



Up Top In Operations

June 2004

Monthly Newsletter of the National Operations Department

Volume 06

The Search and Rescue Season Ahead...

Linda A. Nelson, DC-O

It's June...the flowers bloom, the days are longer, the boaters rush to ready their boats. It is "prime time" for breaking down, running out of fuel, running aground and other exasperating situations. And we'll be there to assist, but we need to keep Coast Guard policy in mind. It bears repeating...let's review the Maritime SAR Assistance Policy (MSAP), found in the U. S. Coast Guard Addendum to the National SAR Supplement (CGADD), COMDTINST M16130.2C.

The MSAP details the policy of the US Coast Guard in search and rescue cases. Let's take the case of a boater whose situation is unknown. The SAR Mission Controller (SMC), who can be the CG station or Group officer of the day, will gather the appropriate information and relay instructions such as putting on lifejackets, setting an anchor and keeping a communications schedule. If the SMC believes that a distress (any known situation in which the mariner is in immediate danger), an immediate response will be initiated.

In a "non distress" case, the Coast Guard will assist the mariner by helping them get assistance. This can include a friend, the marina or a commercial provider. If there is no

specific request for assistance by the boater, a Marine Assistance Request Broadcast (MARB) can be issued on behalf of the boater. In a perfect world, a response to the broadcast is returned within a reasonable time frame (usually 10 minutes) and assistance is secured for the boater.

Where does confusion arise? The confusion arises in the less than perfect world, of course. The common situations include:

1. "Reasonable Period of Time"

the length of time that an SMC will wait before dispatching CG or other resources depends on the level of apprehension about the situation. Impending bad weather, loss of communications or health problems may raise the level of apprehension and shorten the reasonable period of time. However, every case is different and the waiting time will be different.

2. If an Auxiliary facility under orders and another source of assistance (Good Samaritan or commercial provider) arrive on scene at the same or nearly the same time, the Auxiliary facility

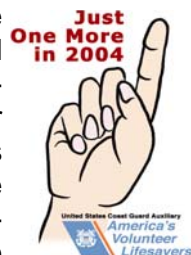
will stand by on scene and report to the SMC. If the other resource is capable of assisting, the Auxiliary facility will do nothing further.

3. If an Auxiliary facility comes across a vessel requesting assistance that has not had radio contact with the Coast Guard, the Auxiliary facility can relay a request for assistance to the Coast Guard. The Auxiliary facility can assist if capable. Otherwise, the Auxiliary facility can remove personnel from danger or stand by until other assistance arrives.

4. Even if the boater is being assisted; if the situation deteriorates the SMC can dispatch a CG resources.

5. If the boater is being towed by a CG or CG Auxiliary resource, the tow can be released if a handoff can be done safely, and either the alternate assistance is desired and arranged by the boater or the operational commander has a higher need for the resource.

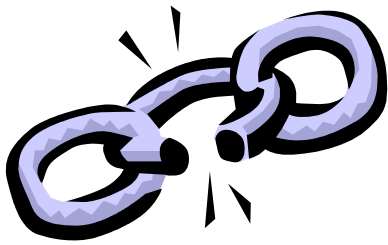
The U. S. Coast Guard Addendum to the National SAR Supplement (CGADD), COMDTINST M16130.2C can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-o/g-opr/manuals.htm>. And while you are at it, take a moment to refresh your skills, especially the side and stern tow. Semper Paratus....be ready to assist!



Chain, Chain, Chain

Linda A. Nelson, DC-O

Have you got a question? Unclear about a procedure? There are lots of resources for you to check. First, go to the manuals. They are often the most helpful place to start. If you strike out there, give internet resources a try. The USCG Auxiliary, the USCG and the Chief Director's websites all have the Commandant's Instructions, training manuals and reference texts that you might need. So let's say you strike out there. Your next play is to bring your question through the chain of leadership. Depending on the nature of the question, your flotilla commander or staff officer may have the information or guidance that you seek. If they don't have the facts at their fingertips, they should run the question up through the chain to the top if needed.



The answers to most questions are in the basic reference sources. But we are all challenged by the occasional thoughtful question that stumps all of the best minds. That's when you have to call in the pros. Yup...I'm talking about my staff! The Operations Program Division Chiefs are true experts in their respective fields and they will research and respond to your questions as needed. So if you are up in the air about an aviation issue, your DSO should contact Bob Shafer. Communicate with Ned Kroeker when the question is about telecommunications.

Continued on page 3

It's the "O" in Operation Patriot Readiness!

Linda A. Nelson, DC-O

Operation Patriot Readiness (OPR), the USCG Auxiliary programs designed to assist the Coast Guard in Homeland Security missions, has something for everyone! There are missions in Recreational Boating Safety, Operations and Marine Safety. But for those members involved in the operational programs, Operation Patriot Readiness is a vital link between the Coast Guard and Auxiliary forces.

