



# Up Top In Operations

February 2004

Monthly Newsletter of the National Operations Department

Volume 01

## **New Years Notes from the New Guy in Air Ops**

**By Bob Shafer**  
**Division Chief, Air Operations**

**It's a New Year**, and with it, we have some new positions and people in the Air Operations Division. We're planning some new initiatives to help AUXAIR reach new heights as an Auxiliary program, and be an even more effective force multiplier for the Coast Guard. As the new Air Operations Division Chief, my immediate priorities for AUXAIR focus on being Safe, Effective, and Fun.

**SAFETY** - First and foremost, we need to be safe. Everyone comes back after every mission, every time, without a scratch, without a doubt. To this end, we will be placing more emphasis on increased standardization and training within the AUXAIR program.

Standardization has improved the safety record of Active Duty Coast Guard Aviation. It will help Auxiliary Aviation, too. We will concentrate on such things as: training and qualifying new pilots and crew members for various missions; recurrent training for experienced AUXAIR members; use of checklists and

procedures; evaluation of the effectiveness of our training.

New training initiatives are already in the works, such as the Spatial Disorientation Training program at NAS Pensacola. We plan on making this available to every AUXAIR pilot in the future. We plan on providing more training presentations and materials to AUXAIR units in the fleet. We will facilitate the sharing of locally produced training materials between units.

There can be no compromise with issues relating to flight safety. To that end, we plan to raise the bar on our qualifications, and to provide training guidance and materials to help AUXAIR members meet or exceed those qualifications.

**EFFECTIVENESS** - We need to perform our many missions well, to the highest standards of quality and professionalism. Expansion of our mission areas, promotion and building our program, and being the greatest force multiplier possible for the Coast Guard are our goals. We need to look at all of the many missions we can accomplish, in addition to our traditional ones of SAR and Logistics.

We should be a powerful asset for the Homeland Security mission, through Maritime Domain Awareness Patrols (MDAPATS), and participation in Integrated Border Enforcement Teams / Integrated Maritime Enforcement Teams (IBET/IMET). Our ability to perform and report aerial observations is our strength and we should capitalize on this.



Our performance needs to meet the highest standards in all of our missions. We need to achieve the highest quality in our work products, including observations, mission reports, photos, and searches. We must maintain the highest professional standards with regard to our personal demeanor, our uniforms and appearance, and courtesy to Active Duty personnel.

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**New Years Notes from the New Guy in Air Ops**  
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We need to build the overall strength of the AUXAIR program by collecting information on the many hours of work provided by our participating members. It's not enough that we do a good job; we have to prove that we do a good job. We'll do that by collecting data, and providing decision makers with a cost/benefit analysis demonstrating the enormous benefit of the AUXAIR program versus its modest funding.



**FUN** - We're all volunteers in this organization, so this has to be personally rewarding for each member. We need to recognize accomplishment, have prompt and adequate reimbursement of expenses and remember that the "fourth cornerstone" of the Auxiliary is Fellowship.

Nothing sucks the fun out of our volunteer efforts like big bills for operating our aircraft. Our present maintenance reimbursement system takes much of the financial sting out of this. Developing a national model for AUXAIR funding, to replace the present system which varies from District to District, will help insure our ability to keep up with our expenses.

In addition to formal awards, all AUXAIR members should feel that their efforts are a valuable contribution to the work of the Coast Guard. We should all share in the feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction that come from being a part of a winning, productive team.

To help us accomplish all of these things (and more) there are some new Branches within the Air Operations Division. As this is being written, the selection of the persons to fill the new positions is ongoing. Hopefully, by the time you read this, these will all be filled.

The new Branches include:

**Aviation Flight Capabilities** – Our “R&D department”, this branch will develop the technical and support requirements for our various AUXAIR missions. They'll research technologies and techniques that we may use to enhance our mission capability. And they will participate in developing standards and training for utilizing mission support equipment.

**Aviation Homeland Security Operations** – This branch will focus on the use of AUXAIR for support for ports and waterway security, including MDA and MEP patrols. These high profile missions will be tracked and analyzed, along with more traditional sorties including SAR, ATON, ice reconnaissance, logistics, training and AOR familiarization flights. They will look for ways to improve our standardization, training and performance of these missions and look for new opportunities for improvement and increased participation. They'll also be involved in developing a cost effectiveness model for use of aviation resources.

