



Up Top In Operations

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Big News from the Operations Department!

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Happy Spring! I hope the weather in your area has been better than here in mid-Michigan.

It has been a very cold and rainy spring so far. Perhaps that means that we will have a great boating season...once it finally starts.

There are many exciting things going on, operationally speaking:

1. The new, revised Operations Policy Manual will be ready for review by mid June, then ready for print by NACON. It will include the new VE supplement.
2. As of this writing, all of the Boat Crew training manuals and the BCSM are in stock at ANSC. The [overhauled] Air training text will be reprinted after the Commandant's Aviation Safety Board report comes out.
3. The Chief Director's Office (OCX) has applied for training

money for three National "C" schools for coxswains for next year.

4. The new airplane reimbursement rates will be out soon. Surface vessel maintenance funding has been requested again, but we will not know if it will be approved for some time.
5. The new Coast Guard and Auxiliary watchstander qualification book is in routing through HQ for approval. It should be out by fall.
6. A new "Ops Ashore, Boat Force Operations Insignia" (for active duty and the Auxiliary) has been signed by RADM Cross, and is in effect. The initial ceremonial pinning was held at CGHQ on 16 May. Supplies of the Shore Ops insignia will be available at CG Exchanges in the late summer. This insignia is intended to be earned through significant and consistent support to the small



boat community in the CG. On the Active Duty side, it represents a significant career-based level of support. It will not be easy to earn. It will, however, be possible to earn. An Auxiliarist may earn this by completing certain operational qualifications and serving a specified number of hours supporting ashore operational Active Duty Units. The Commandant Instruction will be available on the AUXWEB within a month or so with additional details on how one earns it.

7. The new Finance Center Statronics Patrol Order Management System (POMS) is being tested in five CG Groups and several CG Districts. It is a system that handles electronic submission and payment for patrol orders. It looks very nice, is easy to work with, and promises quicker, more accurate payments for Auxiliarists. It has already produced an approximate 80% workload reduction in some Groups and DIRAUX offices...therefore resulting in quicker turn-around time for payment of claims.
8. The Auxiliary Operational Excellence Program will hit the streets later this year. It is a program to provide Coast Guard Auxiliary boat crews (teams) with a chal-

"Big News" continued on page 2

lenging opportunity to highlight their proficiency and skills through the successful completion of a series of evaluated scenarios. The Operational Excellence Program is not a mandatory "higher level" that the team must complete. It does not replace qualification or certification; rather, it is an achievement of true excellence that may be obtained by a coxswain/crew team if they desire to do so. The Operational Excellence Program, E-Decal and ribbon, is an earned award; it is not a qualification. It is intended to reward demonstration of a high level of proficiency in boat crew skills, foster teamwork, and encourage fellowship among our operational members. It will recognize top performing operational boats and crews, just like aboard Navy ships and Coast Guard Cutters. The Active duty crews must earn their "E" Ribbons as a high performing team. So will the Auxiliary, for those that choose to take on the challenge.

The need for operational facilities has never been greater; please do whatever you can to encourage our members to have their boats become an OPFAC. As you can see, there are a lot of interesting things going on, it is an exciting time to be Operational; spread the word!

Have a great operational season...be safe out there. Remember your TCT and risk management training; there is nothing that we do on or above the water that requires getting injured. Put the brain in gear before the transmission.

Semper Paratus,
Robert C. (Bob) Colby
Department Chief, Operations



Common Myths About Mentoring

By: Gail A. Fisher, DVC-OE
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You may still have misgivings about taking part in the boat crew mentoring process. You may even believe some of the "myths of mentoring" to be true! Well, here are some common myths and the "myth-busting" reality.

Myth #1 – You need a toga to be a mentor.

Truth #1 – While mentoring originated in ancient Greece, the protégé no longer sits at the feet of the mentor! Today's mentoring relationship occurs between two adults, both of which have a lot to share and a lot to learn.

Myth #2 – The person being mentored is the only one who benefits from the relationship.

Truth #2 – Not so! Mentors can derive a great deal of personal satisfaction from working with a trainee. Helping a person develop and become productive can be very rewarding. And, most mentors will tell you they learn new ways of doing things through the mutually beneficial mentoring relationship.

Myth #3 – You must be old and wise to be a mentor.

