



Up Top In Operations

December 2001

Monthly Newsletter of the National Operations Department

Volume 12

Operation Patriot Readiness

Written by: Robert C. (Bob) Colby, DC-O

The Operations Order is out!

Although there is no specific tasking in it for us in the "O" Department, it does apply to all Auxiliarists and there is much that we as active operational members can (and should) do.

✈ The new "Level of Normalcy" is still being developed. Please continue to support the active duty with our patrols and other direct support to your local Coast Guard Units such as communication watchstanding, crew augmentation, administration assistance, etc. The current heightened levels of sup-

port should be maintained, if possible, as requested.

✈ Work with all concerned to help your unit (Flotilla, Division, District/Region) achieve a "higher level of readiness," including any special qualifications for your local area. Encourage other members to increase their readiness and upgrade their qualifications to a higher personal level.

☎ Encourage all members to get their facilities (boats, airplanes and radios) in-



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

spected and approved as operational.

✈ Promote and assist with recruitment and training to get more members qualified in all of the operations programs.

✈ Help as needed to collect the personal audit information on all members and make sure that it is entered on the flotilla summary matrices.

☎ Assist with the presentation and be sure to attend the 2002 mandatory Operations workshop. It should hit the streets by the end of the year.

✈ Finally, promote rapid and complete reporting of all missions into AUXMIS/AUXDATA so that you get credit for everything that you do and so we may show just how much that we actually do contribute to the Coast Guard.

Semper Paratus!

Trailer Boating Safety

**Written by: Charles Ford,
BC-OSS**

Taking a boat to the launch site is the most popular form of boating. As a matter of fact, 95% of the millions of boats registered in the United States are trailerable. Most of these boats spend more time on their trailers than they do in the water. To protect their investment and enhance safety on the trailer, on the road, and in the water, the operator must become knowledgeable about their boat and trailer combination. They must know how to maintain their trailer, be certain it is the right size, correctly assembled, properly fitted to the boat and towed by a suitable hitch assembly and towing vehicle.

Perhaps dealers are the most convenient source of information. This source includes the boat, trailer, and vehicle dealers. The trailer manufacturer is required by law to supply certain data and display it on the trailer. This includes the maximum gross vehicle weight, the size and type of tires, the year and model, and the date of manufacture. The gross vehicle weight rating must be at

least 15% greater than the combined weight of the boat, gear, and trailer in order to be on the safe side.

The trailer couplers are rated also; check to be sure that the coupler and the ball have sufficient rated capacity. Of course, the hitch on the towing vehicle has to be rated for the total load also.

Before selecting a trailer, it would be wise to find out what launching methods are used where you intend to launch. Perhaps the most universal arrangement is a trailer with multiple small rubber rollers. The exact number, and placement of the rollers, may require advice from the boat dealer, since improper placement can permanently damage the hull.



When trailers are used entirely in fresh water lakes and rivers, the "float-on" types seem to be the most popular. Being totally submerged in the fresh water for the boat to float on does not present the corrosion problems experienced in salt water. Whatever type support is selected, careful adjustment is necessary to avoid excessive strain on the boat's hull.

Perhaps it should go without saying that the boat should

be carefully tied down to the trailer at bow and stern to avoid it bouncing off the trailer, or out of alignment, on a rough highway. The many boats seen on the roads partially or totally off the trailer are proof it is worth saying.

Okay, we are ready to tow the boat and trailer. Have we thought about stopping? Just about all states require brakes on units over 1,500 pounds gross to have brakes on the trailer. Check the laws in states in which you intend to travel for the types of brakes approved for your load. Do not forget the safety chains required between the trailer and the towing vehicle.

Brake lights and turn signals are required, and since they may be immersed fully when launching or hauling they must be watertight or removed before dunking. They should always be

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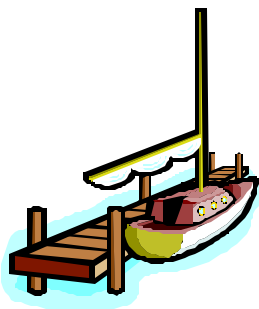
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checked before each trip. Clearance lights are required in some states depending on the total width of the rig. Wheel bearings are susceptible to water damage; bearing protectors are available to be pumped with grease under pressure to keep the water out.

Assuming the tow vehicle is properly serviced and inspected, the next problem is maneuvering. It may seem unnecessary to remind you never to forget you have a boat behind you. But, it does happen all too often that the driver forgets how long the tow is before cutting back in the lane after passing.

The worst moments for the operator comes when launching at the ramp, because they have not practiced backing the rig. Good advice is to take the rig to a deserted parking lot and practice backing between objects such as cans or boxes placed on the ground to represent obstacles. A helpful hint when backing is to place your hand on the bottom of the steering wheel and move your hand in the direction you want the rear of the trailer to move. Be careful not to over-steer. Some boat owners have installed a hitch on the front of their tow vehicle. Switching to that hitch for launching does make handling easier and keeps the rear wheels on dry land.

When launching a sailboat, many people want to step the mast on the boat first in the parking lot. Be sure there are no wires or other overhead obstructions on the path to the water. A few boaters are electrocuted every year because their rigging came in contact with overhead electrical wires.



"Up Top in Operations" is the monthly newsletter of the National Operations Department of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary.



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Carbon Monoxide False Alerts

Submitted by: **Warren Schneider, DVC-OT**

Radio facility owners who operate in the 150 MHz range should be made aware that some Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors will alarm when used in close proximity to the radio station.

The Nighthawk CO Alarm, manufactured by the Kidde Company, a very popular alarm which is sold nationwide, will false alarm when exposed to the 150 MHz radio frequency field. Discussions with the company confirmed that a processor within the unit is designed to function in the 150 MHz range and the false alarm problem is well known.

The only way found to handle the problem is to relocate the alarm to an area where the radio frequency field is not strong enough to activate the alarm but still provide the CO detection protection desired or to disable (unplug) the alarm when using the 150 MHz transmitter. Written by Bill Herman, past DC-O

Thanks for a Successful 2001!

By: **Jerri A. Smith, BC-OSE**

It seems like just yesterday that COMO Colby asked me to serve as BC-OSE — that was **eight** Up Tops ago! I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Operations Department for their support and excellent contributions to this newsletter. I look forward to your continued support in 2002.

A quick reminder: the deadlines for each edition of the **Up Top in Operations** are on the 23rd of each month. Please e-mail your article(s) to me at the address listed on the top of this page. The contributor's schedule will remain the same in 2002 as it was this year:

DVC-OA & staff: January and July
DVC-OE & staff: February and August
DVC-ON & staff: March and September

DVC-OS & staff: April and October
DVC-OT & staff: May and November
DC-O: June & December

Thanks again for all of your assistance this past year. I wish you all the warmest greetings of the holiday season, and peace, health and happiness in 2002.