

# Operational Plan 2017 – 2018



U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary  
District 7

**U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY • DISTRICT 7 2017 - 2018  
OPERATIONAL PLAN**

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"I am thankful for a nation whose beliefs are tested, whose laws are followed, and whose values are inspiring."

**Lewis Timberlake**



## Introduction

As the largest of the of the Auxiliary Districts, the more than five thousand (5,000) men and women of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Seventh District are dedicated to assisting the boating public and supporting Coast Guard units in their mission areas. Seventh District's geographical area includes the states of South Carolina, Georgia, nearly all of Florida, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands. We proudly volunteer our time and resources to support six Coast Guard Sectors, four Coast Guard Air Stations, 20 Coast Guard small boat stations, and eight Coast Guard Aids to Navigation Teams.

We are trained to perform in a wide variety of missions; to be Semper Paratus (always ready). Following are the numbers of members who are certified in mission areas, and the number of facilities which are volunteered and certified for use:

- 867 Instructors
- 501 RBS Program Visitors
- 482 Boat Crew
- 28 Air Observers
- 59 Pilots
- 58 Marine Safety Specialists
- 590 Aids to Navigation Verifiers
- 121 Food Service Specialists
- 548 Telecommunication Operators
- 975 Vessel Examiners
- 325 Coxswains
- 21 PWC (Personal Watercraft) Operators
- 47 Air Crew
- 203 Interpreters
- 288 Watch Standers
- 331 Boats
- 36 Planes
- 263 Radios

The list of missions and certified members in those missions is much longer, and clearly reflects the degree of dedication our members have invested in supporting the United States Coast Guard and our recreational boating public.

Given the strain that current budgets have placed on the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary, one of our biggest challenges and top priorities will be to maintain and strengthen the support that we have pledged to our core programs. The goals and strategies outlined in this Plan do not begin to address all we will do and accomplish during 2017 and 2018. The big picture is that we will strive to strengthen all our missions in a culture of continuous improvement.

*Judith L Hudson, DCO-7*

"In order to succeed, you must know what you are doing, like what you are doing, and believe in what you are doing."

**Will Rogers**



## USCG Auxiliary Policy Statement

*The Commandant of the United States Coast Guard  
Washington DC 20593*

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed volunteer component of our Service. The Coast Guard's guiding principles of SERVICE TO NATION, DUTY TO PEOPLE and COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE are only achievable through the combined efforts of all Coast Guard forces. The Coast Guard Auxiliary is a valuable, dedicated and indispensable part of the Coast Guard team.

Established by Congress on June 23, 1939, as the Volunteer Reserve, the Auxiliary conducted many of the Coast Guard's domestic missions while the Active Duty and Reserve components were forward deployed during World War II. The Auxiliary has continued its great service to our Nation ever since.

The spirit of volunteerism and patriotism that called the first Auxiliarists to duty continues today in the more than 30,000 professional men and women who faithfully execute assigned Auxiliary missions throughout our Nation, its territories, and in foreign countries where U.S. engagement is enhanced by Auxiliary services. Upon enrollment, Auxiliarists pledge to support the Coast Guard Auxiliary and to faithfully execute assigned duties, and to abide by the governing policies established by the Commandant. They are a crucial force multiplier for the Coast Guard's sustained mission excellence.

Auxiliarists enthusiastically provide experience, talent, and platforms for a wide range of activities, including, Maritime Safety Outreach, Search and Rescue, Safety and Security Patrols, Disaster Response, Pollution Response and recruiting. These activities enable the Coast Guard to successfully execute all its missions, and they do it without compensation!

The Auxiliary missions are:

- To promote and improve Recreational Boating Safety;
- To provide a diverse array of specialized skills, trained crews, and capable facilities to augment the Coast Guard and enhance safety and security of our ports, waterways and coastal regions;
- To support Coast Guard operational, administrative and logistical requirements.

I charge all Commanders, Commanding Officers and Officers in Charge to continually strive to include the Auxiliary in mission execution and support so that we can maximize sustained excellence across all mission areas.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul F. Zukunft". The signature is fluid and cursive.

