention Department mainly as Auxiliary Assistant Container Inspectors (AUX-CI), Auxiliary Assistant Life Raft Inspectors (AUX-LR), Auxiliary Uninspected Passenger Vessel Examiners (AUX-UPV) and Auxiliary Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examiners (AUX-CFVE). The Inland Division 11 concentrates on pollution prevention and education through the Auxiliary Prevention Outreach Specialist Program (AUX-MEES - formerly Marine Environmental Education Specialist).

Sector SD, with one coastal and two inland divisions, has nine Auxiliarists actively augmenting the Prevention and Response Divisions as Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Responders (AUX-ED), Auxiliary Assistant Waterway Management Specialists (AUX-WM), Uninspected Passenger Vessel Examiners (AUX-UPV) and Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiners (CFVE). The two Inland divisions are active in AUX-MEES pollution prevention, and are also looking into other Marine Safety qualifications like Auxiliary Assistant Contingency Planner (AUX-ACP) and AUX-WM to offer

their members the opportunity to achieve the Marine Safety Insignia. Ω



## From Our Districts

### District 13

Curt Lundine, DSO-MS

Every Coast Guard Auxiliary District has its own unique set of potential Marine Safety hazards. Exposure to disaster in the marine environment is a real threat that most of us face daily. The big, black cloud keeping District 13 awake at night is the very real likelihood of a large disturbance in the Cascadia Subduction Zone.

We here in the Pacific Northwest cannot even sit back and wonder if it will ever happen. It is going to happen, and we can only wonder how much longer we have until a large magnitude earthquake strikes the seabed off the Oregon and Washington coast.

The experts who plan disaster scenarios project not only substantial earthquake damage on shore, but damage of a historic nature from a large tsunami resulting from the seabed disturbance. Cities all along our beautiful coastline have tsunami response plans in effect, but none know if we can really be prepared for mother nature throwing a fit.

Most of the petroleum reserves for the coastal part of the district are stored in aging facilities located on the shorelines of our harbors and rivers. In many cases these are located on areas of landfill, subject to liquefaction which shakes the ground like jello during large earth movement.

We in the Auxiliary must be ready to assist the Coast Guard when this disaster strikes. Member training must consider greater response needs along with our traditional focus on marine safety and environmental protection. Ω



The Cascadia Subduction Zone is where the Juan de Fuca and North American plates meet. Most recently, tectonic processes from the North American Plate overriding the oceanic plate included a 6.8 magnitude earthquake in Oregon in 2001 and the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980. Major cities affected by a disturbance in this subduction zone would include Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia; Seattle, Washington; and Portland, Oregon.



## From Our Districts

### District 14

Laurie Herrell, ADSO-MS

District 14 includes the Islands of Hawaii: Big Island, Maui-Molokai-Lanai, Oahu, Kauai; and Territories Guam, Saipan and American Samoa. Along with safety patrols, search and rescue, vessel safety checks and boating education classes, D14 takes pride in Marine Safety and Environmental Protection programs. At present, seven Marine Safety flotilla staff officers ensure Marine Safety and Marine Environmental Protection (MS/MEP) programs are available to the members. They keep the Auxiliary MS/MEP section established as a force multiplier to the Coast Guard Marine Safety Teams, Marine Safety Detachments and Sector Prevention Departments.

Currently, our members are actively involved with the Marine Safety training program in which the Marine Safety Training Ribbon (MSTR) is earned after completing an intense study program similar to the Active Duty Marine Safety Qualification exams. There are more than five recipients of the MSTR in the district, with several Auxiliarists pursuing the Marine Safety Insignia qualification.

Throughout District 14, Commercial Fishing (CFVE) and Uninspected Passenger Vessels (UPV) are prevalent in the boating industry. Our local Marine Safety Teams, Marine Safety Detachments, and Sector's Prevention Department assist with training and qualifying Auxiliarists to serve as Examiners alongside Active Duty counterparts. Part of this training is to have Auxiliarists offer educational outreach to the boating community, as well as to build positive relationships between the Coast Guard and local boaters.

Other Marine Safety environmental programs involving Auxiliary participation in D14 include the Hawaiian Islands Entanglement Response Network. The community-based group involves training a number of individuals to safely free entangled whales and other marine mammals from fishing nets, lines and possible boat strikes. The training includes members of the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Department of Land and National Resources, and other National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration agencies to create a task force as part of the marine mammal response and rescue efforts.

The Auxiliary's Marine Safety and Environmental Protection program continues to thrive in District 14. With the help and assistance of the Active Duty units and a number of dedicated Auxiliarists, MS/MEP remains a program to support the Coast Guard with its boating safety and environmental commitments. Ω



## From Our Districts

### District 17

Jean Butler, DSO-MS

Flotilla 13 Sitka, Alaska performed in an exemplary manner in 2015 and was awarded the District 17 Flotilla of the Year award. Lead by Joe N. Meador, Jr, Flotilla Commander, who was also presented the district's award for 'Exemplary Performance as Flotilla Commander', this small, but mighty flotilla conducted a wide range of missions including nontraditional Auxiliary missions, greatly enhancing the safety of the Sitka community.

In addition to their typical busy schedule including Public Education, Public Affairs, Vessel Safety Checks, Uninspected Passenger Vessel Exams, Commercial Fishing Vessel Exams, surface patrols, and B-0 SAR standby, the flotilla assisted the Coast Guard in a multiagency exercise and several marine environmental responses. The flotilla averaged 76.4 mission hours per member in 2015. This figure excludes member hours recorded on Form 99. Not surprisingly, the flotilla and

individual members earned additional awards for their performance, including Carol Meador, who was named D17's Auxiliarist of the Year.

In this small community of about 9,000 residents, 2015 brought an unusual series of emergencies: the sinking of four commercial vessels, a major landslide that isolated part of the island community, and an 80,000-gallon oil spill into local waters from a shore facility. Flotilla members responded to Coast Guard's requests for assistance for surface units that conducted searches, assessed on scene conditions, transported responders to the scene, and provided a platform from which to collect spill samples. In all, more than 25 hours of underway time were performed in support of the Marine Environmental Protection mission during an actual spill response, with an additional 22.4 hours in Contingency Planning and 3.6 hours underway during an oil spill exercise.

Flotilla 13 Sitka is a trusted resource for the Sector Office in Juneau and for the Sitka Marine Safety Detachment. With the wide variety of mission performance in 2015, the Sitka flotilla is truly a living demonstration of the motto, Semper Paratus. Ω



**ANCHORAGE, Alaska—**Flotilla 13 Sitka, United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is awarded a Meritorious Achievement Award at a ceremony Feb. 14, 2016. The flotilla was recognized for having the highest average of activity per member throughout the year. U.S Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Meredith Manning