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The Communications and Education Division of the “M” Department

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The Special Projects Division of the “M” Department has been renamed the Communications and Education Division. With the change in the name there will also be changes in position designations and some new programs.

The Division is headed by David Hand, DVC-MO and is organized into two Branches.

Communications and Information Branch

The Communications and Information Branch is headed by Miguel Corco, BC. Working with Miguel are Sally Rohdy, BA and Mike Chism, BA.

This branch is responsible for handling and coordinating the communications of the Department. This responsibility also includes the maintenance of the web-site, publishing of the “Best Practices” and “Safety Lines” newsletters, keeping the Staff Roster and Organization Charts up to date and maintaining the Departmental mailing lists. This branch is also responsible for the distribution of all Departmental publications and distributions to our DSOs-MS and the MSOs.

The information responsibilities consist of developing reports, making statistical studies of Departmental activities and program results, and keeping track of Departmental program results. A major program being developed is the AMHLS program. Miguel and Mike are very involved in this undertaking.

The next issue of the “Best Practices” newsletter will have a new, fresh look. Miguel has developed a new look to go with a new approach we are taking to this publication. “Best Practices” will be published three times a year to allow more input from the Districts for each issue.

Education and Training Branch

The Education and Training Branch is led by Ron DeLaby, BC.

Working with Ron will be Joseph Nekraz, BA. Joseph brings to the team experience in the development of on-line educational programs.

The Education and Training Branch is responsible for the Trident Program. This program was brought on-line this year. With the move to the AUXETRAIN

web-site, the program is up and running well.

This Branch is responsible for the preparation of the Introduction to Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Course, the course Study Guides, the on-line tests, and the program administration and maintenance of the Trident Program.

Course completions to date are: Good Mate Course – 202, Introduction to Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Course – 175, and ICS 100 – 536.

New Division Initiatives

New initiatives and programs under development by the Division include the Strategic Training Plan 2003-2004. This plan sets the goals, strategies and methods to be used to accomplish the “M” Department training goals during this coming year. These goals include the continued improvement of the trident training program, promotion of member interest and participation in MSEP training and programs, preparation of study materials to support the Trident Program Auxiliary Performance Qualifications, and to train our members to better support the USCG.

A Trident Program Marketing Plan and a Marketing Implementation Plan have also been developed and are under review. The Marketing Plan seeks to increase the visibility and participation by Auxiliary members and by the MSOs in the support and training for the Trident Program. Improved access to qualification training opportunities and practice for the Auxiliary members is also an important goal.

The cornerstone of the marketing program is the MSO Augmentation Survey. This survey indicated the MSO need for support by the Auxiliary and

training support available. In addition, an important part of the marketing plan is the education of the MSO staff in the opportunities and benefits available to them through the use of the Auxiliary in accomplishing their missions.

The Marketing Implementation Plan will introduce a series of posters and question and answer presentations designed to increase interest in and knowledge of the Trident Program among our members. There is also planned an on-line Trident Forum to serve as a place for members to ask questions and get answers about the program, as well as to share comments and best practices from District to District.

The Mentor/Verifier program is being revised to agree with ALCOAST 262/03. Upon approval, it will be distributed and posted on-line. The proposed revisions will bring the program into conformity with ALCOAST 262/03 and emphasizes that the Performance Qualification Standards are designed to meet the **needs** of the M Field Units.

A proposal for additional recognition for Auxiliary members as they work towards the Trident Device is under initial consideration. The lengthy time and service requirements and the long term commitment required suggest that intermediate recognition of members' achievements as they work toward the Trident Device may help to maintain interest and enthusiasm in the program.

The new initiatives and the continuing programs will need the support and active participation of the Department and the DSOs-MS. With this support and hard work, the Auxiliary will always strive to meet the needs of the Coast Guard and be an active and integral member of the “Coast Guard Forces”.

Semper Paratus, DVC-MO