PAUL F. ZUKUNFT, Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard



## National Mission Statement

- To promote and improve Recreational Boating Safety
- To provide a diverse array of specialized skills, trained crews, and capable facilities to augment the Coast Guard and enhance safety and security of our ports, waterways, and coastal regions
- To support Coast Guard operational, administrative, and logistical requirements

## National Vision Statement

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary – the best trained, most valued maritime volunteer organization in the world – highly effective during normal operations and ready for emergencies.

## National Strategic Imperatives

- Increase Auxiliary membership through defined programs
- Develop recruiting efforts to provide branded message
- Encourage retention of existing members through mentoring, awards programs, and similar active efforts to let members know that their efforts are needed and appreciated.
- Encourage diversity in recruiting.
- Promote communication among all levels of the Auxiliary.
- Promote the use of communication technology within the Auxiliary.
- Encourage training beyond the qualification and sustainment levels so that members can strive to become proficient in their activities.
- Stress core values and expected standards in adhering to membership oaths.
- Cultivate leadership skills and succession management.
- Ensure that qualification requirements reflect the mission for which the member is trained.
- Streamline the currency maintenance process.
- Define the numerical targets and develop a dashboard to track progress of each strategic goal.

## National Guiding Principals and Priorities

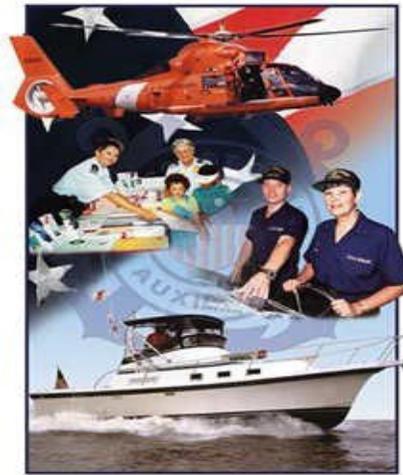
**Service to Nation:** Strengthen presence in all types of safe boating education; Expand efforts in Paddlecraft Water Safety; Meet Human Capital needs of the Coast Guard and the Auxiliary.

**Duty to People:** Provide a unified web platform experience to facilitate mission and people needs; Simplify, standardize and coordinate administrative procedures to meet service and people needs.

**Commitment to Excellence:** Identify and provide leadership development resources, tools and training; Maximize maritime radio communications support, capacity, and capabilities; Align Auxiliary Interpreter Corps capabilities with Coast Guard requirements; Standardize, manage and support Auxiliary financial policies and procedures; Expand the Auxiliary University Program to meet mission and service needs.

*"Good enough never is."*  
Debbie Fields

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## Core Ethical Principles

**HONESTY** – Be truthful, straight forward, sincere, candid. Do not mislead or deceive.

**INTEGRITY** – Live by principles, show the courage of your convictions. Stand behind your beliefs, and put principle over expediency. Walk the talk.

**COMMITMENT** – Keep your promises, be reliable, take action, and accept responsibility.

**LOYALTY** – Be faithful, supportive, adhere to accepted cases, and pledge allegiance.

**FAIRNESS** – Strive to be equitable, be open-minded to people and ideas, recognize and overcome prejudice, do not discriminate on an improper basis.

**COMPASSION** – Be considerate, kind, caring, charitable, and unselfish.

**RESPECT** – Be courteous, deferential, and tolerant to policies & procedures, individuals and groups. Appreciate the freedom, dignity, and rights of others.

**CIVIC DUTY** – Willingly perform assignments and a fair share of the work. Abide by rules and laws; participate.

**PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE** – Identify deficiencies. Do your best at all times, take pride in your work, always strive to improve.

**ACCOUNTABILITY** – Consider consequences and accept responsibility for actions and inactions, do not shift blame or make excuses. Correct errors and misunderstandings.

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## Executive Summary

District 7 lost 5% of our net member base through retirements and dis-enrollments in 2015. This is due in part to increased requirements to qualify and re-certify in our mission areas, the implementation of a significant increase in membership dues, the aging of our member force, a mandated training requirement, and personal reasons. In 2016 we lost additional significant numbers of members; however, many of them were not that active.

