

Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary



First Northern District

Strategic Plan

2012 - 2013

Introduction

This Strategic Plan provides a blueprint for the First District, Northern of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary for the years 2012-2013. It describes to the leadership at all levels the key strategic imperatives District Commodore's watchwords and directions.

The plan will be periodically reviewed and updated based upon feedback from cognizant Coast Guard authority, the National Executive Committee, District Staff, Commander First Coast Guard District, and Sector Commanders and of the progress made while accomplishing the elements of the plan.

This plan provides Unit Officers with a picture of the strategic and operational intent, direction, focus and accountability for First Northern in 2012 and 2013.

Dennis M. DeGabriele
District Commodore

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE EXTRACT

As the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary enters the second decade of the 21st Century, it will re-examine the roles it plays in support of the U.S. Coast Guard. In the years following 2001 and the September 11 attacks on the country, the Auxiliary emphasized maritime security issues while trying to balance personnel, assets and time available with its traditional recreational safe boating missions. This plan reflects a change to emphasis on recreational boating safety while continuing to contribute to the security of the United States.

To effectively accomplish its assigned mission by the Coast Guard, the Auxiliary will concentrate in four strategic areas: mission effectiveness, providing a ready volunteer force, effective relationships with its partners, and knowledge management.

This plan outlines strategies as a course ahead to enhance products and delivery of recreational boating safety programs in public education, vessel safety checks, and dealer visitations. It addresses concerns for a decrease in operational mission availability and assets yet seeks a way to address declining marine environmental protection missions.

In order to have the most effective ready volunteer force during both normal and surge operations, this plan offers strategies to address concerns of a maturing membership, leadership succession, member training, diversity, member recognition, recruitment, and retention.

Following the Commandant's vision of strengthened partnerships, the Auxiliary will nurture relationships with the Coast Guard, the states, our international customers, and the maritime industry, insuring the organization operates at peak efficiency.

Recognizing the explosive growth in traditional and non-traditional media, the plan offers a way ahead in both external and internal information sharing and organizational branding through use of a message via a social media presence and use of innovative technologies.

THE MISSION OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

The primary mission of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is Recreational Boating Safety. We also have the mission to contribute to the safety and security of our citizens, ports, waterways, and coastal regions, as authorized by the Commandant of the United States Coast Guard. We will support the overall mission by improving the quality and delivery methods of our educational products. We will work with other like-minded organizations to improve the overall knowledge of the boating public to increase awareness of safety on the water.

NATIONAL COMMODORE'S VISION STATEMENT

The Coast Guard Auxiliary will continue to meet America's ever changing needs through increased attention to recreational boating safety, security of America's waterways, and improved methods of educating the boating public.

NATIONAL STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

- Continue to be the best all volunteer organization in the Nation (Goal 1)
- Continue to provide the best product on the market for the education of the boating public (Goal 1)
- Maintain the high standards of the organization to insure that we continue to maintain the integrity and dependability of the organization (Goal 1)
- Maintain a ready volunteer force ready to assist the Coast Guard in times of emergency (Goal 2)
- Continue an aggressive recruiting program to include a diversity of members to insure the long-term growth of the organization (Goal 2)
- Continue to recognize the contributions of our members (Goal 2)
- Continue to meet the expectations of the Coast Guard and America's Boating Public to be the premiere safe boating organization (Goal 3)
- Work with other Federal Government Agencies, States and other partner agencies to support safe boating (Goal 3)
- Adjust our organization to the changes in the structure of the Coast Guard to best support its missions and to allow for the cooperation within to insure the organization operates at peak efficiency (Goal 3)
- Create innovative methods to use new electronic systems to improve the overall effectiveness of the education process (Goal 4)

NATIONAL STRATEGIC ISSUES

As pointed out in the National Strategic Plan, there are numerous issues, barriers and/or roadblocks that must be dealt with in order to achieve desired outcomes for the next two years.

Internal issues are concerned with

- Our **membership is maturing** faster than the rate of recruitment and qualification of younger members. Many of our mature members can no longer participate in the activities they once did, so participation /effectiveness levels are down in some program areas
- **Leadership succession** is the shortage of qualified members in the pipeline to enable smooth transitions to higher positions
- **Training programs** are in place; however, the delivery of those programs is not always effective

External issues have to do with

- **Economic readiness** influenced by the economy affects the members' ability to participate, the Coast Guard's ability to fund programs, and the Auxiliary's ability to perform at its best
- **Increasing requirements** and stringencies are diminishing the pool of operationally ready volunteers
- **Loss of surface facilities** since many members are not offering their vessels for use

Each of these issues, and more, were considered in the National and District strategies to planning for our desired outcomes.

DISTRICT COMMODORE'S VISION

No one has to be reminded that First District Northern (1NR) stretches from Maine at the border to Canada to Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island and our membership faces challenges both geographic and demographic in nature. While our challenges may be reflective of those faced by any other district in the United States, one of the most difficult is reaching more of the boating public while tormented by a short boating season. On the other hand, our members continue to utilize their wealth of experience and knowledge for performing that outreach, while serving in the capacity of an outstanding augmenting factor in Team Coast Guard.