Truth #3 – The purpose of the mentor relationship is to help a member learn the skills needed to qualify in the Boat Crew program. Age is not a requirement! As for wisdom, share all that you have, and your trainee will certainly benefit.

Myth #4 – Effective mentoring takes place simply by pairing an experience person with a trainee.

Truth #4 – Mentoring is much more than pairing two people together and hoping that it works! The flotilla leadership must be willing to "check-in" with the mentor and trainee to ensure the goals of the program are being met. The mentor and trainee must both be willing to commit time and energy to making the relationship successful. Let's face it, any relationship that is neglected is at risk for failure!

Myth #5 – My flotilla doesn't need me, someone else will do it.

Truth #5 - Our flotillas need us all to pitch in! Whether you volunteer to mentor in the Boat Crew training program, or assist in some other way, all contributions are valuable. And remember mentoring is nothing more than reaching out to share your knowledge and expertise with another person in a structured way. Your flotilla does need you to help it train new folks to carry out its mission!

There are probably many other myths out there, but you get the picture. The best way to separate myth from reality is to try mentoring and see for yourself. You might be surprised to find that the benefits far outweigh the costs!

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Leaves no residue...

Clean Agent Fire Extinguishants

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What is a clean agent fire extinguishant? It is a fire extinguishing material, which will put out fire and leave no residue to be cleaned up, and do no damage to anything in the fire area.

Back in the 1920s, and for more than thirty years, carbon dioxide gas was widely used as a clean agent industrially, on boats, aircraft and ships of all classes. CO₂ is a clean agent but it has the major disadvantage of being deadly to anyone caught in the fire-killing atmosphere.

During World War II, agents were developed here and abroad that would extinguish fire, and leave no residue, without making the protected area unsafe for human occupancy. The most popular of these were called halons. Halon 1301 was the most suitable, since it is gaseous, for flooding a space. Halon 1211 is discharged as a liquid and is called a streaming agent. This is preferred for portable fire extinguishers.

In the 1970s, the world came to realize that halons were contaminating the ozone layer in the atmosphere. This layer protects the earth and its inhabitants from ultraviolet radiation. Production of halons ceased in this and most other industrial countries of the world by an international agreement called the "Montreal Protocol."

SO! You have a halon extinguisher on your boat. Should you throw it away?

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No — it is still a fine fire-extinguishing device and it is not contaminating the atmosphere while on your boat. It is the best clean extinguishing agent ever made. It is non-toxic when used in fire killing concentrations. When it is used on a fire, the heat destroys it, and the by-products do not contaminate the ozone layer. However, the by-products produced when used on a large fire are toxic and unbearably irritating to inhale.

A more practical question exists: if I use it or it leaks can I get it refilled? Maybe. There is still plenty of the agent around unsold or reclaimed



from units taken out of service. It may be hard to locate a service firm who will refill the unit at a price that is attractive. It may be more convenient to scrap the shell and replace it with a unit filled with halon or one of the new clean agents available that are approved by the EPA as non-contaminating.

Please do not scrap a full unit. If you want to get rid of it, take it to a fire company or fire equipment dealer who will be sure contents are reclaimed or destroyed.

You probably have dry chemical fire extinguishers on board; there is no better portable extinguisher. You also know the problems of getting an engine room hatch open to effectively

attack the fire with any portable extinguisher. The best solution is clean agent fixed system. Also, if you should discharge a dry chemical unit on an engine while it is running, you will probably will have to completely overhaul the engine.

I should emphasize that there are fixed system units on the market filled with HALON 1301 and portable units filled with HALON 1211; these are filled with agent manufactured before the ban on production and are perfectly legal. Just be certain the unit you buy, be it portable or a fixed system, is labeled "Coast Guard approved."

The only agent presently on the market for an "engineered" marine fixed system is HFC-227ea, sold under the names FM200 and FE227. Both of these are clean, but are more expensive, and if the concentration exceeds the minimum fire killing 7%, they may make the room in which they are discharged unsafe to enter until ventilated. Streaming agents now produced for use in portable extinguishers are FE 36 and Halotron.

Regardless of which agent is used, if you buy a portable extinguisher or a fixed system with an Underwriters Laboratory Coast Guard approval label, it is acceptable for use on your boat.