With these members leaving, we also lost their knowledge, history, and mission activity. As a result, we must **actively recruit quality members** with skills, experience, and talents who can contribute in areas where we have gaps. Improve our mentoring and training efforts, as well as to ensure our members know they are appreciated. These steps will be paramount to being successful in re-building our membership.

Our number one mission area is the **Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) Program** that delivers public education, vessel safety checks, and RBS program visits supported by marketing and publicity efforts. Even though boating fatality statistics have improved somewhat in the last few years, obviously, we must enhance and expand our efforts in this arena. Every life lost is a failure, so innovative, smart programs and action steps to educate and inform the recreational boating public is a necessary priority.

Currently, our communications and **relationships with the Coast Guard** are less than optimal. In some geographical and functional areas, it is excellent, while in other areas there is minimal interaction. We are in the process of improving our service and learning where and how we can be better partners. These efforts will continue to be nourished and advanced in order for the Auxiliary to remain relevant and for our support to be the best that it can be.

As **environmental factors** continue to negatively impact our planet including our marine resources, we have an obligation to improve the quality and quantity of our efforts to educate and inform our fellow citizens on how to reduce the human footprint that is such a factor in this picture. Partnering with other maritime and natural resources organizations and agencies that are focused on saving our environmental quality of life should be a major thrust.

Our organizational strategy begins with the National Plan. Working with that guidance and information gathered from district members, the District Operational Plan was developed.

In the first quarter of 2015, an assessment of specific District 7 issues was completed, organized, and prioritized. A brief summary of that **SWOT survey** is included in the Appendix.

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Throughout 2015 I also distributed a two-page anonymous, voluntary survey at each of the 20 units that I visited. A summary of those comments also is attached. This information weighed heavily in developing the 2017-2018 Operational Plan.

From the combination of surveys, conversations with Auxiliary groups and individuals, and input from my Transition Team, four (4) Operational mission areas have been chosen as the focus points for the next two years:

- Targeted recruiting, training and retention
- Quality Performance in RBS areas
- “Gold Standard” support to our Coast Guard units
- Marine Safety (MS) & Marine Environmental Protection (MEP) programs

***Inter-related elements of the 2017-2018 Operational Plan***

The four operational mission areas, with emphasis on technology, support the National Strategic Plan, and the District Seven vision and mission statements, motto and watchwords. These mission areas are all inter-related , and collectively form our focus for the next two years.

Watchwords of ***Listening, Learning & Leading*** strive to ensure that everyone is actively heard on a continuing basis, that all members have a mindset of continuous learning, practicing and improving, and that each member uses his/her unique knowledge, talents and skills to contribute, lead and excel in those areas where they have expertise.

***Persistent Personal Progress*** is imperative to our district in order to provide our customers with the skills, talents and experience to meet our missions and our goals. Persistent Personal Progress also refers to practicing and honing the skills we already have, and developing the ones we need for the future. We must strive to improve, do more, and become more effective at what we do. All of this leads to our overall mission of delivering ***Relevant Service***. That is what it is all about – ensuring that we can support the Coast Guard and our boating public with meaningful contributions – with what they want and need to serve and protect our country.

*Judith L Hudson, DCO-7*

The choices we make will determine the Auxiliary we will become. We choose to build an Auxiliary of excellence and relevance.



## District 7 Vision Statement

- To attract, mentor, and train members to serve as the most effective and valued maritime volunteer organization in the world.

## District 7 Mission Statement

- To promote and improve Recreational Boating Safety missions
- To provide a diverse array of specialized skills, trained crews, and capable facilities to augment the Coast Guard and enhance safety and security of our ports, waterways, and coastal regions.
- To support Coast Guard operational, administrative, and logistical requirements.

## District 7 Motto

### **Persistent Personal Progress for Relevant Service**

- Recruit, mentor and train new members, as well as maintain, improve and add to our skills and knowledge to ensure all of us are proficient, knowledgeable and always ready....to continuously learn, practice, and take part in our programs and missions. This is what defines ***Persistent Personal Progress***.
- The delivery of ***Relevant Service*** will be accomplished by forming positive and interactive partnerships with sectors, and with boat and air stations to ensure we provide the support and assistance they need. In addition, we must stay current with what is happening in recreational boating (causes of accidents, injuries, fatalities, etc.) and then integrate that information into our teachings and interactions to provide ***Relevant Service*** to our community customers.