As we look to 2012 and beyond, it is clear that there will be a mounting necessity to bring Auxiliary operations, and particularly training, more clearly in line with the mission requirements of the active component of the Coast Guard. Our members all have the unique skill sets and local knowledge we are so proud of. We need to turn those factors into positive

Experience and knowledge is what the Auxiliary is about. **It is what we do!** Dr. Arthur J. Murray said "*Knowledge is a set of models describing various properties and behaviors within a domain.*" What better reflects his theory than how we as the Auxiliary approach the boater with information (knowledge) vital to their safety and well being or how we step into an operational or administrative support roles. Knowledge Management is an identified, established discipline that 1NR must continue to address, through the utilization of advances in technology or simply the tried and true methods already available to us in the classroom.

The ability of our members to step up and ensure alignment with our parent organization we must achieve the 1NR Goals and Strategies, the National Commodore's Vision, the desired outcomes listed of the National Strategic Imperatives. This must take place while abiding by the Auxiliary Policy Statement and the current structure of the national organization and the Commandant's Vision Statement.

1NR in itself is a strategic asset. Every member of 1NR must remain focused on methods to improve our "product." The goals identified herein are first and foremost attainable, and will provide the basis for the future improvements. We will continue to share the knowledge and experience we have gained, but the job ahead must include identifying and defining the areas and methods for improving our delivery to the public and to our members while growing as an organization.

Dennis M. DeGabriele
District Commodore

GOAL 1 – COMMUNICATIONS

Strengthen lines of bi-directional communications that exists within all organizational structures of First District Northern utilizing the working concepts and established policies found within the Chain of Leadership. This will be accomplished by ensuring communications are frequent and concise, and provide for the rapid conveyance of policy and the management of knowledge contained within the nexus (connections) of our members.

- Get the Word Out will be the by-word of all elected and appointed staff
- Ensure policy changes and updates are communicated in a timely manner to all members
- Strengthen the lines of communication across the District Bridge and District Staff
- Strengthen the lines of communications of appointed the staff officers (Parallel Staffing)
- Communications engines should include, traditional as well as, where practicable and available; example expanded use of technology

GOAL 2 – MEMBER TRAINING

Provide and make available the best member training opportunities that will ensure our members attain their goals of serving the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary.

- Utilize a Lessons Learned effort identify currently established efforts and/or practices to create a district-wide New Members program
- Educate new and current members concerning available “career paths” to include areas of specialty training at Coast Guard Training Centers
- Develop and conduct workshops for substantive training for mentors for new members
- Develop potential areas and methods of Distance Learning techniques for Member Training
- Integrate Incident Command System (ICS) principals for daily operations and the need for Delegation of Authority
- Provide training for technology-based accountability systems
- Develop cross-unit training exercises that utilizes ICS

- In partnership with Sector Commanders, develop “career days” to provide members the opportunity to integrate more closely with local CG units

GOAL 3 – LEADERSHIP

The District Bridge and every elected and appointed officer should strive to ensure they, individually, are a resource of effective leadership within their unit and for First District Northern. This may be accomplished through visible and ongoing commitment and direct and continuous involvement in the identification and attainment of the goals required to complete our missions.

- Utilize the S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) methodology for establishing the means of achieving the 1NR and unit level Strategic Goals
- Ensure “buy-in” by all elected and appointed officers of District and unit goals
- Ensure every member is aware of, and takes ownership of, District and unit Goals
- Visit and re-visit these goals on a regular basis, seeking those areas for improvement and rewarding members who have embraced and attained these goals
- It is extremely important that leadership ensure every member has the opportunity to use their knowledge and skill sets to reach their full potential
- Recruitment and retention must be of prime importance to every elected and appointed leadership
- Stipulate that everyone acknowledge that Public Affairs is everyone’s responsibility and provide opportunities for that to occur
- Become known in your community as Team Coast Guard

GOAL 4 – KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge has been identified as a strategic asset. Our focus must continue to be the sharing of the knowledge embodied in our experienced membership and embedded in our ethos. That effort must include the traditional face-to-face methods so important in team and confidence building but must reach out to utilize more of today’s technology-based initiatives.

Knowledge management outreach must be enhanced to include more of the traditional media to fulfill the educational needs in every community.

More than ever, additional efforts in providing our membership's needs for personal updates, training should provide for the use of electronic, social-media, and distance learning technologies.

- Expand the uses of technology by and for members in areas to include
 - Qualification or re-qualification requirements
 - Distance Learning
 - Member Accountability
 - Response
 - Opportunities for Direct Operational support of Coast Guard Units

GOAL 5 – RECOGNITION

Every member is a volunteer. Recognize their successes and their efforts. Everyone is aware that the primary mission, and every Keystone of the Auxiliary, is dependent upon the personal commitment, insights, knowledge, and experience of our members. Individual, group, and organizational recognition is a key factor in ensuring valuable, continuing productivity of our members. That recognition should occur at every level and through every means available, from local community recognition to Auxiliary National and Coast Guard awards.