Fundamentally, the Operation Patriot Readiness initiatives focus on the intersection points between Coast Guard and CG Auxiliary activities. The basic intersection is at the level of the station and the flotilla. It is here where the planning for activities, events and exercises takes place. It is here where those vital relationships are forged. It is here where we will need to take a stand to protect our country should the need arise. That is why each of us has a stake in Operation Patriot Readiness.

What do you know about OPR? Have you checked out the OPR website? It



can be found at the following link: <http://www.uscgaux.org/%7Eopr/>. Here you can find out about the new public outreach program called "America's Waterways Watch". This program features excellent materials for use in public education as well as stickers and brochures for boaters. Don't forget to tell folks about that all important phone number "1-877-24-WATCH" to report any unusual activity.

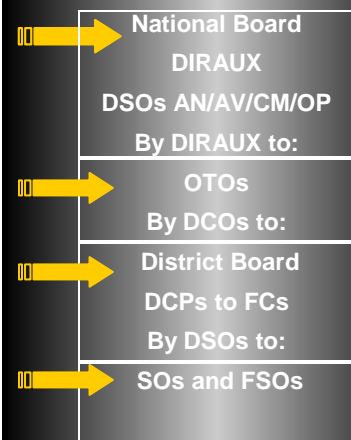


The OPR website also provides exercises for use in training and information on "AUXPAL", a great program to provide augmentation to local Coast Guard stations. The Operations and Marine Safety pages offer information on the basic programs and more advanced training materials on Harbor Patrols and other Homeland Security missions.

The Coast Guard and CG Auxiliary operations program are pillars in providing support for our Nation's Homeland Security. The CG Auxiliary operations program is the foundation of our Operation Patriot Readiness initiatives. So get ready...be a patriot...make your operational missions count!

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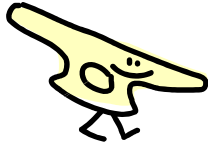


CLEATS AND BITTS

Charles Ford, BC-OES

Cleats used on the decks of pleasure craft vary greatly in design and intended use. Some which seem intended for use to secure the boat to a dock or another boat are totally unsuitable to hold a line without danger of cutting the line if any great strain is put on it. Some are so designed it is very difficult to attach a line of any reasonable diameter. They seem to be designed solely for style. If the boat you acquire has such cleats and you intend to tie your boat securely sometime, I suggest you install at least four that are suitable for marine use.

There are many cleat designs, some for very special use and you can find them in any marine catalogue. They include "jam"cleats, "cam"cleats, "clam"cleats, "lance"cleats, "shroud"cleats and "gripper"cleats to name a few. Most of the above are for special purposes on sailing boats and are in no way suitable for securing a boat at its mooring.



The cleat most commonly used on Coast Guard Auxiliary facilities is the Horn Cleat. These come in "open base" and "closed base" design. The former is generally preferred since it may allow the "eye" in the line to be passed through and over the horns for a quick secure hitch.

Cleats are available in many materials including various plastics, and zinc alloys. On pleasure boats "bronze" and "stainless" steel are the only materials which will stand the weather and are strong enough to serve the Auxiliary Facility properly and stand the standard duty of a pleasure craft.

Now comes the question of size. Horn cleats are measured from tip to tip of the horns and the size is selected to suit the lines with which it is



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

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to be used. A good rule of thumb allows for having a minimum of 1/16" of cleat length for each 1/8" of line diameter. For example a 4" cleat (4 x 16) will accept a line of 4/8" or 1/2" or an 8" cleat (8 x 16) is suitable for a line of 8/8" or 1" and a six" cleat for a 5/8" line. Beware of any cleat, which has sharp edges for the line to rub against versus smooth rounded edges.

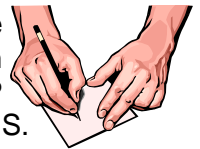
No cleat is better than its fastening. Cleats, when purchased, come with, or at least specifications for, the type and diameter of the bolts (NEVER USE SCREWS) to be used. They also supply or state that a backup plate be used under nut and washer to distribute the load over a larger area than the washer alone.

Bits, (Samson Posts) when sold for deck mounting, come with

instructions similar to those for cleats and may require even thicker and larger backup plates because they may be subject to even greater strain.

Chain, Chain, Chain Continued from page 2

COMO George Pendergast can help you navigate through a Aids to Navigation question. Mark Simoni is unmatched in his understanding of the surface program. Each of these members is ready to assist when needed. If your chain of leadership can't help with your question, these folks can. Their email addresses are printed in each issue of UP TOP IN OPERATIONS. Drop them a line!



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