## District 7 Watchwords

### **Listening, Learning, Leading**

- To habitually engage in active listening with an open mind and a positive approach.
- To read and study; to practice something new on a continuing basis expanding our knowledge and skills.
- To participate in our areas of interest where we are experienced, talented, and successful.

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## Goals

### Planning, Execution, Tracking, Accountability.

The following officers will lead the goal efforts, and lend support, provide innovative and creative ideas, information, and relevancy working with other officers, teams, members and partners to achieve positive results:

- Recruiting and Retention – District Staff Officer – Human Resources (DSO-HR), District Staff Officer – Member Training (DSO-MT) & District Staff Officer – Public Affairs (DSO-PA)
- Recreational Boating Safety (RBS) – District Chief of Staff (DCOS) & District Directorate Chief, Prevention (DDC-P)
- Coast Guard – District Staff Officer – Incident Management (DSO-IM), Auxiliary Sector Coordinators (ASCs), DSO-HR and DSO-MT.
- Marine Safety (MS)/Marine Environmental Protection (MEP) – District Staff Officer-MS (DSO-MS) & appropriate ADSOs-MS
- Technology Efficiency – District Directorate Chief – Logistics (DDC-L) & District Staff Officer, Communications Services (DSO-CS)

### 1. To recruit, mentor, and train new members.

- A. Recruit, mentor and train members in all RBS areas increasing members and certifications by 2% per year. Increase # of members by 5% per year.
- B. Use gap analysis “Needs” to assist flotillas and divisions in developing and executing targeted recruiting plans to support Coast Guard units
- C. Identify missing skills and talents for flotilla administration and add to the targeted recruiting missions
- D. Train Division Staff Officers – Human Resources and Member Training on using the local unit resources available to develop and implement targeted recruiting and mentoring programs in units. Increase the number of active mentoring programs by 2% per year.
- E. Identify and promote new and more diverse recruiting sources.
- F. Train on “best practices” of retention. Improve retention rates by 2% a year.
- G. Recruit skilled radio communications operators in Tampa, Orlando, Miami, Atlanta & Charleston increasing certified TCOs by 2% per year. Explore opportunities to recruit operators in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.
- H. In 2018 identify and initiate two new Auxiliary University Programs.

“Those who say it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it.”

Chinese Proverb

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**2. Improve our education and information to the recreational boating public with the goal of reducing accidents, injuries, and deaths on the water.**

- A. Identify two projects per year to be defined, planned, and implemented by the District RBS Committee toward this goal.
- B. Create new radio announcements and messages, television spots and interview opportunities, social media postings, texts and articles to educate, inform and publicize our RBS messages and missions.
- C. Increase the variety of Public Education (PE) classes taught in each Division (DIV) by one each year
- D. Increase the number of PE students, Vessel Examinations (VE) & Program Visits (PV) by 2% per year.
- E. Contact and establish active relationships with external boating safety organizations, to partner on projects, missions, and events. These organizations could include:
  - a. U.S. Power Squadron
  - b. National Safe Boating Council
  - c. Corps of Engineers
  - d. State Navigation Districts
  - e. State Fish & Wildlife Commissions
  - f. Local. regional NOAA units
  - g. Dominican Republic Coast Guard Auxiliary
  - h. Other identified regional and local boating safety organizations
- I. Assign DDC-P, DSO-VE, DSO-PE and additional experienced members forming a committee to develop an AUXPAD District 7 Program, gain District Executive Committee (EXCOM) approval and initiate implementation of an Auxiliary Paddle Craft (AUXPAD) Program.

**3. Provide the “gold standard” of logistical, operational, and administrative support to Coast Guard units.**

- A. Ensure current assets and needed assets (gap) analysis information is reviewed on a semi-annual basis by meeting with sectors and units to discuss and update.
- B. Identify, develop as needed, and provide training programs to ensure the district can provide qualified members to meet the needs of sectors, boat and air stations as identified in the gap analysis.
- C. Obtain information from the Coast Guard on their standards of training and performance for areas and positions identified for needing Auxiliary backup, fill-in, and surge Operational support.
- D. Develop required train-the-trainer programs for supporting division and flotilla training needs.
- E. Implement the approved Auxiliary Radio Communications Contingency Plan in all Sectors.