- Elected and appointed leaders must better familiarize themselves with the awards programs that exist within the Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, and individual units of First District Northern.
- Elected and appointed leaders must allocate a portion of their role to the identification of those members who deserve recognition
- Make recognition timely
- Utilize every public and organizational method to ensure that the local and Auxiliary communities are aware of those recognitions

Appendix A - cOMMANDANT'S vISION sSTATEMENT

Commandant's Vision Statement

Charting the Course of the United States Coast Guard

-----Original Message-----

From: Papp, Robert ADM

Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2010 8:21 PM

Subject: Setting The Watch

Shipmates,

I am honored to serve as the 24th Commandant of the Coast Guard. When I assumed the duties from Admiral Thad Allen at noon today, it concluded a series of key rotations and marked the setting of a new watch to lead our service. Serving with me on this watch are Vice Admiral Sally Brice-O'Hara, Vice.

Commandant, Master Chief Michael Leavitt, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard and Master Chief Mark Allen, Master Chief Petty Officer of Reserve Forces. Each assumed their duties over the past ten days. They are all very experienced professionals who have been tried and tested in the field. We are also joined by Vice Admiral Robert Parker, Commander, Atlantic Area, Vice Admiral Manson Brown, Commander Pacific Area, Vice Admiral John Currier, Chief-of-Staff and Future Deputy Commandant of Mission Support and Rear Admiral Brian Salerno, Deputy Commandant for Operations. I am proud to serve alongside this exceptionally talented group of leaders.

My watch will be guided by the following vision for our service:

We are defined by our missions, people and heritage. We will selflessly serve our country and perform our duties in a manner that secures the trust and confidence of mariners and citizens alike. We will set a course that steadies the service, honors our profession, strengthens our partnerships and respects our shipmates.

This vision will be achieved by the incoming watch through clear focus on select projects and initiatives currently under way in our service. Instead of creating new tasking, we intend to emphasize vital initiatives, leverage teams that are in place now and move these efforts forward to completion. I will provide more specifics in the coming weeks. I often use the term Shipmate. You need to know that this is a term of Endearment for me that represents a common bond across the entire Coast

Guard family and all mission communities. There is no higher compliment in my opinion than being called a Shipmate and no better goal than being a good one.

Admiral Allen will continue his service as the National Incident Commander for the Deepwater Horizon Oil spill managing the overall federal response. I am glad he accepted this last assignment as it will enable me to focus on the Coast Guard's response, and serving you as Commandant of the Coast Guard. Admiral Allen is a true public servant and visionary, I thank him for his service.

I encourage all Coast Guard active duty, reserve, civilian, auxiliary, families and retirees to bookmark and initiate RSS feed from the senior leadership web page at www.uscg.mil/seniorleadership. We intend to use this location during our watch to post information and address subjects that are important to our service.

All standing orders remain in effect, set the watch and carry out the routine of the day.

Semper Paratus,

Admiral Bob Papp

APPENDIX B - USCGAUX POLICY STATEMENT



THE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
Washington, DC 20593

U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY POLICY STATEMENT

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is our steadfast volunteer corps. Our Auxiliary Shipmates assist the Coast Guard with performing our many challenging maritime missions, with boating safety remaining as their core function. Proudly serving alongside our total workforce, Auxiliarists make it possible to more ably accomplish our missions – they are a true force multiplier.

Originally formed as the Coast Guard volunteer Reserve on June 23, 1939, the volunteer Reserve was renamed the Auxiliary two years later. The Auxiliary rapidly expanded as the United States entered WWII, and Auxiliarists assisted in many of the Coast Guard's domestic missions, freeing up active duty Coast Guardsmen for wartime operations.

Today's Auxiliary is defined by this same spirit of patriotism and volunteerism. Auxiliarists continue to lend their unique talents to assist with performing a broad range of Coast Guard missions. Their mission support efforts expand the reach and impact of Coast Guard operations, particularly boating safety initiatives.

The Auxiliary Service priorities include:

- **Promoting and Improving Recreational Boating Safety;**
- Providing trained crews and facilities to augment the Coast Guard and enhance safety and security of our ports, waterways and coastal regions;
- Supporting Coast Guard operational, administrative and logistical requirements.

We must always remember that it is through public spirit, patriotism and an uncommon sense of civic duty that the members of the Auxiliary give their time, facilities and services – they receive no compensation. Commanders, Commanding Officers, Officers-in-Charge and program managers shall continually strive to enhance *Silver and Gold* partnerships to further the work of the Coast Guard.

I am personally committed to ensuring we maintain an Auxiliary that is robust, well-trained, and always ready.

R. J. PAPP, JR.
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard