



# Safety Lines

The Newsletter of the Department of  
Marine Safety and Environmental Protection  
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary  
Volume Two, Number 6: October 2001

## Emergency Preparedness -- Training and Support

With the tragic events of September 11<sup>th</sup> still fresh in our minds, we see our nation engaged in a new and ongoing struggle against terrorism here at home. We have learned a lot about the geography of far-away places in recent weeks – and the terrible prospect of disease and death delivered to our nation's doorways in the simple process of opening a letter. And we have all said, "Life will never be the same."

For the Coast Guard, there are new changes and challenges as well. Coast Guard units, vessels and members are engaged in port and domestic security missions throughout our nation. Reservists have been called up and assigned to duty. Safety zones are in place on our waterways and vessel movement has been restricted in many areas. The Office of Homeland Security is now in place and the Congress is considering new legislation to strengthen port security efforts. On the waterways as well, life is not the same.

Many Coast Guard Auxiliary members have said, "What can we do?" As the Coast Guard and local civil authorities begin to sort out the new paradigms of homeland security and protection against the continued threat of terrorist attacks, the Coast Guard Auxiliary – America's Volunteer Lifesavers – needs to make sure that member training and unit organizations are ready to meet these new challenges.

### Step One: Review the Guidelines

The Auxiliary's Emergency Response Guidelines outline the overall framework for the employment of members in the event of any sort of emergency response, including

one associated with terrorism and civil disasters. In fact, one of the scenarios contained in the Guidelines specifically refers to a terrorist event. Members need to become familiar with the Guidelines. Additionally, they need to develop working relationships with Coast Guard units and training programs to support effective member involvement. More information on each of these is shown below.

### Step Two: Know the Customer

Implementation of an emergency response assignment begins with the development of a working relationship with the "customer" – the local Coast Guard unit that will be supported by the Auxiliary flotilla, unit or organization. This working relationship needs to be documented and defined in a "Memorandum of Understanding" so that all parties will know what each expects from the relationship. On the Coast Guard side, the service is looking for qualified assistance to augment staffing and support or expand operations. On the Auxiliary side, we are looking for training opportunities and the satisfaction of providing a valuable service to our Coast Guard and to our country. The sample MOU provided on the Marine Safety Department section of AUXWEB outlines how the relationship can – and should – work.

### Step Three: Prepare the Plan

With a working relationship in good order, the local Auxiliary unit needs to prepare its plan and to insure that its plan is a part of the local emergency response plan.

The question frequently comes up, "Should the plan be a Flotilla level plan or a Division level plan?" The answer is ... it depends. It depends on the size of the Flotilla, its

inventory of trained and available personnel, and its proximity to the Coast Guard unit being supported. Generally, it is often desirable for a Division to have the overall support relationship and to take the lead in working with a local Coast Guard unit to develop a plan. But an exception comes to mind from recent experience: an Auxiliary flotilla working with a remote Coast Guard station in Coos Bay, Oregon. The Flotilla was an integral part of the Station's watch, quarter and station bill. It had taken emergency response training (ICS Level 100) with the Station. As a result, members already had jobs assigned based on a skills inventory and knew what to do. It was no surprise, then, that those members were part of the callup of personnel. They were an essential part of the response team and were used accordingly.

#### **Step Four: Train, Train, and Train**

The value added by Auxiliary participation in a local emergency situation is directly proportional to the training undertaken by the members to meet the needs of our customer, the Coast Guard. In order to make sure that Auxiliary members have access to this kind of training, the national M staff has developed the "Trident Program." The Trident Program is our shorthand way of referring to the training, qualifications and member recognition needed to support the work of the Coast Guard in MS/MEP and to encourage the participation of our members.

The educational components of Trident consist of two courses:

1. Initial Indoctrination, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, and
2. Advanced Level, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection.

The "Initial Indoctrination" course will provide the candidate with a comprehensive overview of the programs, missions and administration of MS/MEP functions in the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary. Upon completion, the member will earn the

designation as "Marine Safety Specialist" in the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

As of mid-October, 2001, this course is currently being written and will be ready for release early in 2002. In addition to the traditional paper document format, this course will also be available in electronic format and may be completed on-line.

The "Advanced Level" course is actually a collection of the following courses:

- Initial Indoctrination, Port Operations
- Initial Indoctrination, Marine Inspection
- The Good Mate Manual
- Incident Command System (Basic)
- Intro. to the Marine Safety Manual

Port Operations, Marine Inspection and ICS Basic (Level 100) are currently available from the Coast Guard Institute. The Good Mate Manual is complete; a facilitator's guide is in development. The Marine Safety Manual, Chapter One already exists and a facilitator's guide for it is in development.

Completion of these courses, plus completion of four satisfactory years in service in the Marine Safety program and qualification in four occupational specialties (PQSS) will qualify a member for award of the new Auxiliary Marine Safety device, now under development. ***For more information on this, see current postings on AUXWEB.***

#### **Step Five: Practice to Get It Right**

Finally, remember that no amount of planning and training will work without the practice and drills to get it right. Set up the drill exercises with your Coast Guard unit, use your ICS training to organize the event, and practice new skills and assignments.

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