**4. Improve and increase the use of technology for mission efficiency and effectiveness.**

- A. Train officers on the use of Join.Me, Go-To-Meeting, and Go to Training.
- B. Post division and regional training sessions in a calendar format on the D7website.
- C. Train officers on the use of social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.

*Lead with purpose, vision and heart.*

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**5. Develop partnerships, programs and trained members in marine safety and marine environmental protection.**

- A. Provide annual training in the Sea Partners program in each Sector.
- B. Increase the number of relationships with local schools by 2% per year to educate students on marine safety and environmental protection.
- C. Develop and maintain partnerships with local marine safety and environmental organizations to promote better visibility with on-going issues.
- D. Qualify at least one member in each division as an Uninspected Passenger Vessel (UPV)/Commercial Fishing Vessel Examiner (CFVE) verifying officer.
- E. Increase UPVs and CFVEs by 2% per year.
- F. Promote training and activation of the Power Squadron in the AWW mission.
- G. Implement Focused Lens in two additional Sectors

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed  
citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only  
thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead



## District Commodore Leadership Philosophies

- Deliver to all members and customers the best services in the most appropriate approach and efficient time frame possible.
- Work smart, enthusiastically, and energetically.
- Embrace positive change. Understand the “why” of the change to reduce the risk for producing new issues and long-range negatives surrounding the change.
- Identify, define and resolve concerns, issues, and conflicts without delay and with fairness and objectivity, balancing member needs and desires with organizational objectives, values, and missions.
- Function always with honesty, integrity, openness and professionalism.
- Speak on sensitive issues to bring perspective, objective thinking, and a path to rational resolution.
- Treat Auxiliary assets in a prudent manner ensuring the most value.
- Participate in missions to the fullest extent possible.
- Continue to learn and improve personally and professionally.
- Promote individuality within teamwork, proactive projects, win-win solutions, out-of-the-box thinking, and innovation.
- Provide staff with worthy challenges, necessary resources, and wholehearted support enabling them to fulfill their responsibilities to the highest standards.
- Utilize delegation to achieve the best use of time, knowledge and results.
- Have and encourage a healthy and active sense of humor.
- Keep life in balance with time, work, family, Auxiliary, health, and reflection/relaxation.
- Communicate, communicate, communicate!



## WE WANT TO KNOW – Summary of Survey Results

### District 7 2015 Survey Results

**Background:**

Survey was distributed at all units visited emphasizing voluntary participation, and anonymous submission.

12 Divisions; 8 Flotillas

Approximately 75% participation; not all participants answered all questions; some participants gave more than one answer on open-ended questions.

**Survey distributed FEB-NOV 2015:**

Survey consists of 10 multiple choice questions (strongly agree to strongly disagree), 9 open-ended questions requiring text answers Additional Comments section.

<b>Multiple Choice Questions:</b>	<b>Most Prevalent Answer:</b>
1. I am passionate about our missions	65% strongly agreed
2. I am valued as a member of the AUX team.	85% answered Strongly Agree or Agree
3. I am able to use my professional expertise	50% Strongly Agreed
4. I regularly receive feedback about my AUX work.	63% Agreed or were Neutral
5. I have several very close friendships in the AUX.	52% Strongly Agreed
6. Unit meetings are led by a person who listens, engages Everyone follows through on decisions..	72% Strongly Agreed or Agreed
7. We have visionary leaders in our organization.	Approx. 1/3 answered in each of the categories Strongly Agreed, Agreed and Neutral
8. Fellow AUX are highly committed to excellence.	73% responded in the Agreed or Neutral
9. I know what my role(s) and responsibilities are in the AUX.	86% said Strongly Agree or Agree
10. I am allowed flexibility in fulfilling my AUX roles and responsibilities.	72% Strongly Agreed or Agreed

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**District 7 2015 Survey Results Continue**

