

Auxiliary Ready for Operations – (AUX-RFO)

Established as a joint program among flotilla/division Operations and Member Training and the local Coast Guard command, Auxiliary Ready for Operations (AUX-RFO) is designed to eliminate the separation of capabilities, tasking and results between the silver and gold members. This, in turn, will give the local Coast Guard Station command confidence in the abilities of the Auxiliary operational members, resulting in greater utilization of Auxiliary crews and facilities. AUX-RFO is designed for training to be completed by Auxiliarists and evaluation to be carried out by Coast Guard personnel.

While acknowledging many of the silver members are significantly older than the gold members, the goal is to have the silver side as well prepared as possible. There are three critical areas:

- Capabilities: CPR/First Aid Training, physical abilities, P-6 pump, etc.
- Tasking: Ability to handle, within reason, adverse weather conditions, various times of day/night and locations other than the standard flotilla area of responsibility (AOR).
- Results: Successful completion of important surface missions by the silver side just as expected from the gold side members.

As a result of the successful implementation of the AUX-RFO program, Coast Guard Station commands will have intimate knowledge of participants' capabilities which will assist them in further tasking. Some of the tasking contemplated for AUX-RFO participants is B-0 standby for primary Station Search and Rescue (SAR) response on weekdays (to allow station personnel to complete other necessary tasks) and staging as SAR response vessels and crews during high profile holidays such as Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Operational Drywater, Fireworks displays, etc.

Ideally, implementation of AUX-RFO should be completed prior to start of the SAR season. To that end it would behoove each operational member to review and renew their:

- Wellness (what a great time to get back into the gym, go on a diet, stop smoking, etc.)
- Professional knowledge (why not review the appropriate Boat Crew Manuals [Volumes I, II and III] as well as the Operations Policy Manual. How about initially certifying as Operation Excellence if you haven't done it before or how about recertifying?)
- Practical expertise (get out on the water and practice skills, get some line and practice knot tying, practice first aid capabilities)

As part of the preparations for the SAR season and to be of maximum benefit to the local Coast Guard Station, as many boats and crew as possible from each flotilla should be Ready For Operations (RFO). This involves three main areas:

- Facility and Rescue/Survival Equipment (R&S) inspection
- Written tests for crew and coxswain to cover material contained in the Boat Crew Seamanship Manual
- Underway Drills

To prepare for the underway drills, the AUX-RFO program supplies the underway drill checklists that the active duty uses for their 25' patrol boats, modified for the Auxiliary. This is where Member Training comes into play. Members need to work with their operations officer and elected bridge to review the items in the checklists and get the training going. The drill sheets can and should be used by boat crews in the course of the drills.

Note: The standards in the drill sheets are over and above standard Auxiliary drills; it is the AUX-RFO program's intention to help Auxiliary operational members increase their skills. If a member receives an UNSAT in any drill, it will NOT affect their standing as a crew or coxswain within the Auxiliary.

There is a direct correlation between many of the tasks in AUX-RFO to those in Operational Excellence certification. However not all tasks are covered. However, members may want to consider using AUX-RFO as a jumping off point and implement an Operation Excellence program at the same time.