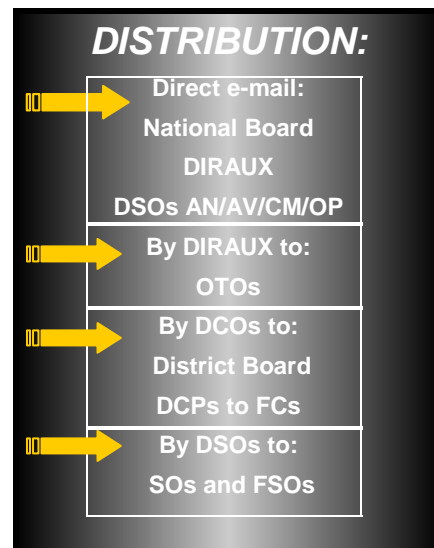
**Aviation Flight Standards** – This branch will work on developing our various training and operations manuals. They'll develop standards for the evaluation of pilots, crews and planes for all aspects of AUXAIR operations, and



they'll establish a system to determine that such standards are being met.

These new branches will work alongside our “legacy” branches – Air Flight Surgeon, Administrative Management, Aviation Recruitment, Flight Safety and Aviation Training.

We have a terrific national Air Operations team in place, and they're starting to work on the many challenges we face. Working together with the Districts and with all of the AUXAIR aviators in the fleet, we can build a good AUXAIR program into a truly excellent one. Welcome aboard to all of our new personnel, and strap in! We're getting set to make **AUXAIR SOAR!**



## ***Increased Emphasis on Coast Guard Auxiliary Aviation Air Safety***

**By Wayne E. Peters, Branch Chief, Aviation Flight Safety (BC-OAS)**

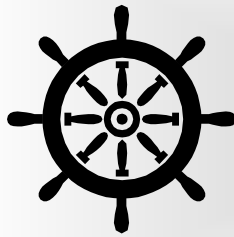
Since 11 September 2001, with increased security needs and the transfer of the Coast Guard to the Department of Homeland Security, there has been a call for more Coast Guard Auxiliary Pilots and Auxiliary Air Facilities to support the Active Duty Coast Guard. This increased demand for AUXAIR support was called for by the Operation Patriot Readiness Operations Order (OPORDER 01-01). The Chief Director of the Auxiliary, Captain David Hill (G-OCX), stated, "today's security environment has mandated a profound shift in our national security priorities and the Auxiliary will become the leading volunteer organization in the new Department of Homeland Security". This increased demand for Coast Guard Auxiliary Air, when coupled with changes in the National Policy resulting from the Commandant Coast Guard Final Action Message regarding Coast Guard Class A Aviation Flight Mishap involving an Auxiliary Aviation Aircraft on 01 Feb 2001 (Final Action Message), has created a greater emphasis on safety for Coast Guard Auxiliary pilots, crews and aircraft.



The Final Action Message called for following specific actions:

**(1)** reorganize Auxiliary Aviation Operations consistent with the "Squadron Concept" which operationally aligns Auxiliary Aviation with an active duty Coast Guard Air Station,

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



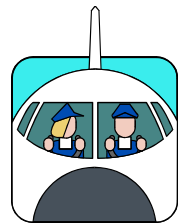
***Linda A. Nelson, DC-O***  
[echopeep@ixpres.com](mailto:echopeep@ixpres.com)

***GENE ROMANICK, BC-OEE***  
[romanick@tellurian.com](mailto:romanick@tellurian.com)

- (2)** incorporate the interim COMDT COGARD messages changes requiring two instrument rated pilots for all operational Auxiliary Aviation missions conducted during night or IMC (Two Pilot Rule),
- (3)** mandate initial and recurring spatial disorientation/unusual attitude recognition and recovery procedures and Crew Resource Management training requirements for Auxiliary Aviation pilots and aircrew,
- (4)** expand Auxiliary Aviation doctrine to include an Auxiliary unique Risk Assessment Matrix,
- (5)** assign an Auxiliary pilot as the designated Auxiliary Aviation Coordinator (AAC),
- (6)** develop and implement a Coast Guard-wide formal training program for AAC and Auxiliary Liaison Officers (AUXLO),
- (7)** leverage, where possible, ATC Mobile as a training resource in support of Auxiliary Aviation,
- (8)** utilize the AUXDATA program to track Auxiliary Mishaps,
- (9)** partner with COMDT (G-WKS) to rewrite the Mishap reporting requirement of Auxiliary Aviation Doctrine, and
- (10)** update the Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual to clearly state which Coast Guard FAA exemptions apply to Auxiliary Aviation Pilots.

The first action item requesting the reorganization of Auxiliary Aviation Operations is well underway in most Districts and has brought Coast Guard Auxiliary aviation more in line with active duty Coast Guard aviation by moving control of Auxiliary air operations to the Coast Guard Air Stations.

This action of shifting additional responsibility of Auxiliary air safety to Coast Guard Air Stations Commanding Officers, the professional aviators, has had a substantial positive impact on Auxiliary Air Safety.