<u>Text Question</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Comments</u>
11. Have you taken a training course in the last 12	38% answered "No"	Not good.
12. If you answered "Yes" to Question 11, what was the course(s) you took?	Top three answers were an AUXOP course, TCT, VE / BC / COX	Interesting that Mandated Training was not in the top three.
13. Do you plan to take a training course within the next 12 months?	Approximately 1 in 4 said "No". Of those who responded in the affirmative, the top three answers of what courses they planned to take were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An AUXOP course</li> <li>• BC/COX, or</li> <li>• A marine safety course.</li> </ul>	Again, mandated training is not included.
14. Is your FL/DIV presenting the Deckplate Leadership Series?	70% No	Also not good
15. What is your evaluation of the new publication Currents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 64% No Response/Have not read it</li> <li>• 31% Informative/Useful, 4% It's Okay</li> <li>• 1% Too many publications</li> </ul>	We obviously need to draw attention to this publication and ensure our members know where to find it.
16. What gives you the most pride/satisfaction about contributing to the Auxiliary?	<p align="center"><b><u>Top 3 answers were:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Helping people/Helping Team CG</li> <li>2. Surface Operations</li> <li>3. Giving back to my community/country</li> </ol>	
17. Are there missions you feel are a waste of time?	67% No; Other answers were from just 1-3 members.	
18. What missions should we be doing more of?	<p align="center"><b><u>Top three answers were:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PE Courses</li> <li>• Surface patrols</li> <li>• Advanced training (RFO &amp; QE)</li> </ul>	
19. How can we improve our missions and Programs?	<p align="center"><b><u>Top three answers were:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shorten time and improve communications/accuracy of ID cards and pictures with Vetting Process,</li> <li>2. Simplify processes and forms</li> <li>3. Provide more training opportunities</li> </ol>	
20. Additional Comments –	Comments were received on 29 different subjects. <b><u>Top three were:</u></b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve the vetting process</li> <li>2. Proud to be an Auxiliarist/Glad to help the public</li> <li>3. Too frequent changes/not enough time to complete new requirements/no notice on changes</li> </ol>	

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## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats SWOT Survey Top Three Results

### Strengths

- Training
- 5,200 People with diverse knowledge, experience, & skills
- Stable, well-defined, and comparable organizational structure to the CG

### Weaknesses

- Inadequate and inconsistent recognition and appreciation of our members
- Lack of willingness of members to hold officer positions at flotilla and division levels
- Lack of standardization of training, skills and expertise to support the CG at optimum levels.

### Opportunities

- Develop closer and improved communications, planning, and working relationship with stations and sectors
- Plan and conduct targeted recruiting, orienting, and mentoring
- Increase the use of and training on technology in departments and missions

### Threats

- Declining funds to support the Auxiliary
- Aging membership coupled with younger population without time and money to volunteer
- Declining surface assets and inadequate meeting, PE, and training spaces

-END-

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## Operational Plan Glossary

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Description</b>
AUX	Auxiliary
AUXPAD	Auxiliary Paddle Craft (Program)
AUXOP	Auxiliary Operations (Advanced Program)
AWW	American's Waterway Watch ( <a href="http://americaswaterwaywatch.uscg.mil/home.html">http://americaswaterwaywatch.uscg.mil/home.html</a> )
BC	Boat Crew
CFVE	Commercial Fishing Vessel Examination/Examiner
COX	Coxswain
DCAPT	District Captain (East = E, North = N, West = W)
DCOS	District Chief of Staff
DCO	District Commodore
DDC	District Directorate Chief (Logistics = L, Prevention = P, Response = R)
DIV	Division
DSO	District Staff Officer
FL	Flotilla
HR	Human Resources
IT	Instructor
MEP	Marine Environmental Protection
MS	Marine Safety
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Association
PE	Public Education
PV	Program Visitation or Program Visitor
QE	Qualifying Examiner
RBS	Recreational Boating Safety
RFO	Ready for Operations (Training Course)
SO	Division Staff Officer
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats – Used for analyses of an organization
TCT	Team Coordination Training
UPV	Uninspected Passenger Vessel
VE	Vessel Examinations or Vessel Examiner

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