



Safety Lines

Volume 8

October 2007

An Open Letter from Greg Kester, DC-M:

This year has been fraught with changes. We started the year as the Marine Safety & Environmental Protection Department and end as the Marine Safety (Prevention) Department. Some of you may wonder what that was all about. As the Coast Guard evolved into Sectors and Headquarters realigned we found that our old way of communicating and doing business was failing. In the field we had junior enlisted and officers that couldn't figure out what we did because we were using language and job descriptions that had become obsolete in the new Coast Guard. When you can't communicate with your customer it becomes very hard to do business.

Several of our MSEP Divisions were no longer under the Marine Safety umbrella in the real world. With that in mind we sat down with our sister Department in the Operations Directorate and realigned ourselves to more closely mirror the Sector Structure and headquarter realignments. As of August 1st we finished our metamorphosis becoming Marine Safety (Prevention) Department and we now have the following Divisions: Port and Facilities Activities, Vessel Activities, Prevention Outreach, Navigation Systems and Communications and Education.

The prior AWW and Marine Environmental Divisions were merged as both programs are handled out of the same office at CG Headquarters. This allows us to be more efficient with our manpower and overall program management.

Our Marine Environmental Response and Incident Management functions were transferred to the Operations (Response) Department to complete the general reorganization. There are still some name changes that have been requested and are pending, but in general we are now at the point where we can buckle down and get back to work.

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~Greg Kester



This brings me to our next item of discussion which is our TRIDENT training and education process. Coast Guard headquarters has been working on new PQSs for the Gold side "M" Pro device and have almost completed that process. There will be some significant changes coming to our PQSs. One of the major changes that Headquarters made was that the Auxiliary can now only qualify on the active/reserve Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiner PQS. All other Active Duty/Reserve qualifications have been specifically placed off limits to us.

The first thing I want everyone to know is that any PQS qualifications that you have earned, you will be able to retain. It will still count toward earning the TRIDENT. Any PQS qualifications that you are working toward now will have a date, to be determined, by which it will have to be completed or you will have to start over with the new PQS. We will ensure this is well publicized on the national website and through the Marine Safety Staff chain.

We are still reviewing the Auxiliary PQSs to determine which ones will be kept, which ones will be added, which ones that will be updated or modified and which ones that will become obsolete and deleted. This is actually a great opportunity for us as our Gold-side counterparts have opened the door for us to participate in more areas thereby creating a greater win/win situation all around.

As all of this matures I will continue to update you. Please watch our web site for additional updates on this and other matters pertaining to the Prevention Department. It is currently being updated and should become easier to navigate. <http://www.auxmdept.org/>

Greg Kester DC-M



of

YOU MAY HAVE SEEN AN ARTICLE RECENTLY PUBLISHED IN AN INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING TRADE MAGAZINE TRADEWINDS REPORTING POTENTIAL LEGISLATION BEING CONSIDERED TO TRANSFER THE MARITIME SAFETY DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES OF THE COAST GUARD TO A NEW FEDERAL AGENCY IN ANOTHER DEPARTMENT.

NO LEGISLATION HAS BEEN INTRODUCED BY CONGRESS. HOWEVER, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU UNDERSTAND WHERE I STAND ON ANY SUCH PROPOSAL.

THIS IS NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COAST GUARD OR THE NATION.

I WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT DECISION MAKERS AND NATIONAL LEADERS UNDERSTAND THE VALUE THE COAST GUARD BRINGS TO MARITIME SAFETY AND THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY TO RETAIN THESE DUTIES WITHIN THE COAST GUARD.

AS COAST GUARD LEADERS, I NEED YOU TO CONTINUE TO ACTIVELY SEEK ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE INDUSTRY LEADERS ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES IMPORTANT TO THEM. IN THE CONTEXT OF EXPLAINING OUR ONGOING EFFORTS TO MODERNIZE THE COAST GUARD AND THE TRUE VALUE OF OUR ENTIRE MISSION SET, BE ATTENTIVE TO INDUSTRY'S CONCERNS. OUR DECISIONS AND ACTIONS HAVE DIRECT IMPACTS ON THEIR BUSINESSES AND THEIR WORKFORCE.

KEEP THE DIALOGUE GOING AND SHARE YOUR BEST PRACTICES WITH EACH OTHER AND YOUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP. OUR SUCCESS AS AMERICA'S LIFESAVERS AND GUARDIANS DEPENDS UPON OUR ABILITY TO ENGAGE, LISTEN, AND ACT APPROPRIATELY.

AMERICA'S MARITIME TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPLEX IN THE WORLD. IT IS ALSO ONE OF THE SAFEST AND MOST EFFICIENT DUE TO THE DEDICATED EFFORTS OF EACH OF YOU IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR MARITIME INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS.

INTERNET RELEASE AUTHORIZED.
ADM THAD ALLEN, COMMANDANT

Saving the Sea from People and People from the Sea

***Transferring the Maritime Safety Duties and Authorities of the Coast Guard to a new Federal Agency in another Department...
...is not in the best interest of the Coast Guard or the Nation***



I AM COMMITTED TO PRESERVING OUR LONGSTANDING ROLE AS THE WORLD'S LEADER IN MARINE SAFETY

Admiral Thad Allen



PQS: Auxiliary Assistant Pollution Investigator

By Peter F. Fagley, BA-MOP

This PQS is where the rubber meets the road when it comes to Coast Guard pollution response. With this training, you will begin to learn about the various legal and jurisdictional authorities the Coast Guard has at its command to investigate pollution incidents and how you, as an Auxiliarist, can assist. This is one of the opportunities afforded Auxiliarists to work along side the Active Duty personnel of your local Sector, and it makes a tremendous contribution to our many shared missions.