The "Two Pilot Rule" incorporation into the Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual continues the need for having two pilots aboard during IFR or night flight and provides additional safety and focus on Crew Resource Management (CRM). The first initial spatial disorientation training for Auxiliary Aviation pilots and aircrew was held in Pensacola Florida on 20 November 2003. Crew Resource Management training will be included in future spatial disorientation training in Pensacola.  
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**Increased Emphasis on  
Coast Guard Auxiliary  
Aviation Air Safety  
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The Risk Assessment Matrix used by Active Duty Coast Guard Aviation is under review as a model for a unique Risk Assessment Matrix for use by AUXAIR. Its use is already mandated in some Districts. This is an excellent tool to help pilots focus on the hazards of flight, and the risks involved in exposure to those hazards. This matrix is available for download at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wk/wks/wks1/pdf/AviaitonRiskManag.pdf> from the G-WKS-1 web site.



Adopting and using a Risk Assessment Matrix, along with other additional safety decision models (such as the FAA's Personal Minimums Checklist) should prove to be a benefit in lowering Coast Guard Auxiliary aviation mishaps.

To further assist in reorganizing Auxiliary Aviation with active duty Coast Guard Air Stations, consistent with the "Squadron Concept", Districts have designated or are in the process of designating auxiliary pilots as AAC(s) and active duty Coast Guard pilots as AUXLO(s). Formal training programs are in development for AAC and AUXLO.

The above goals as outlined by the Commandant Coast Guard Final Action Message, the resulting update of the Auxiliary Operations Policy Manual, the utilization of assets of Coast Guard Air Stations and ATC Mobile as training resources, will lead to safer aviation operations of AUXAIR.



**National Operations Department**

Program	Staff Member	E-mail Address
Department Chief	Linda A. Nelson	echopeep@ixpres.com
Deputy Department Chief	David Elliot	DC-Od @AUXOP.US
Aids to Navigation	George Pendergast	commodore@charter.net
Aviation	Robert Shafer	DVC-OA@AUXAIR.US
Communications	Edwin "Ned" Kroeker	ekroeker@seaqueue.com
Surface Operations	Mark Simoni	mark@simonisystems.com
Education	Hank Foglino	foglinh@sunysuffolk.edu
G-OCX Operations Division Chief; Aviation Branch Chief	LCDR Mike Staier, USCG	MStaier@comdt.uscg.mil
G-OCX Surface Operations Branch Chief	MCPO Glenn Wilson, USCG	GWilson@comdt.uscg.mil

## ***Auxiliary Aviation Flight Operations – The need grows and we respond!***

**By Bob Fratangelo, Branch Chief,  
Aviation Homeland Security Operations  
(BC-OAH)**

There are many aviation operational missions for us to perform as a force multiplier for the U.S. Coast Guard. These missions include (and are by no means limited to): Search and Rescue (SAR), Maritime Domain Awareness Patrols (MDAPATs i.e. Port, Harbor, River, Waterway Security patrols), Law Enforcement Support (LES - surveillance), Ice Patrols (ICEPATs), Harbor Patrols (HARPATs), Marine Environmental Patrols (MEPPATs), Fish Patrols (FISHPATs), Aids to Navigation reporting (ATONPATs), Logistics missions, Training missions, and of course Search and Rescue Patrols (SARPATs – sometimes known as Sunset or Safety Patrols). The majority of these missions can be conducted in combination as multi-mission patrols.

Reporting of observations from these missions is extremely important. Timely, accurate and precise mission reports must be generated and then disseminated efficiently in a form that meets the active duty user's needs.

We need to support the Coast Guard with these very valuable missions on a regular basis, especially when MARSEC levels are elevated. The frequency of these missions must be based on the needs of the District. These needs will vary depending on the Active Duty resources available and on many other variables. AUXAIR is already performing these valuable missions in many Districts. Others are gearing up to do so.

We need to research our Districts needs, assess our ability to support these needs and then offer our support via the appropriate chain of command. Often times we need to share with the Active Duty an explanation of our capabilities and show that we are fully able to perform these missions.

AUXAIR is a true operational force multiplier for the Coast Guard. Our dedicated crews and facilities dramatically increase an Air Station's resources. Whenever we are engaged in supplementing Active Duty forces, we generate a tremendous payback in value to the Coast Guard.

It does cost money to fund our program. Ultimately, this funding comes from each Coast Guard District's budget. We must be efficient, operationally oriented, and demonstrate value to the Districts in order to justify the costs of the program.

Some Districts have developed value analysis models/reports. These reports, done monthly for distribution to both Active Duty and Auxiliary leadership, have proven to assist Districts with funding of their respective AUXAIR programs. We will provide examples of these models/reports to all Districts, and assist them with this information gathering process.



I will be working with each of the DSO-AVs in their respective Districts, offering them support to grow and improve their AUXAIR flight operations. In the mean time if anyone has any aviation flight operational questions, please don't hesitate to contact me via email at [robertfrat@juno.com](mailto:robertfrat@juno.com). Bravo Zulu to all of you who have stepped forward during our times of increased operational tempo!



DVC-OA Bob Shafer (left) and BC-OAH Bob Fratangelo (right)