Our Auxiliary level of involvement involves assisting the Coast Guard Pollution Investigators with the gathering and understanding of various forms of evidence, from oil spill sampling, photography of the event or scene to the review of Vessel logs, response requirements and expert opinion. We are required to become familiar with the major enforcement tools used to deal with pollution incidents, whether these incidents are harmful oil discharges or designated hazardous materials releases.

The gathering of evidence and the use and meaning of that evidence are some of the Auxiliaries potential tasking. Your on the job training (OJT) will offer many interesting opportunities to watch and learn how these investigations unfold, as the pollution response investigators set out to gather the information and investigate these pollution incidents. You will be tasked to learn the basic structure of the Coast Guard investigation and enforcement organization. After a field investigation has been completed, the determination to settle the situation locally with a Notice of Violation, which assesses a monetary penalty in most cases, or forward the case to the District Command for review by the Coast Guard Hearing Officer, is made.

There are several stages beyond this level, which will not involve the Auxiliary, or it's Assistant Pollution Investigators. However, procedural and legal apparatus are reviewed in the PQS task workbook and, while it is not the Coast Guard's intent to turn Assistant Pollution Investigators into law enforcement or lawyers, you will be required to have a certain basic understanding of the process, once the case leaves your local Sector.

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of

You will learn to view an incident from several vantage points and photograph the scene as requested by the Active Duty. If needed, you may assist in obtaining statements from victims, witnesses, or those possibly involved in the incident. You will also learn about very specific procedures for sampling the oil spilled and carefully collecting samples of it at several sources for future testing and possible material evidence use. Very careful documentation of all activities are maintained through out this process and are be maintained as evidence in the case.

A note about Personnel Protection Equipment (PPE) and safety needs to be mentioned. As Auxiliary volunteers, the Coast Guard is always concerned about our health and well-being as we work along side the active duty and this is especially true in the area of Marine Safety. You will learn about the various levels of Personal Protection Equipment pollution incidents may require. It is policy that Auxiliary assistance should never involve the need for Personal Protection Equipment beyond your normal work uniform and standard PPE (hardhat, work boots, eye protection, etc.)

This only touches the basics of this interesting and rewarding PQS. Your local Coast Guard Sector or your Flotilla Marine Safety Officer (FSO-MS) can certainly point you in the right direction to obtain more information. As with all Marine Safety PQSs, the opportunity to participate in this field depends on the needs of your Sector. Not all Sectors need Auxiliary assistance in this area.

As has been suggested in the past, look at the M Department website and follow the links to TRIDENT. Read and think about the tasks required for a particular PQS and if you have unanswered questions, utilize your appropriate Marine Safety Chain of Communications and we will make sure you get the information you need.

For those of you reading this newsletter for the first time, please go the following web site for additional information on TRIDENT (www.auxmdept.org) or ask your local Flotilla Marine Safety Officer (FSO-MS) to direct you to other local resources. Good luck and please share some of your stories with us, as this is your newsletter.



This is one of the greatest opportunities afforded Auxiliarists to work along side the Active Duty personnel



Saving the Sea from People and People from the Sea

For information on [Safety Lines](#) or to contribute please contact:

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://auxmdept.org/links.htm>



Pre-ven-tion (plural pre-ven-tions)

An action that stops something from happening: an action or actions taken to stop somebody from doing something or to stop something from happening. An Action taken to prevent something or make it impossible or very difficult for somebody to do something or for something to happen.

Saving the Sea from People and People from the Sea.

~motto of the Prevention Dept.

The Auxiliary's America's Waterway Watch program is managed by the "M" Department, and coordinated at the District level by members holding the position of District Staff Officers-Marine Safety (DSO-MS). Much of the building of public awareness, however, has been assigned to Auxiliarists conducting VSCs, visiting marine dealers and conducting safe boating courses for members of the recreational boating community.

Members of the Auxiliary, in addition to increased activity in augmenting in support billets and picking up more safety and security patrols on water, air and land, have directed their resources to areas related to Recreational Boating Safety (RBS). These traditional Auxiliary services include courtesy Vessel Safety Checks (VSC), Safe Boating Courses for the recreational boating community, and visiting marine dealers and other waterfront business to gain their cooperation in promoting safe and secure boating practices, and environmental protection. And as the Coast Guard team members most directly involved in public contact activity, these Auxiliarists are in the best position to promote, organize and monitor activities related to *America's Waterway Watch*.

The Auxiliary's AWW efforts are coordinated with the Coast Guard's management of the America's Waterway Watch program at the national level, though local Auxiliarists are encouraged to coordinate their activities with Coast Guard Reservists responsible for promoting AWW with commercial interests.

The Coast Guard maintains the primary AWW web site at <http://www.americaswaterwaywatch.org>

"Saving the Sea from People and People from the Sea"